

This is the first official report of the Oversight Commissioner for the calendar year 2003. The current report is the seventh in a series of official oversight reports that began in 2001. The objective of these official reports from the Oversight Commissioner is to fulfil the mandate set out in the recommendations of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, by reporting publicly on the progress achieved following each of the regularly scheduled oversight reviews.

The protocol established for the oversight process was purposely designed to be very rigorous and completely objective. The reason and need for the rigorous protocols established by the Oversight Commissioner is to assure the community that all aspects of the report of the Independent Commission are being implemented and being seen to be implemented.

In their chapter titled “Overseeing Change”, the Independent Commission was abundantly clear that policing policy and practice are central to the principles of the Agreement itself and to its implementation. The study of policing in Northern Ireland by the Independent Commission was one of exhaustive consultation and the recommendations reflect the unanimous conclusions of the Commission. They noted that the various recommendations represent a package, which must be implemented comprehensively if Northern Ireland is to have the policing arrangements that it needs. In the course of conducting our regularly scheduled oversight evaluations, we are always mindful of the guidance of the Independent Commission that: “we advise in the strongest terms against cherry-picking from this report or trying to implement some major elements of it in isolation from others.”

The role of the Oversight Commissioner as envisioned by the Independent Commission was more than just a stocktaking function, but rather to provide an important impetus to the process of transformation. The Government, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Policing Board, and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) are to provide the Oversight Commissioner with objectives, including timetables, covering their own responsibilities and are required to report on the progress and account for any failure or delays in implementing a recommendation.

The foundation for the official reviews of the Oversight Commissioner is the group of outstanding policing experts who make up the oversight team. As a result of their talent, experience and dedication, the oversight protocols are reflective of the “best practices” in policing. The quality of our reviews has been further enhanced by the contributions of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the pre-eminent organisation of policing executives in the world representing over 18,000 police leaders in 96 countries. The IACP has provided a world-class group of law enforcement executives to assist in refining our evaluations.

The next important step in establishing the rigorous oversight reviews was the identification of the Performance Indicators that are utilised to measure the progress of the various institutions. The oversight team conducted extensive research in identifying the 772 Performance Indicators, which are used to reach decisions on whether progress on a specific recommendation is being achieved and to account for any failures to achieve objectives. In essence, the 772 Performance Indicators transform the 175 Recommendations of the Independent Commission from abstract objectives to concrete measures, which in the opinion of the oversight team are indicative of “best practices” in policing.



Based on the 772 Performance Indicators, the team of police experts employs a three-stage evaluation process designed to measure progress from planning to full implementation in the field. The three stages are:

- **Administrative Compliance:** virtually every recommendation will require a directive, policy change, manual revision or order at the beginning of the implementation process. The oversight team reviews these administrative documents to determine if they are consistent with best policing practices and serve to implement the respective recommendations.
- **Personal Evaluation:** at this stage, the oversight team conducts numerous in depth interviews with leaders and policy makers in order to determine the methods and programmes that are being used to implement the various recommendations.
- **Verification:** the ultimate test for the Oversight Commissioner is whether the recommendation is actually being implemented in a manner consistent with the recommendation(s) of the Independent Commission. In order to ensure full compliance, members of the oversight team routinely visit policing agencies, particularly the Police Service, as well as political and other leaders in Northern Ireland. As the Police Service is the primary, though not the sole, focus of oversight interviews are conducted with middle and senior managers, and/or constables, first-line supervisors and local commanders. In addition, the oversight team conducts reviews of documents and performance reports selected on a random basis to determine compliance.

As a result of this rigorous research and the defined role of the Oversight Commissioner, the evaluation reports have and will continue to report on achievements and account for any failures to achieve the stated objectives. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency for some readers of the reports of the Oversight Commissioner to focus more on the areas of concern and less on progress and accomplishments. This can create an erroneous perception or belief that the progress in achieving the objectives of the overall change project has been disappointing because many of the recommendations have not been fully implemented in the twenty months since the official release of the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan.

It is important to note that, in the view of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner, the pace of the progress has been encouraging. In view of the number of recommendations, the context in which they are occurring, and the complexity involved in implementing them, progress has been on balance excellent.

The most obvious examples of this excellent progress are an improved emphasis on human rights, a professional and committed Policing Board, an Ombudsman with a skilled and dedicated staff, a recruitment and selection programme with an objective of providing a police service that is representative of the entire community, and the recent addition of District Policing Partnerships to further improve police accountability. The Police Service of Northern Ireland, from the Chief Constable to the Change Management Team and District Commanders, along with rank and file officers, have continued to meet the objectives set out for them by the Independent Commission.

We have previously reported our opinion that the Policing Board has a professional dedication to fulfilling their role in holding the Chief Constable and the Police Service of Northern Ireland accountable to the citizens of Northern Ireland. We continue to be impressed that the Board in a

relatively brief period of time, and while simultaneously facing a number of difficult decisions, has met its complex responsibilities with courage, intelligence and commitment to the interests of all the people of Northern Ireland.

It is equally important to recognise that it is the Police Service of Northern Ireland that has the responsibility for implementing the vast majority of the 175 Recommendations. They are required to conduct this massive change programme while simultaneously providing the full range of policing services to the citizens of Northern Ireland. The leadership of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Change Management Team along with the District Commanders rightfully deserve a good deal of credit for moving forward with the change programme, often in adverse circumstances.

Even in the context of this excellent progress, there are still important recommendations that need to be accomplished. These areas of concern are set out in detail in later sections of this report in both the Commissioner's overview and the various chapter summaries. In the course of our oversight evaluations, we have observed on several occasions that while many of the recommendations are being implemented in an expedient fashion, some of the recommendations which are particularly the responsibility of the Police Service itself, are being delayed for no apparent reason. If this lack of progress were to become a trend, it would be inconsistent with the Independent Commission's strong caution against selectively implementing some elements of its report in isolation from others.

In previous reports, we have expressed our concern about the difficult and often dangerous environment in which this massive change in the policing of Northern Ireland is occurring. We have reviewed numerous reports and surveys where the citizens of Northern Ireland have registered their fear of increasing rates of violent crime, drug dealing and paramilitary organised crime.

The criminal organisations that control the traffic in illegal drugs, carry out contract executions and extort the legitimate business community are contributing to a perception by some of lawlessness that is beyond the control of the Government. The only answer to combating such lawless and violent behaviour by criminal gangs is a police service that is professional, fully resourced and well-supported by the community, along with an accepted judicial system.

The recognition by the Policing Board of the danger inherent in the growing influence of these violent criminal gangs on the entire society of Northern Ireland will be important in addressing this problem. The Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland has correctly spoken out about the long-term dangers of these criminal organisations and initiated an enforcement strategy to deal with the issues.

The Independent Commission very clearly identified the dangers inherent in paramilitary structures transforming to the classic organised crime model. They realised that the full support of the entire community would be essential in dealing with such violent criminal organisations. In fact, the entire theme of the report of the Independent Commission is a need to develop confidence in and support for policing. This is a critical period of time for the policing of Northern Ireland and if this climate of lawlessness and violence is to be remedied, all of the citizens of Northern Ireland will have to unite to confront these criminals and crime syndicates.



As a result of my responsibilities as the Oversight Commissioner, I have been in frequent and continued contact with the institutions that are responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Independent Commission. It was apparent from the very beginning of this change process that the application of resources and effort required to fulfil the objectives of the Independent Commission would be a major undertaking.

It is important to note that the leadership of the institutions responsible for carrying out the reforms has been professional and co-operative throughout the process. The successful progress to date is directly attributable to the efforts of the Secretary of State, the Northern Ireland Office, the Policing Board, the Police Service and the Ombudsman. The Police Service of Northern Ireland has primary responsibility for much of the implementation process and the Chief Constable, senior leaders, the Change Management Team and District Commanders along with the rank and file have been professional and co-operative in responding to the requests of the Oversight Commissioner throughout the oversight process.

Thomas A. Constantine
Oversight Commissioner

May 2003

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
AIS	Administrative Information System
ALR	Armoured Landrover
CPLC	Community Police Liaison Committee
DCU	District Command Unit
DPP	District Policing Partnership
ELF	Executive Leadership Faculty
FARM	Finance and Resource Management
FTR	Full Time Reserve
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GB	Great Britain
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
IACP	International Association of Chiefs of Police
IT	Information Technology
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PBR	Plastic Baton Round
PRD	Primary Reference Document
PRRT	Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PTR	Part Time Reserve
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
SLA	Service Level Agreements
TED	Training, Education and Development
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
UK	United Kingdom
VSSU	Voluntary Severance Support Unit

▶▶ **commissioner's overview**



In this, the first report of the Oversight Commissioner for calendar year 2003, the evaluation will focus on a rigorous analysis of the progress being made in implementing the recommendations of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland. This report, which is the seventh in a series which began in 2001, is the product of the on-going evaluation of progress conducted by the policing experts assigned to the Office of the Oversight Commissioner. The on-site visit by the oversight team in December of 2002 and the analysis of requested documentation are the basis of this evaluation.

The role of the Oversight Commissioner is clearly set out in Chapter 19 “Overseeing Change” of the report of the Independent Commission. The Commission stated that its recommendations represented unanimous conclusions reached after exhaustive consultations. The Commission considered it vital that the recommendations be implemented comprehensively and faithfully, and firmly believed that the recommendations represent a package which must be implemented in total rather than selectively. The Commission also advised in the strongest terms against “cherry picking” the recommendations or trying to implement some major elements of the report in isolation from others. In order to avoid such problems, they recommended the position of Oversight Commissioner to monitor the changes required of all those involved in the development of the new policing arrangements. This was to assure the community that all aspects of the report are being implemented and being seen to be implemented.

In recognition of objectives of the Independent Commission, it has been vital that a rigorous and professional system of oversight evaluation was established. The Oversight Commissioner must conduct his office in an objective manner without fear or favour of any individual, group or institution. The integrity of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner is critical to confidence of the entire community. The manner in which this is accomplished has been detailed in the Introduction above as well as in previous reports.

Inherent in any oversight or monitoring protocol is the responsibility to report on the progress achieved together with the extent to which any failures or delays are the responsibility of the policing institutions themselves or due to matters beyond their control. In this report, these are categorised as “Progress and Accomplishments” and “Areas of Concern.” It is important that the reader review this report in the proper context. The progress by the various institutions responsible for implementing the change has been excellent on balance.

We have repeatedly pointed out the concerns of the Independent Commission about “cherry picking” the recommendations. In the course of our evaluation, we have identified certain recommendations that are not progressing and there is no reasonable explanation for the lack of progress. We will be watching these recommendations very closely to make sure a trend does not develop that could have an adverse impact on what is otherwise an excellent effort by dedicated people.

Review of Progress and Accomplishments

The Police Service has developed a comprehensive Human Rights Plan. The Policing Board, with the assistance of a recently hired Human Rights Advisor, is reviewing the plan as submitted by the Police Service. The Policing Board and the Police Service have finalised and released a Code of Ethics that fulfils the intent of the Independent Commission.

One of the important themes of the Independent Commission was the need for accountability. Their vision of a Policing Board was well thought out and the actual implementation has proven to be a very important asset for the improvement of policing in Northern Ireland. We continue to be very impressed by the leadership of the Policing Board in providing the way forward for the reform of policing in Northern Ireland. The Board has been faced with a number of serious and controversial issues and on each occasion resolved the problem in a professional, deliberative manner. The support of the entire community for the Policing Board will be critical to the long term safety and security of the citizens of Northern Ireland.

A marked success for the Policing Board is the recent establishment across Northern Ireland of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs). The Independent Commission intended that DPPs be an integral part of the new policing arrangements. Their establishment, though delayed, marks excellent progress on the new beginning to policing. Being representative of the community, DPPs allow community views on policing to be aired while also contributing to the formulation of local policing plans. Once the DPPs are operating fully they will help to identify, discuss and prioritise local community concerns, and in conjunction with their local District Commanders will establish policing priorities. Without doubt DPPs will make a positive and significant difference both to policing with the community and in preventing crime across Northern Ireland.

The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland continues to be fully co-operative with the oversight process. The Office has developed an excellent staff and state-of-the-art review systems. Like the Policing Board, the continued support for the Ombudsman is very important for community confidence in the police.

The Police Service has developed an outstanding Implementation Plan for their Policing with the Community Strategy. The distribution of this plan will serve as a comprehensive manual for putting into effect the letter and spirit of one of the core recommendations of the Independent Commission. This Plan is further evidence of the professional efforts that we have come to expect from the sectors of the Police Service of Northern Ireland responsible for this important area of change.

The Police Service has continued with a gradual but systematic introduction of regular police vehicles to replace the armoured land rovers. It has also taken steps to address inconsistent application of its policy for stops and searches under emergency legislation through an internal audit. The audit process included detailed discussions with District Commanders about the policy's requirements. The Police Service in future audits will revisit this issue.

The Policing Board and the Police Service have extended considerable efforts in implementing those recommendations that deal with public order situations.

The decision by the Policing Board to request a Human Resource Planning Strategy to address the critical issue of staffing is just one more example of the professional approach of the Board in addressing the important issues of policing in Northern Ireland. The Chief Constable has accepted this tasking in an effort to improve the quality of service to the citizens of Northern Ireland.

The Independent Commission emphasised the need for decentralisation and local accountability of policing to the community. The concept of District Commanders in jurisdictions that are congruent with local political entities is the cornerstone of the theme of decentralisation. The



Oversight Commissioner continues to be impressed with the talent and dedication of the individuals who assumed the District Commands. The District Commanders of the Police Service of Northern Ireland are providing excellent leadership and it is essential that the Government, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the community provide them with increased support.

The decision by the Policing Board to commission Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) to conduct a study of issues related to the relationship between Special Branch and Crime Branch was an excellent first step in resolving this often contentious area. The study by Her Majesty's Inspector was well-researched and professional. The recommendations of the HMIC report are consistent with the intent of the Independent Commission and address the concerns previously mentioned in the reports of the Oversight Commissioner. Both the Policing Board and the Chief Constable have accepted the recommendations as proposed by the HMIC. However, an expedited implementation programme is extremely important if these recommendations are to be fulfilled.

The Policing Board and the Police Service have approved a plan to implement the recommendation of recruiting 2,500 members of the Part Time Reserve. If the plan is implemented as envisioned by the Independent Commission, it will provide major assistance to the concerns about staffing levels and, if the part-time reserves recruited are representative of the community, they will also increase community confidence in the police.

The recruiting programme by the independent agency the Consensia Partnership, has completed four recruitment campaigns for police officers. The recruitment programme is well designed and meets contemporary policing standards. The recruiting programme has been successful in continuing to attract substantial numbers of recruits from the Catholic community. Perhaps of equal importance, the recruit training staff and field supervisors are impressed by the quality of the new officers.

The Policing Board has recognised the serious deficiencies of the training facility at Garnerville. The Policing Board has considered the Police Service of Northern Ireland's business case for the new police training college and agreed that the proposal be submitted to the Northern Ireland Office with the Board's full endorsement. The Board sees the training college as one of the cornerstones of the Police Service and wishes to have the project completed by 2007.

The training programme for the recruit officers is assessed on a continuing basis so that it remains progressive and relevant to current modern training practices. Site visits to the recruit training programme and interviews with staff and new officers reinforce the positive evaluation of the training for new constables. The tutor officer training programme for new constables is an exceptional project that is well-designed and well-received by the tutor officers and the new constables.

Areas of Concern

In the course of the evaluation visit conducted in December of 2002, the oversight team determined that there were several areas where progress had not been achieved at a pace that could reasonably have been expected. Some of the recommendations are not yet or cannot be implemented due to factors beyond the control of the responsible institution. However, as we note in greater detail below, there are other recommendations that are well within the control of one or more of the policing institutions, but which have yet to show sufficient progress.

Moreover, many of these have been identified as concerns in previous reports of the Oversight Commissioner. Although these recommendations are relatively few in comparison to the excellent overall progress on the majority of recommendations, they are important because of the stated concerns of the Independent Commission about “cherry picking” in the implementation process.

In May of 2002 the Police Service provided evidence that a two-stage programme would meet the requirement that serving officers understand the new police oath and understand the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it. Stage one involved a briefing for over 8,900 officers on the new oath. Although we were advised that documentation would be provided that would allow for verification, this was not the case. Stage two involved addressing the oath in the Course for All, and ultimately ensuring that officers understood the oath and the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it. Oversight evaluators attended several sessions of the Course for All, however did not observe a record of administration which clearly indicated individual understanding of the oath and the need to carry out duties in accordance with it.

Our evaluators noted that the Course for All, particularly the constitutional arrangements and impact of the Independent Commission recommendations, was not dealt with in an adequate manner. The Independent Commission wanted every officer and civilian to have “a full understanding of the impact on policing” of the new constitutional arrangements in Northern Ireland, the new policing arrangement as set out in the Independent Commission report, and the reforms to the criminal system. While a beginning has been made, this objective has not yet been achieved.

Human Rights training for serving officers and civilian employees has seen limited progress, and there is a need for a clear implementation plan which includes financial implications and time schedules.

In order to support the excellent “Policing with the Community Strategy” developed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland, it is essential that first and second level supervisors be given training commensurate with their new responsibilities. The lack of attention and support for those who are serving in these important supervisory positions could have a serious adverse impact on the “Policing with the Community” Strategy.

The police alone cannot be held responsible for a successful “Policing with the Community” Strategy. The community must also step forward to assist the police by providing guidance and accountability. Absent support from all citizens, the police will be handicapped in achieving the objectives for Policing with the Community as set out in the report of the Independent Commission.

An estate strategy has been agreed for new police buildings, with funding approved for three new police stations. However, at the time of the December 2002 evaluation visit the Police Service and the Northern Ireland Office advised that they had not yet agreed upon a financial plan for the badly needed modernising of existing police stations. Some three and one-half years after the Independent Commission’s report there is still no substantial modernisation of police buildings as recommended. Police officers, civilian staff and members of the community remain largely without access to modern and safe police facilities.

As of 30 December 2002 there was still minimal progress on civilianising the reception areas of



police facilities. The Independent Commission noted that civilianising reception areas would bring the PSNI into line with police services in Great Britain and elsewhere. They also noted that there is no operational need for a police officer to perform receptionist duties. Further, that many members of the public would be more comfortable dealing initially with a civilian and that civilianising receptionist areas would help to further integrate police stations with their local communities.

Numerous field visits and discussions with District Commanders and supervisors revealed almost unanimous support for this recommendation. If it had been quickly implemented as originally intended, up to 260 police officers would potentially have been freed up for patrol duties. However, as of 30 December 2002 receptionist positions had still not been publicly advertised, although they have been subject to an internal trawl. As of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had not filled any receptionist positions through the internal trawl process. At present the percentage of Catholic civilian employees is approximately 12.8%, a figure that has remained largely unchanged for some time. If the Police Service continues to fill civilianised positions through internal trawl, candidates will not reflect the 50:50 balance. Although Grafton Recruitment has recently advertised for 60 civilian receptionists, thereby ensuring 50:50 hiring as called for in legislation, this only belatedly begins the process.

Although the District Command concept is sound, and individual District Commanders are performing very well, a major concern remains the continued lack of significant progress in providing full organisational support to District Commanders. There is still confusion about the nature and amount of authority that has been devolved from the centre to the district level. DCU Commanders require full human and financial resources to be provided in order to support the new concept of devolved decision making. As of 30 December 2002 no personnel managers had been appointed to DCUs, and only 8 out of 29 DCUs had business managers in place. One immediate effect personnel managers could have in DCUs is to relieve DCU Commanders and other police officers of unnecessary administrative responsibilities. There is also no clear policy which spells out a Commander's discretion to determine, in conjunction with the community, how best to balance policing resources in that district.

The issue of video recording in the 22 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) designated custody suites is still in question. There is no detailed plan for the implementation of this recommendation, and there is only a general plan for a three-year timetable of installation. In essence, this means completed installation for all 22 would occur six and one-half years after the Independent Commission made its recommendation.

The research on alternatives to the Plastic Baton Rounds (PBRs) is included in three separate reports. Although the research is excellent, especially in the first two reports, there is a need to provide definitive answers in clearly established time frames.

The Independent Commission considered the issue of internal accountability within the police service to be critically important. Although internal accountability is often a matter of discipline, the Independent Commission recognised that it was first and foremost a matter of management. It recommended the creation of a trend analysis system and the follow up of trend information by management as one means of addressing the issue of internal accountability.

The Ombudsman's office was given responsibility for making trend information on complaints

against police officers available to the Police Service and to the Policing Board. This information is provided monthly and quarterly, and is sufficient in detail to allow the Police Service to develop an internal trend identification process. While indicators routinely include public complaints, other indicators within the Police Service such as sickness absence, poor performance and other identified risk areas are also significant. If implemented, all of these systems combined provide the police service with an early warning process to better manage its internal accountability. However, as of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had not yet utilised information from the Ombudsman in such a system.

In previous reports, the Oversight Commissioner advised that the current plan for amalgamating Special Branch and Crime Branch did not fulfil the intent of the agreed upon recommendations. However, the report of HMIC commissioned by the Policing Board, included well thought-out recommendations that meet the balance of maintaining the ability to deal with terrorism while sharing information with the Crime Branch. If implemented the HMIC recommendations should meet the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendation. Although the Policing Board and the Chief Constable quickly endorsed the HMIC's recommendations in November of 2002, as of 30 December 2002 we had not received specific time lines for the full implementation of all of the Independent Commission and HMIC recommendations.

The lack of progress in the implementation of the recommendation on registration of interests has been reported previously. The delay in implementing this recommendation is the responsibility of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

In addition to the need for a state-of-the-art training facility, there is an equivalent need for a state-of-the-art training programme. The lack of a current well-developed needs analysis is a critical first step which has yet to be achieved. Requests for specific and concrete evidence that training programme measures are being fulfilled and timetables adhered to, particularly with respect to a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis and Service Level Agreements (SLAs), have been outstanding since the publication of our oversight report in September of 2001. Evidence of real progress had not been provided as of 30 December 2002. SLAs are considered especially significant as they are vital to the devolution of decision making initiative and to addressing the in-service training needs of District Command Units. The District Training Officers, who are also an essential part of the in-service training programme, have received limited support to the point that they are reporting use of their own personal equipment to retrieve information from colleagues or to review internet training material. District Trainers do not appear to benefit from the same training upgrade opportunities as do their counterparts at Garnerville.

Our evaluators noted that the Course for All, particularly the constitutional arrangements and impact of the Independent Commission recommendations, was not dealt with in an adequate manner. The Independent Commission wanted every police officer and civilian to have "a full understanding of the impact on policing" of the new constitutional arrangements in Northern Ireland, the new policing arrangement as set out in the Independent Commission report, and the reforms to the criminal justice system. While a beginning has been made, this objective has not yet been achieved.



While there have been some positive steps in the area of training, it has become obvious that there is a need for comprehensive improvement in the Police Service's training programmes. The Policing Board will need to take a proactive approach to monitoring and facilitating results in this area.

Future Directions

Future oversight visits will increasingly focus on site visit to follow-up on and verify the nature and extent to which agreed-upon changes have taken place. Such changes, particularly at the point of policing service delivery, will be evaluated to determine adherence to the Independent Commission's objectives and intentions.

Specific areas of interest for the upcoming oversight visit include the development of a programme for human rights monitoring by the Policing Board; DPP operations, especially relationships with the Policing Board, District Councils, and the Police Service. We will also review the substitution of ALRs with regular police cars to determine the degree of both actual and planned progress; progress on the devolution to DCUs of authority, with human and financial resources; increases in permanent civilian training staff, particularly civilian support positions in DCUs; and progress on the use by management of information from trend identification/early warning processes.

We will review progress on the slimming down of Headquarters; the implementation of the HMIC's recommendations on Special Branch; and the process for registering police and recruit officers' interests and associations. Finally, we will look for progress on the Police College, the development of a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis and the development of Service Level Agreements in training between DCU Commanders and PSNI Training.

▶▶ human rights



A. Chapter Summary

Background

Quoting the 1998 Belfast Agreement, the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland noted that the fundamental purpose of policing should be “the protection and vindication of the human rights of all.” In order to achieve this goal, the Commission recommended that the police develop a “comprehensive programme of action to focus policing in Northern Ireland on a human rights-based approach” and that the performance of the Police Service in implementing such a programme be monitored closely by the Policing Board. The Independent Commission recommended several specific actions that the Police Service should take to bring about a greater emphasis on human rights in Northern Ireland policing. They were:

- promulgation of a new oath for all serving officers;
- development of a code of ethics;
- expansion of human rights training for all police officers, recruits as well as serving officers, and civilian staff;
- incorporation of human-rights awareness and practice in the performance evaluation of individuals; and,
- appointment of a lawyer to advise the Police Service about the human rights implications of its activities.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Police Service appointed a human rights lawyer in October of 2001. The human rights lawyer ensures all Police Service policy conforms to the 1998 Human Rights Act. The human rights lawyer also provides advice on the human rights implications of new policies, as well as the human rights implications of police training. To augment this work, and to support and standardise human rights instruction throughout its programmes, the Police Service appointed a Human Rights Co-ordinator to the Police College.

The Police Service has completed work on its comprehensive human rights plan. The plan, which includes a business case, was widely circulated to outside groups including the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Equality Commission. The plan will be published once the Policing Board’s recently hired Human Rights Advisor has had an opportunity to review it, a process that is to be completed by March of 2003.

The Code of Ethics for the PSNI was launched publicly by the Board and the Police Service on 13 February 2003. Even though the Code in its final form did not come into force until March 2003, it was presented in detail to recruits at the Police College and to in-service personnel at the Course for All. A copy of the Code will be sent to all PSNI members, and was due to come into effect on 14 March 2003. The Code references appropriate international standards as well as best practices in other police services.

The recruit training programme has been revised to stress the importance of human rights. All police recruits now learn human rights theory and practice. Human rights training has also been integrated into various recruit-training modules including Police Community Relationships and

Criminal Justice. The recruit-training programme includes human rights input from non-police experts from universities. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) recently evaluated the human rights component of the training programme. Results were largely positive, and the NIHRC was particularly satisfied with the level of co-operation received. This was felt to augur well for future collaboration between the Police Service and external bodies.

Areas of Concern

The Independent Commission recommended that all new and existing police officers take a new police oath, which expressed an explicit commitment to upholding human rights. The text of the oath recommended by the Independent Commission was adopted as Section 38(1) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. The Act also obliges the Chief Constable to bring the new oath to the attention of serving officers and to ensure that they both understand it and understand the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it.

Progress on implementing the Independent Commission's recommendations with respect to the oath for recruit officers has taken place. Recruit classes after September of 2001 have been trained in and have attested to the new oath. Similar progress for serving police officers has been lacking.

Instilling the importance of human rights in every police officer was central to the Independent Commission's vision of a new beginning for policing. Ensuring that serving officers understand the new police oath and understand the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it is also required by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. In May of 2002 the Police Service provided evidence that a two-stage programme would meet these requirements. Stage one involved briefing over 8,900 officers on the new oath. Although we were advised that documentation would be provided that would allow for verification, this was not the case. Stage two involved addressing the oath in the Course for All, and ultimately ensuring that officers understood the oath and the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it. Oversight evaluators attended several sessions of the Course for All, however did not observe a record of administration which clearly indicated individual understanding of the oath and the need to carry out duties in accordance with it.

Finally, evidence of the integration of human rights into all training modules has not been provided. Requests for evidence that human rights had been integrated into all training modules, particularly those aimed at serving police officers, have been outstanding since the publication of our oversight report in September of 2001. As of 30 December 2002 specifications as to the differences in human rights training between old and new programmes for recruit officers, civilian staff and serving police officers had not been provided. Among other evidence not provided is an implementation plan detailing the required staff and budget levels, or the anticipated time schedule for implementation.

Future Directions

The Independent Commission on Policing in Northern Ireland recommended that the Policing Board develop a programme for human rights monitoring. This has been delayed pending the commencement of the Policing Board's Human Rights Advisor. The formulation of such a programme will then be examined for best practice. We will also continue to pay close attention



to the development by the Police Service of an effective, co-ordinated approach to human rights training for all personnel.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 1: Human Rights Based Approach to Policing

Patten Recommendation:

1. There should be a comprehensive programme of action to focus policing in Northern Ireland on a human rights-based approach.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

A draft plan, including a business plan, has been prepared by the PSNI and submitted to the Policing Board. Approval by the Board has been delayed until the Board's newly hired Human Rights Advisor has had an opportunity to undertake a review of the document. At that time, the document will be assessed for best practices.

Recommendation 2: New Police Oath

Patten Recommendation:

2. There should be a new oath, taken individually by all new and existing police officers, expressing an explicit commitment to upholding human rights.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance has been completed with respect to recruits. All recruits attest to the new oath at graduation from the Police College. Administrative compliance with respect to serving police officers has not been completed. The Independent Commission emphasised the importance of human rights as the very purpose of policing. It recommended that human rights should be instilled in every police officer, and that a new oath be taken that expressed an explicit commitment to upholding human rights. In its August 2001 Implementation Plan the Government accepted this and noted that a record would be kept. The Implementation Plan also noted that existing police officers, having already been attested as constables, could not be required to take the new oath. However, the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 requires that the terms of the new oath be brought to the attention of all serving police officers, and that they understand it and understand the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it.

The Police Service provided evidence of a programme for certifying that serving officers understand and indicate their understanding of the new oath. This was a two-stage programme, the first stage involving a series of briefings on the new oath. By August of 2002 the Police Service had briefed a total of 8,953 police officers on the oath, however documentation provided was not sufficient to allow for the proper verification of the administration of this process. Although we were advised that documentation would be provided that would allow for such verification, this was not the case. Stage two of the programme, ensuring that officers understand the oath and the need to carry out their duties in accordance with it, was to take place during the Police Service's Course for All. As of 30 December 2002 the Course for All had not been concluded.

Oversight evaluators attended several sessions of the Course for All. Although the oath is included in the new Code of Ethics, and was addressed during the Course for All, a record of administration, clearly indicating individual understanding of the oath and the need to carry out duties in accordance with it, was not observed. This record remains outstanding and will need to be provided if the Police Act is to be satisfied and the recommendation implemented as intended by the Independent Commission.

Recommendation 3: Code of Ethics

Patten Recommendation:

3. A new Code of Ethics should replace the existing, largely procedural code, integrating the European Convention on Human Rights into police practice. Codes of practice on all aspects of policing, including covert law enforcement techniques, should be strictly in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board/NIO

The Code of Ethics has been completed by the PSNI and approved by the Policing Board. As of 30 December 2002 the Code had not been released for publication pending the amendment of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. However, since that time the Code has been published and was released on 13 February 2003. The Police Service consulted with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, as well as with other groups, in preparing the Code. The Code will come into effect on 14 March 2003 and will be assessed for alignment with the European Convention on Human Rights and “best practices” in other police agencies.

Recommendation 4: Training in Human Rights

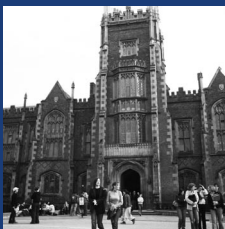
Patten Recommendation:

4. All police officers, and police civilians, should be trained (and updated as required) in the fundamental principles and standards of human rights and the practical implications for policing. The human rights dimensions should be integrated into every module of police training.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. While progress on incorporating human rights into the recruit-training programme has been made, similar progress has not been made with respect to serving officers and civilian employees. The Police Service has not provided a specification of the differences in human rights training between old and new programmes, nor a detailed implementation plan including staff, budgets and time schedules. There is also no evidence of the integration of human rights into all training modules.

The Police Service has not supplied evidence of changes made to functional modules, or programmes for modifying the culture of the training institution. Certain organisations, including the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Mediation Northern Ireland, have observed some training sessions. However, the Police Service has not provided material about the content of such training, nor has it provided a plan for selecting, training, and supervising the



teachers of the human rights component, nor for the evaluation of the human rights training. Plans for evaluating learning outcomes and the impact of human rights training on behaviour have also not been provided.

Recommendation 5: Appraisal of Human Rights Performance in Individuals

Patten Recommendation:

5. Awareness of human rights issues and respect for human rights in the performance of duty should be an important element in the appraisal of individuals in the police service.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission recommended that a new appraisal system capable of measuring human rights performance be developed and implemented by the Police Service. Developing a meaningful system is important because the ability of the Police Service to measure a police officer's human rights performance is central to the issue of public accountability. This has not occurred as of 30 December 2002. However, the component of the performance appraisal system, which measures human rights, has been completed and a copy provided, and the new appraisal system is on schedule for 1 April 2003.

Recommendation 6: Appointment of Human Rights Lawyers

Patten Recommendation:

6. A lawyer with specific expertise in the field of human rights should be appointed to the staff of the police legal services.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved

Recommendation 7: Monitoring Human Rights Performance

Patten Recommendation:

7. The performance of the police service as a whole in respect of human rights, as in other respects, should be monitored closely by the Policing Board.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Chief Constable

A plan for the monitoring of human rights by the Policing Board has not been developed as of 30 December 2002. The plan has been delayed pending the commencement of the Human Rights Advisor recently hired by the Policing Board.

▶▶ **accountability**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland devoted 35 of its 175 recommendations to providing oversight mechanisms designed to ensure the accountability of policing to the public and the law. Its recommendations cover the creation of a Policing Board, District Policing Partnerships, a Police Ombudsman, a Commissioner and complaints tribunal for covert law enforcement operations, and the strengthening of financial accountability.

Progress and Accomplishments

Since its inception in November of 2001 the Policing Board has accomplished a great deal including overseeing the development of the Police Service's new badge and uniform. The Board supervised the launch of a successful, cross-community recruitment programme for police officers. Following extensive consultation with the Government, the Police Service and the community at large the Policing Board released its first Policing Plan in March of 2002, which set out strategic goals and objectives for the Police Service to meet for 2002 - 2005. During the Summer and Autumn of 2002 the Policing Board appointed a new Chief Constable, a Deputy Chief Constable and two Assistant Chief Constables. The Board has also published a Code of Practice for the exercise and functions of the District Policing Partnerships, which have now begun their crucial work across communities in Northern Ireland.

The Independent Commission intended that District Policing Partnerships be an integral part of the new policing arrangements. Their establishment, though delayed, marks excellent progress on the new beginning to policing. Being representative of the community, DPPs allow community views on policing to be aired while also contributing to the formulation of local policing plans. Once the DPPs are operating fully they will help to identify, discuss and prioritise local community concerns, and in conjunction with their local District Commanders will establish policing priorities. Without doubt DPPs will make a positive and significant difference both to policing with the community and in preventing crime across Northern Ireland.

The Chief Constable regularly furnishes quarterly reports on police performance to the Policing Board. Other financial accountability systems, which include an audit agreement and Best Value audits, will commence in April of 2003. The NIO, the Policing Board and the Police Service have developed these systems. The Policing Board requested that the Police Service address a number of human resources issues including the number of officers and reservists assigned to security posts, management of severance and sick leave, civilianisation and the downsizing of headquarters, among others. The Police Service developed a comprehensive and wide-ranging Human Resource Planning Strategy in response to this request which committed it to several goals over the next three years, including the optimisation of 750 security posts, a short-term adjustment in the timing of officers leaving under severance, reductions in sickness levels to 450 officers per day, and the civilianisation of 600 police positions.

Following the incorporation of certain amendments suggested by the Policing Board, the Board endorsed the Strategy in October of 2002. In addition, The Policing Board sought an independent review of intelligence sharing within the PSNI by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary. The report was thorough and entirely consistent with established best policing practices, and all its recommendations were adopted by the Board. Finally, the first fully costed Policing Plan, for 2003

- 2006, will be released in March of 2003. All of these achievements clearly demonstrate the willingness of the Policing Board to hold the Police Service to account as intended by the Independent Commission.

The Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland is also performing in all respects as intended by the Independent Commission. The Ombudsman is notified of all complaints against police officers and supervises all subsequent investigations. The Ombudsman has created a system for sharing data about complaints against police officers with the Police Service, and performs analyses of complaint trends and potential problems, which are shared directly with the Police Service on a monthly basis. The Ombudsman also develops more thematic reports on an ongoing basis.

Areas of Concern

To date the Police Service has not published its transparency plan for sharing of information with the public. This recommendation has been standing for some three and one-half years. However, the Policing Board is currently reviewing the draft policy. It is also important that the Policing Board and the Police Service develop a formal joint policy to establish the framework for operational responsibility. In addition, there remain no clearly defined mechanisms for the Policing Board to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Chief Constable.

Future Directions

Once the District Police Partnerships begin to function as planned, we will begin to assess their operation, especially their relationships with the Policing Board, the District Councils, and the Police Service. We intend, as well, to carefully review the transparency plan of the Police Service, if it is published as intended in April 2003.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendations 8 and 9: Creation and Responsibilities of the Policing Board

Patten Recommendations:

8. An entirely new Policing Board should be created, to replace the present Police Authority.
9. The statutory primary function of the Policing Board should be to hold the Chief Constable and the police service publicly to account.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved. The Policing Board has been created and is functioning as intended by the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland.



Recommendation 10, 11 and 12: Police Planning Process, the Annual Policing Plan and the Annual Policing Budget

Patten Recommendations:

10. The Policing Board should set objectives and priorities for policing over a 3 to 5 year period, taking account of any longer term objectives or principles set by the Secretary of State or successor. It should then be responsible for adopting a 3 to 5 year strategy, prepared by the Chief Constable through a process of discussion with the Board, which should reflect the objectives and priorities set by the Board.
11. The Board should be responsible for adopting an Annual Policing Plan, developed by the Chief Constable, through a process of discussion with the Board, on the basis of objectives and priorities set by the Board, and within the agreed 3 to 5 year strategy.
12. The Board should be responsible for negotiating the annual policing budget with the Northern Ireland Office, or with the appropriate successor body after devolution of policing. It should then allocate the police service budget to the Chief Constable and monitor police performance against the budget.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Chief Constable/NIO

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved. The Policing Board has developed a planning process that fulfils the Independent Commission's intent. After extensive consultations with the Chief Constable, the Secretary of State, and community groups, the Policing Board published its Policing Plan 2002-2005 which sets objectives for the Police Service with respect to public safety and organisational change, establishes performance targets for those objectives, and specifies budgetary requirements. As this report was being written, consultations were ongoing between the PSNI and the Policing Board with respect to the 2003-2006 plan, which has subsequently been published. In the Policing Plan 2002-2005, budget requirements for 2002-2003 and 2002-2005 have been specified.

Recommendation 13: Monitoring Strategic Trends

Patten Recommendation:

13. The Board should monitor police performance against the Annual Policing Plan and the 3 to 5 year strategy. It should also follow such things as recruitment patterns and trends, including fair employment and equal opportunities performance, and training needs. It should assess public satisfaction with the police service and, in liaison with the Police Ombudsman, patterns and trends in complaints against the police.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Police Ombudsman

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. Performance targets have been set in the Policing Plan 2002-2005 and the Chief Constable reports progress toward them quarterly to the Policing Board.

Recommendation 14: Powers of Appointment

Patten Recommendation:

14. The Board should have the responsibility for appointing all chief officers and civilian equivalents and for determining the length of their contracts. All appointments should be subject to approval by the Secretary of State (and successor after devolution) and the Chief Constable should be consulted in relation to the appointment of subordinate chief officers and civilian equivalents. The Board should have the power to call upon the Chief Constable to retire in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness subject to the approval of the Secretary of State (and successor) and to the right to make representations as at present. Similarly, the Board should have the same power in relation to other chief officers and civilian equivalents exercisable subject to the approval of the Secretary of State (and successor) and the same right to make representations and after consultation with the Chief Constable. The Secretary of State should have the power to require the Policing Board to call upon the Chief Constable to retire on the same grounds but this power should be exercisable only after consultation with the Board and subject to the same right to make representations already referred to. Additionally, after devolution the relevant Northern Ireland minister should have power to call for the retirement of the Chief Constable on the same grounds but this should be subject to the agreement of the Policing Board and the approval of the Secretary of State with an equivalent right to make representations. The Board should be the disciplinary authority for chief officers and civilian equivalents.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/NIO

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. The Policing Board has appointed senior officers of the PSNI, including the Chief Constable. However, the Policing Board has yet to develop criteria for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Chief Constable as called for by the Independent Commission.



Recommendation 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19: Co-ordination with Other Agencies, Composition of the Policing Board, Background of Board members, Appointment of Independent Members, Appointment of the Chairman of the Policing Board

Patten Recommendation:

15. The Policing Board should co-ordinate its work closely with other agencies whose work touches on public safety, including education, environment, economic development, housing and health authorities, as well as social services, youth services and the probation service, and with appropriate non-governmental organisations.
16. The Policing Board should have 19 members, 10 of whom should be Assembly members drawn from the parties that comprise the new Northern Ireland Executive, selected on the d'Hondt system, who should not at the same time hold ministerial office in the Executive.
17. The nine independent members of the Board should be selected from a range of different fields - including business, trade unions, voluntary organisations, community groups and the legal profession - with the aim of finding a group of individuals representative of the community as a whole, with the expertise both to set policing priorities and to probe and scrutinise different areas of police performance, from management of resources to the safeguarding of human rights. Their appointments should be for four years; but if it were necessary for the purpose of continuity to ensure that not all Board positions fell vacant at the same time as elections to the Assembly, some of these appointments could be for an initial period of two years.
18. The independent members should be appointed by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, until such time as responsibility for policing is devolved, at which point the appointments should be made by the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister acting together. Until devolution, the Secretary of State should also determine the remuneration and expenses of Board members, in consultation with the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister.
19. A Board member of high quality and standing in the community should be appointed by the Secretary of State to be the first chairman of the Board, with the agreement of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, for an initial term of four years.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved. Extensive co-ordination with other agencies is taking place. The required numbers of political and independent members have been appointed in an appropriate manner. The independent members of the Policing Board display the diversity called for by the Independent Commission, and the chairman has been chosen in an appropriate manner.

Recommendations 20 and 21: Devolution of Responsibility for Policing

Patten Recommendation:

20. Responsibility for policing should be devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive as soon as possible, except for matters of national security.
21. The powers of the Policing Board proposed in this report, in relation to both government (as now represented by the Secretary of State) and the Chief Constable, should in no way be diminished when the government role in the tripartite arrangement passes to the Northern Ireland Executive.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Northern Ireland Executive

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not yet been completed. Devolution of responsibility for policing continues to rest with the Government, as represented by the Secretary of State. However, devolving responsibility for policing to the Northern Ireland Executive is linked to the broader Criminal Justice Review for Northern Ireland currently underway.

Recommendation 22: Simplification of Roles in Tripartite Arrangement

Patten Recommendation:

- 22. The provisions of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 should be simplified so that the respective roles of the Secretary of State (or successor), the Policing Board and the Chief Constable are clear.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. Enabling legislation which implements this recommendation is provided under sections 24 - 26 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

Recommendation 23: Repeal of Power to Issue Guidance to the Police

Patten Recommendation:

- 23. The provision, in Section 39 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, that the Secretary of State may issue guidance to the police as to the exercise of their functions, should be repealed.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendation 24: Operational Responsibility

Patten Recommendation:

- 24. The Chief Constable should be deemed to have operational responsibility for the exercise of his or her functions and the activities of the police officers and civilian staff under his or her direction and control.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

The Independent Commission noted that the Chief Constable, like any other public official, should be both free to exercise his responsibilities but also capable of being held to account afterwards for the manner in which they were exercised. Operational responsibility was defined as the Chief Constable's right and duty to take operational decisions, and that the Chief Constable should not be directed by the government or the Policing Board as to how an operation should be conducted. This did not mean that the Chief Constable's conduct of an operational matter should be exempted from inquiry or review after the event. However, there remains a need for the Policing Board and the Police Service to develop a formal joint policy establishing a framework for operational responsibility.



Recommendations 25 and 26: Powers of Policing Board to Require Reports, Powers of Policing Board to Inquire

Patten Recommendations:

25. The Policing Board should have the power to require the Chief Constable to report on any issue pertaining to the performance of his functions or those of the police service. The obligation to report should extend to explaining operational decisions. If there is a disagreement between the Board and the Chief Constable over whether it is appropriate for a report to be provided on a particular matter, it should be for the Chief Constable to refer the question to the Secretary of State for a decision as to whether the Board's requirement should stand.
26. The Policing Board should have the power, subject only to the same limitation set out in paragraph 6.22, to follow up any report from the Chief Constable by initiating an inquiry into any aspect of the police service or police conduct. Depending on the circumstances, the Board should have the option to request the Police Ombudsman, the Inspectorate of Constabulary or the Audit Office to conduct or contribute to such an inquiry, or to use the Board's own staff, or even private consultants for such a purpose.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Chief Constable/NIO

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has been completed, subject to periodic review of practice.

Recommendation 27: Creation of District Policing Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

27. Each District Council should establish a District Policing Partnership (DPP), as a committee of the Council, with a majority elected membership, the remaining independent members to be selected by the Council with the agreement of the Policing Board. The chair of the DPP should be held by an elected member, with rotation between parties from year to year.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/District Councils

A Code of Practice for District Policing Partnerships has been published. District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) are in the initial stages of operation in most areas and will be subject to our incremental review. Progress on DPPs is welcomed, as these bodies were intended to be a crucial part of the new policing arrangements. DPPs are designed to be representative of the community and to allow for community views on policing to be highlighted. DPPs will also contribute to the formulation of local policing plans based on local needs and priorities. In conjunction with local District Commanders, DPPs will then use the community's concerns and priorities to establish its policing plan. Without doubt DPPs will have a critical and significant impact both on policing with the community and on the prevention of crime across Northern Ireland.

Recommendation 28: Arrangements for Belfast

Patten Recommendation:

28. The District Policing Partnership in Belfast should have four sub-groups, covering North, South, East and West Belfast.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Belfast District Policing Partnership/Chief Constable

District Policing Partnerships are in the initial stages of operation and will continue to be monitored.

Recommendation 29: Meetings between DPPS and District Commanders

Patten Recommendations:

29. There should be monthly meetings between the DPP and the police District Commander, at which the police should present reports and answer questions and the Board should reflect community concerns and priorities to the police. The views expressed by DPPs should be taken fully into account by the police and by the Policing Board in the formulation of policing plans and strategies at the central level.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. At the time this report was being written District Policing Partnerships were just beginning to operate.

Recommendation 30 and 31: Annual Report of District Police Partnerships, Administration Costs of District Police Partnerships

30. The DPP should submit an annual report to the District Council and publish it.
31. The approved administration costs of the DPP should attract a 75% grant from the Policing Board, the remaining 25% to be funded by the District Council.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/District Councils

Recommendation 30 is not applicable at this time. Administrative compliance for Recommendation 31 has been completed. Assessment of practice will be made after District Police Partnerships have begun to operate.

Recommendation 32: Expenditures by District Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

32. District Councils should have the power to contribute an amount initially up to the equivalent of a rate of 3p in the pound towards the improved policing of the district, which could enable the DPP to purchase additional services from the police and other statutory agencies, or from the private sector.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Executive Committee

This recommendation was not adopted, and therefore not provided for in legislation.



Recommendation 33: Consultative Forums at Local Level

Patten Recommendation:

33. It should be the aim of every police beat manager to have a consultative forum in his or her patrol area.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/DPPs/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission recognised that there were many consultative forums, at various levels and dealing with multiple issues, across Northern Ireland. Those most commonly dealing with policing issues are Community Police Liaison Committees (CPLCs). However, the Independent Commission did not intend that these be replaced, nor that their work or organisation be changed due to the establishment of DPPs. In fact, the Police Service and local communities were encouraged to develop consultative forums on lines that best suited them and their neighbourhoods.

The Northern Ireland Office, the Policing Board and the Police Service are working to co-ordinate the efforts of these many groups. Our performance indicators also specifically called for evidence of Police Service policy and direction in this regard. However, as of 30 December 2002 no policy to that effect was provided.

Recommendation 34: Contacts between Policing Board and DPPs

Patten Recommendation:

34. The Policing Board should maintain regular contact with the DPPs, through periodic meetings of chairpersons, annual conferences, seminars, training courses and by including them in the circulation of information.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/DPPs

As of 30 December 2002 administrative compliance for this recommendation had not been completed, pending the establishment of District Policing Partnerships and the development of appropriate policies. However, the DPPs were launched in March of 2003 and will be reviewed in upcoming evaluation visits.

Recommendation 35: Meetings of the Policing Board

Patten Recommendation:

35. The Policing Board should meet in public once a month, to receive a report from the Chief Constable.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed with the approval by the Policing Board of its "Interim Standing Orders," which are periodically updated. A schedule for public meetings of the Policing Board is published, as are the minutes of all public meetings of the Board.

Recommendation 36: Meetings of the District Policing Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

36. District Policing Partnerships should meet in public once a month, and procedures should allow for members of the public to address questions to the Board and, through the chair, to the police.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/DPPs/NIO

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed, although these crucial components of the new beginning to policing envisioned by the Independent Commission recently began to operate across Northern Ireland.

Recommendation 37: Openness of the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

37. The police service should take steps to improve its transparency. The presumption should be that everything should be available for public scrutiny unless it is in the public interest - not the police interest - to hold it back.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. As of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had not published a plan for making information available to the public. However, a plan is presently under development and has been circulated for outside consultation, including to the Policing Board. This plan makes explicit reference to the Independent Commission's recommendations related to openness, as well as to our own performance indicators.

Recommendation 38: Police Ombudsman

Patten Recommendation:

38. The Police Ombudsman should be, and be seen to be, an important institution in the governance of Northern Ireland, and should be staffed and resourced accordingly. The Ombudsman should take initiatives, not merely react to specific complaints received. He/she should exercise the power to initiate inquiries or investigations even if no specific complaint has been received. The Ombudsman should be responsible for compiling data on trends and patterns in complaints against the police, or accumulations of complaints against individual officers, and should work with the police to address emerging issues from this data. He/she should have a dynamic co-operative relationship with both the police and the Policing Board, as well as other bodies involved in community safety issues. He/she should exercise the right to investigate and comment on police policies and practices, where these are perceived to give rise to difficulties, even if the conduct of individual officers may not itself be culpable, and should draw any such observations to the attention of the Chief Constable and the Policing Board. The Ombudsman should have access to all past reports of the RUC.

Lead Responsibility: Police Ombudsman

The intentions of the Independent Commission with respect to the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland are being achieved. Full co-operation with the oversight process has been provided, and there is a professional working relationship between the Ombudsman and the Police Service and Policing Board.



Recommendations 39, 40, and 41: Covert Law Enforcement

Patten Recommendations:

39. New legislation on covert policing should be fully compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights and should have the same application in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom.
40. There should be a commissioner for covert law enforcement in Northern Ireland.
41. There should be a complaints tribunal, comprising senior members of the legal profession, with full powers to investigate cases referred to it (either directly or through the Police Ombudsman) involving covert law enforcement operations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

The Chief Surveillance Commissioner for the United Kingdom released his annual report for 2001/2002 in December of 2002. This report covers surveillance issues for Northern Ireland and indicates that oversight of covert law enforcement practices are sound. As noted in our Report No. 6 the Codes of Practice under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act were issued in August of 2002. Compliance with these recommendations has now been achieved with respect to the NIO's involvement. Continuing oversight will now examine and evaluate subsequent Police Service policy related to the Codes of Practice.

Recommendation 42: Strengthening of Financial Accountability

Patten Recommendation:

42. There should be a substantial strengthening of financial accountability, including: a fully costed Annual Policing Plan; a strong audit department within the Policing Board, staffed by experts in budgeting, financial management and value for money programmes; and more systematic use of the Audit Office to study police resource management, either at the behest of the Policing Board or on its own initiative.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. However, evidence has been provided to indicate that the Police Service and Policing Board will meet the planned target of a fully costed policing plan and performance plan, for the fiscal year 2003/2004. As for practical integration of financial and business planning with operational strategies, a pilot integrated business/planning exercise for the urban district (Belfast) was completed in December of 2002.

Recommendation 43: Designation of Chief Constable as Sub-Accounting Officer

Patten Recommendation:

43. The Chief Constable should be designated a sub-accounting officer, in addition to the Chief Executive of the Policing Board, so that either or both may be called, together with the Permanent Under Secretary as principal accounting officer, to give evidence to the Public Accounts Committee.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Oversight evaluation and verification phases will follow at the end of fiscal year 2002/2003.

▶▶ **policing with the community**



A Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland recommended that policing with the community should be the core function of the Police Service and of every police station. Crucial to the new beginning envisioned by the Independent Commission, the theme of policing with the community has implications for the structure of the Police Service, for its management, culture, recruitment and training. The long term goal is to deliver truly effective, locally-based policing that would not only address some of the current issues unique to Northern Ireland, but put it at the leading edge of policing in the United Kingdom, Ireland and internationally.

Progress and Accomplishments

The “Get Home Safe” campaign launched by the PSNI in South Belfast is an outstanding example of collaborative problem solving with the business community. In September of 2002 the Police Service launched an ambitious public information programme intended to inform and engage the public on a variety of public safety issues. The programme was targeted at a diverse range of external audiences, particularly young people. In addition, the PSNI’s Crime Analyses Programme was awarded a prestigious National Training Award for 2002. This award reflects the continuing high level of performance in this area described in previous oversight reports.

The Police Service released an Implementation Plan for Policing with the Community in December 2002. This Plan will serve as a comprehensive manual for carrying into effect the spirit and form of one of the core recommendations of the Independent Commission. The plan is progressive and far-reaching, and its distribution marks an important step in the planning process on the part of key members of the Change Management Team and Community Policing, in collaboration with DCU Commanders. Evaluation visits with street-level policing units showed good examples of Police Service engagement with the general public. Nonetheless, sincere engagement with the Police Service and support from all communities remain key to the ultimate success of community policing.

Conditions in some DCUs have permitted the Police Service to implement neighbourhood policing initiatives and regular foot patrols. In these areas members of the community expressed confidence in and a sense of engagement with local police officers, police connections with local councils were strong and sector inspectors were working from neighbourhood problem solving folders. DCU Commanders reported promising results in those DCUs where dedicated Crime Teams were operating. However, a lack of full community support in other DCUs does not currently permit similar initiatives, which ultimately will have an adverse impact on the ability of the Police Service to reduce crime and violence in those particular communities.

Areas of Concern

Neighbourhood problem solving is a critical objective of community policing. While the Police Service has informed and encouraged problem solving at the DCU level with continuing information releases, police officers at the front line level have not received the detailed and specific training which enables them to make practical use of the tools made available by the Police Service. More importantly, this training has also not been provided to first and second line supervisors, generally acknowledged as key individuals in ensuring that real change actually takes place.

The delivery of the Course for All, which commenced during this evaluation period, and the Beat Officers Training Course should provide a good starting point; however they do not meet all of the Independent Commission's requirements. There are still no Service Level Agreements between training and DCU Commanders. This has been noted in previous oversight reports. It is difficult to understand the delay, particularly considering that such agreements already delineate respective responsibilities between Commanders and other areas, such as criminal intelligence and crime analysis. There is also no clear corporate policy or plan to ensure that probationary constables undertake a significant part of their training in neighbourhood policing teams.

A lack of full support for policing among some communities means that certain of the Police Service's community policing initiatives are not as effective as they should be. There is a need for the entire community to support the Police Service if real change and an effective service are to come about. While some Commanders cite resource shortages as hampering a more effective implementation of community policing recommendations, it should be noted that issues which might have alleviated resource pressures, such as increased civilianisation and more effective management of sickness absence, had not been meaningfully addressed by the Police Service as of 30 December 2002. Finally, issues around the wearing of name badges, particularly the use of exemptions within the Police Service to its own policy, is of some concern.

Future Directions

While observations at street level have provided an overview of the current state of patrol operations and relationships with the community, the next assessment will focus on documented indicators of effectiveness and efficiency. Police Service policy on name badges will be examined to ensure that the Independent Commission's intent with respect to neighbourhood policing is reflected.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 44: Community Policing as a Core Function

Patten Recommendation:

44. Policing with the community should be the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative Compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. In December of 2002 the Police Service released an implementation plan for policing with the community encompassing all activities necessary to take action on the strategic plan approved by the Policing Board. This plan includes a policy statement and goals and describes their application to organisation, staffing, tenure, training service delivery, problem solving, partnerships, empowerment and accountability. A role profile for community policing officers lists key activities and competencies. The role and guidelines for consultative forums are described in detail. The plan was circulated throughout the Police Service to serve as a template for continuing focus on transition to a policing style more responsive to the community.



Visits to DCUs included tours with sector response cars and beat officers and introductions to residents, merchants and community liaison committee members. In many instances, it was clear that Commanders and their staff are making sincere efforts to expand the number of local contacts and working partnerships. Where community support exists these relationships are proving to be productive. Unfortunately, where the Police Service does not enjoy the full support of the community, progress on most policing with the community initiatives has been limited.

“Get Home Safe” is an excellent example of the Police Service and its District Commander initiating a programme in co-operation with members of the community. Aimed at tackling the growing problem of alcohol-related violence in South Belfast, “Get Home Safe” is outstanding collaborative problem solving that combined the efforts of the PSNI, Belfast City Council, Belfast City Centre Management, the Federation of the Retail Licensed Trade, Belfast Vintners and Victim Support, to enable young people to enjoy urban nightlife without the threat of violence. There are projects of similar but lesser scope in other districts, which is encouraging.

First-line supervisors will need to benefit from community policing training if this is to become the core function of the Police Service, and they are to exercise leadership in delivering on the Independent Commission’s stated core function of policing with the community. There is limited evidence of neighbourhood problem solving practices below sector level, however formal training on problem solving for police officers, in the form of a pilot Community Beat Officer’s course, is scheduled to commence in January of 2003. The course initially projected training for approximately 460 community beat officers across the PSNI, however these are not at the supervisory level. Through the Course for All, police officers and civilian employees are receiving an introduction to policing with the community and problem solving.

The implementation plan for policing with the community commits the Police Service to minimum tenure and other staffing strategies consistent with recommendations of the Independent Commission. Sectors policing assignments and walking beats are incorporated into duty assignments in the DCUs. Several Commanders were awaiting appointment of the district partnerships before beginning the process of collaborative goal setting, however this may now commence. The implementation plan describes an ambitious communication programme on community policing targeted to a diverse range of internal and external audiences. The programme picked up momentum in the final three months of 2002 with video broadcasts spots, media releases and publications.

Recommendation 45: Dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Patten Recommendation:

45. Every neighbourhood (or rural area) should have a dedicated policing team with lead responsibility for policing its area.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Administrative Compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Policing with the Community Implementation Plan issued in December of 2002 will put into action commitments endorsed by the Policing Board in May of 2002. The Plan informs DCU Commanders in precise detail of the records needed for assessment using our performance indicators. DCU Commanders were full participants in this process. The primary records systems are in place.

Neighbourhood policing teams are not universally distributed in all DCUs, with staffing shortages often cited as reasons why this recommendation cannot be progressed more aggressively. However, resource pressures must be seen against other initiatives, which the Police Service has not aggressively pursued, such as civilianisation, re-assignment of police officers to patrol duties and more effective management of sickness absences. Records reflecting the total number of walking beat hours were available, with performance varying by location and availability of resources. Community consultation is integrated into the problem solving process described in the implementation plan. The plan requires the maintenance of records of community problem solving efforts and police performance. Validation must await site visits in 2003. Problem solving is a feature of the Course for All and the Beat Officers Training course. Delivery of this training programme commenced in the final quarter of 2002. These courses, particularly the Course for All, are significant and good first steps however do not meet all of the Independent Commission's requirements.

Although some training activity is taking place at the DCU level, no evidence of a service level agreement was provided. As noted in other chapters in this report, the lack of finalised service level agreements will continue to impede the effective use and distribution of training resources. DCU Crime analysts are using computer-based tools to produce crime pattern and activity reports. The internal communications systems of bulletins and orders have continued to keep front line officers informed of expectations, plans and events. An extensive communications plan directed to the public by both the Policing Board and the PSNI is intended to inform and encourage the public to participate in community problem solving. The new annual performance review for officers scheduled to begin in April 2003 includes factors for evaluating performance in community policing.

Recommendation 46: Service in Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Patten Recommendation:

46. Members of the policing team should serve at least three and preferably five years in the same neighbourhood. They should wear their names clearly displayed on their uniforms, and their uniforms should also bear the name of the locality for which they are responsible.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service's tenure policy has not yet been approved, and it is unlikely that implementation will occur before April of 2003 (see also Recommendation 83). Evidence of further results have not been provided. The proposal that police officers clearly display their names on their uniforms was legislated in section 55 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. The form of display was approved by the Policing Board and confirmed by the Police Service in General Order 25/2002, Crest, Uniform, Flag - PSNI Code Amendments. The Independent Commission recommended that police officers be identifiable by members of the community, as this is a hallmark of successful neighbourhood policing. Police Service policy came into force on 5 April 2002, subject to local risk assessment. However, the Acting Chief Constable issued a subsequent rescinding directive on 8 April 2002. As of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had approved no new policy for the wearing of name badges.



Recommendation 47: Police Probationary Training

Patten Recommendation:

47. All probationary police officers should undertake the operational phases of their probationary training doing team policing in the community.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance with this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service's Policing with the Community Implementation Plan stipulates that DCU Commanders should ensure that, when designing duty schedules for probationary constables, a significant portion of their time should be spent in Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs). However, there is no clear corporate policy or plan, with implementation schedule, to ensure that probationary constables undertake a significant part of their training in NPTs. For example, there are currently 459 regular police officers and 143 members of the Full Time Reserve assigned to NPTs, with 43 probationary constables assigned to NPTs. Without a corporate plan, schedules and records, it is difficult to understand how all probationary constables are going to acquire this experience, or how this recommendation is going to be achieved.

Recommendation 48: Patrolling on Foot

Patten Recommendation:

48. Where practicable, policing teams should patrol on foot.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Policing with the Community Implementation plan provided a framework for record keeping by DCU Commanders to account for foot patrol activities and performance. Oversight visits in September and December verified deployment of an impressive number of officers dedicated to foot patrol, with hours of activity recorded in duty rosters, although not aggregated. Future visits will evaluate objective indicators of performance. Resource shortages were cited as reasons for few probationary officers having an opportunity to experience foot patrol assignments. However, as noted above, the Police Service has other means at its disposal with which to address resource pressures. Some of these, including civilianisation, management of sickness absence and internal re-assignment of police officers to patrol duties, have not been pursued as intended. Nonetheless, DCU Commanders demonstrate an active and sincere interest in succeeding with the foot patrolling strategy.

Recommendation 49: Role of Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Patten Recommendation:

49. Neighbourhood policing teams should be empowered to determine their own local priorities and set their own objectives, within the overall Annual Policing Plan and in consultation with community representatives.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Administrative Compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The concepts of Sector policing and Neighbourhood Policing Teams are described in the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan. DCU Commanders are maintaining duty rosters and basic activity reports. Sector policing goals were in place in a limited sample of site visits completed in December of 2003. Progress on the design of an information system for recording the activities of Neighbourhood Policing Teams was reported, however this system was not completed as of 30 December 2002. Now that DPPs have been established we can look for evidence of District Commanders empowering neighbourhood policing teams to determine local priorities and set objectives in consultation with DPPs and other community representatives, as well as evidence of the results of this strategy in terms of achieving local goals.

Recommendation 50: Crime and Complaint Pattern Analysis

Patten Recommendation:

50. The Northern Ireland police should, both at a service-wide level and at patrol team level, conduct crime pattern and complaint pattern analysis to provide an information-led, problem-solving approach to policing. All police officers should be instructed in problem-solving techniques and encouraged to address the causes of problems as well as the consequences (the priority being to train beat managers and their teams); and they should be regularly appraised as to their performance in doing so.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative Compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The comprehensive programme of crime analyses installed by the PSNI is progressing well at both the Headquarters and DCU level. Operational commands continue to express their satisfaction with this service. The Police Service's programme was recognised with a prestigious National Training Award for 2002. Service bulletins continue to inform front line police officers of the analysis resources that are available to them. The deployment of crime analysts and associated computer support services was complete in 27 of 29 DCUs, with 2 DCUs sharing analysis resources. New data mining technology was acquired in October of 2002 and rolled out to all DCU and Regional analysts. A crime-mapping package was also released in December of 2002. Other new products are expected, including a form of predictive analysis known as geographical profiling.

The new appraisal system, scheduled for introduction in April of 2003, will entail the evaluation of police personnel on their performance with problem solving. The Director of Analytical Services has been tasked with designing a system of information reports to support working relationships between police, District Policing Partnerships, and existing Community Police Liaison Committees. The Change Management Team assumed early responsibility for auditing performance with the transition to community policing. Change Management is tracking early successes with community problem solving, and a number of anecdotal cases were examined. The problem-solving model was widely distributed throughout the organisation. Future success with neighbourhood problem solving should be reflected in the performance statistics of DCUs, and eventually in the cumulative crime reports of the Police Service. It is too early in the process to attribute impact.



Recommendation 51: Attendance at Police Training Courses

Patten Recommendation:

51. DPPB members and other community leaders should be able to attend police training courses in problem-solving techniques.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

There is provision for the inclusion of members of district partnerships in the Training, Education and Development strategy. Although appointments to district partnerships were not complete by the end of 2002, they have since commenced operation and we will be able to evaluate attendance at problem-solving courses.

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A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland made several recommendations covering the appearance of police stations, appropriate types of patrol vehicles, and the need to increase devolved authority to District Commanders. In addition, recommendations included those on army support, the use of emergency powers, administration of detention facilities, and other issues affecting the ability of the Police Service to deliver the kind of law enforcement service a peaceful society would require.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Police Service reports progress in that 49 police cars and vans have been substituted as patrol vehicles in place of Armoured Landrovers (ALRs). In our previous reports, we noted that progress was underway in the implementation of General Order 58/2002, Issues of Strategic Reserve Armoured Landrovers. The Order required that 50% of all ALRs be placed in five strategic reserve depots by March of 2002. As of December of 2002, the Police Service had designated 250 ALRs as “strategic reserve”, but they are stored at several locations, not just the five designated depots. The word “POLICE” has been painted on all ALRs.

The Independent Commission specifically noted that: “much of the dissatisfaction with policing, in both the loyalist and republican areas, stems from the use of emergency powers” by the Police Service. The Commission recommended that the Police Service keep records, in order to establish accountability and effective management, of all stops, searches and similar actions taken under emergency powers. In August of 2001 the Chief Constable responded by issuing General Order 37/2001, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Human Rights and Monitoring Issues. This Order is comprehensive and details the justification and procedures for all stops and searches under an emergency, while also establishing reporting and review responsibilities. The Order includes a new Police and Criminal Evidence form designed to record incidents of stops, searches and seizures, plus a human rights checklist to be used by police officers when conducting a stop and/or search. Although the Order is considered as progress, the actual implementation has been inconsistent and is discussed further under the areas of concern.

The Policing Board has expedited the extension of the inspection of custody and interrogation suites to the current Custody Visiting Scheme. Custody visitors have been trained and guidelines for visiting detained terrorist suspects have been agreed upon between the Policing Board and Police Service. Excellent progress has been accomplished in fulfilling the requirements set forth in Recommendation 64 – inspecting all custody and interrogation suites. Oversight team field visits to several DCUs confirmed that unannounced inspections by custody visitors are taking place.

Areas of Concern

As noted in our Report No. 6, published in December of 2002, available documents and plans for implementing Recommendations 52 and 53, supported by field visits to several police stations, indicates that little progress has been made on updating existing police stations so they are less forbidding in appearance, more accessible to the public and better places to work. The exterior and interior appearance and condition of a majority of police stations need an expedient conversion to a more regular appearance. A related concern includes the reception areas of some police stations. These public access areas are particularly dismal and forbidding, and urgently

require renovation. However, while some police stations needing upgrades are not on the upgrade schedule, others that already have a regular appearance, and are modern and in relatively good condition, are scheduled for upgrade and renovation.

During the evaluation visit in December of 2002 the Police Service and the NIO advised the oversight team that a financial plan for the badly needed modernising of existing police stations had still not been agreed upon. The lack of an agreed upon financial plan means that some three years after the release of the Independent Commission's report, there has been minimal progress in providing police officers and the community with modernised, accessible and safe police facilities.

In 1999 the Independent Commission recommended that video recording equipment should be introduced into custody suites for persons detained under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). This has yet to be accomplished, and the three-year timetable submitted by the Police Service for completing the installation of video-recording equipment in 22 existing custody suites does not comply with the intent of the Independent Commission for this recommendation. However, a pilot project at Musgrave Station has provided experience and information necessary to introduce video recording in other PACE custody suites. In addition, video equipment is on order for the new custody suite at Antrim and necessary cabling has been installed in the Coleraine custody suite.

The closure of the three holding centres at Castlereagh, Gough Barracks and Strand Road has been physically verified by the oversight team. Pending opening of a permanent 20-bed joint custody facility at Antrim DCU, scheduled for April of 2003, prisoners arrested under the Terrorism Act are now held in a temporary facility located at Lisburn DCU. However, although the three holding centres noted above are closed an important decision on the future detention space needs of the Police Service remains unresolved, and as of 30 December 2002 a final number and location of additional joint custody suites had not been determined by the NIO and the Police Service.

There had also been a lack of progress on the issue of staffing the public reception areas of police stations with civilian receptionists. The Independent Commission recommended in 1999 that police officers assigned to station receptionist duties be replaced with civilian employees. This recommendation was subsequently approved in the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan, and it was agreed that a strategy of civilianisation would be pursued with a view both to making police stations more welcoming to the public, and allowing police officers to be released for patrol duties.

The Police service had originally estimated that up to 260 police officers could be freed up through the civilianisation of receptionist duties. However, as of 30 December 2002 receptionist positions had not been publicly advertised. The Police Service utilised an internal trawl procedure of existing civilian employees to begin to fill these positions. As of 30 December 2002 no receptionist positions had been filled through the internal trawl process. At present the percentage of Catholic civilian employees remains fairly steady at approximately 12%, where it has been for some time. If internal trawls continue to be the method by which civilianised positions are filled it is unlikely that these highly visible employees will ever be representative of the broader community. Although Grafton Recruitment has recently advertised for 60 civilian receptionists, thereby ensuring 50:50 hiring as per legislation, this only belatedly begins the process.



As of 30 December 2002 the management concept of devolved authority had not been fully adopted, and District Commanders have not received the necessary tools with which to effectively manage their district resources. District Command Units have been established since April of 2001, however DCU Commanders continue to lack both the necessary devolved authority to properly allocate police resources in their districts, as well as the necessary administrative staff with which to manage those resources (see also Recommendation 54). As of 30 December 2002 no personnel managers had been appointed to DCUs, and only 8 out of 29 DCUs had business managers in place. Delays in the establishment of DPPs, and the community's subsequent lack of input into establishing local patrol patterns, have also prevented Commanders from effectively balancing resources between static posts and mobile patrols.

There is continuing concern with the slow progress in complying with General Order 37/2001, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Human Rights and Monitoring Issues. The Police Service Order established procedures and reporting requirements to be followed for all stops and searches made under the Terrorism Act. The concern is that Recommendation 61 called for “immediate effect” of an order relating to use of emergency powers. The Chief Constable signed the Order in August of 2001. However, as of 30 December 2002 the performance data and internal audits provided by the Police Service indicate that the Order had not been implemented uniformly in all of the DCUs.

As noted in our previous reports, the lack of a specific plan or strategy for introducing video recording in PACE custody suites is a concern. There is also no evidence that a plan or strategy has been co-ordinated with other plans associated with Recommendation 52 (closure of certain police stations; new builds) or Recommendation 62 (decision on the location or number of video recording sites).

Future Directions

Future oversight will include site visits to DCUs and police stations by the evaluation team. Visits will examine whether or not police officers have been instructed and/or trained on the PSNI's orders and directives, particularly those related to General Order 37/2001, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Human Rights and Monitoring Issues. The substitution of ALRs with regular police cars as patrol vehicles will also be subject to a more detailed examination, in order to determine the degree of both actual and planned progress.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendations 52 and 53: Appearance of Police Stations

Patten Recommendations:

52. Police stations built from now on should have, so far as possible, the appearance of ordinary buildings; they should have low perimeter walls, and be clearly visible from the street; but they should have security features, which may be activated or reinforced as necessary.
53. Existing police stations should - subject to the security situation in their areas and to health and safety considerations - be progressively made less forbidding in appearance, more accessible to public callers and more congenial for those working in them. The public reception areas inside police stations should be made more welcoming, and civilian receptionists could replace police officers.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

As an addendum to the Estate Strategy Review already noted in previous oversight reports, in April of 2002 the Police Service, after receiving approval from the Policing Board, submitted a business case to the NIO on the appearance of police stations. The business case sought 14.35 million pounds, and included a funding request to cover perimeter security schemes and the refurbishment of inquiry offices over the next three years. On 14 November 2002 the Police Service withdrew the business case, agreeing with the NIO that the request for funding was just an estimate, and that actual costs would vary significantly as the precise scope of work is planned and developed. The Police Service also agreed to a revised process for funding requests, which would require a business case for each project within a specific DCU. As of 30 December 2002 no funding requests under the new process had been approved by the NIO. Considering that the Independent Commission made its recommendations some three and one-half years ago, and funding for refurbishment remains without approval, it may be many more years before actual results can be achieved. However, the funding for major works projects involving three new police stations has been approved.

The Independent Commission noted that there was no operational need for a police officer to perform receptionist duties, and many members of the public may find it more comfortable to deal with a civilian. The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan accepted that replacing police officers with civilian receptionists would be pursued as part of a broader strategy of civilianisation. Previous oversight reports have noted that the full implementation of this recommendation could potentially release a significant number of police officers for patrol (see also Recommendations 90 and 111). The Police Service estimated that up to 260 police officers could be released for patrol duties by civilianising the post of police station receptionist, and determined that an internal trawl would be used to begin to fill these positions. However, as of 30 December 2002 the internal trawl process had not resulted in any civilian receptionist position being filled. In addition, internal trawls do not serve to address the issue of the representativeness of the Police Service's civilian staff. At present the percentage of Catholic civilian employees remains fairly steady at just over 12%, where it has been for some time. Although Grafton Recruitment has recently advertised for 60 civilian receptionists, thereby ensuring 50:50 hiring as per legislation, this only begins the process.

In the 2002 Inspection Report, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary also expressed disappointment at the lack of progress towards implementation of a civilianisation programme. The lack of progress in this regard was a concern, particularly given the Police Service's stated difficulties in deploying sufficient officers in operational posts to meet public expectations.

As of 30 December 2002 specifications or architectural designs for new build and renovated police stations had not been received. The Police Service has also not developed a photographic inventory of the existing police buildings, although it has advised that photographic surveys of certain stations are available. Administrative compliance for Recommendations 52 and 53 has not yet been fully completed.



Recommendation 54: Devolved Authority of District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

54. District police commanders should have discretion to decide in consultation with their local community how best to balance their resources between static posts and mobile patrols.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

As of 30 December 2002 the documents, which grant DCU Commanders the discretion to decide how best to balance their resources in consultation with the community, had not been provided. The devolution of decision making to the DCU level is one of the key aspects of the change programme recommended by the Independent Commission, and the DCU Commanders interviewed as part of the oversight process have shown themselves to be capable and dedicated individuals. The recent establishment of District Policing Partnerships by the Policing Board should now enable the Police Service to grant the necessary authorities to District Commanders (see also Recommendation 76).

The District Commands have been established and General Order 13/2001, Transitional Arrangement for the Introduction of District Command Units, was provided as evidence of progress on the devolution of authority to District Commanders. Of the several District Commanders interviewed by the oversight team, none had received specific authority to implement the discretion directed in this recommendation. In other words, DCU Commanders are still unable to officially exercise the authority to consult with members of their communities regarding the balancing of static and mobile patrols. However, the oversight team has observed DCU Commanders taking the initiative to consult with the local community for advice on the best deployment of police officers and patrols within the district. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

Recommendations 55, 56 and 57: Police Vehicles

Patten Recommendations:

55. Police cars should continue to be substituted as patrol vehicles in place of armoured Landrovers, and the use of armoured Landrovers should be limited to threatening situations.
56. As soon as possible (that is, as soon as the incidence of deployment ceases to be regular) armoured Landrovers should be moved to depots, to be kept in reserve for use in public order policing for as long as this contingency may be required.
57. The word 'Police' should be painted onto the sides of all Landrovers.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

General Order 58/2001, Issues of Strategic Reserve Armoured Landrovers, outlines the procedure to be followed to move Armoured Landrovers (ALRs) to five reserve depots for public order needs. The General Order also specifies an interim target of 50% of ALRs, approximately 225 out of a total of 450 vehicles, to be placed in the reserve depots by 31 March 2002. As of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had assigned 71 ALRs to DCUs for routine policing purposes, while another 129 were assigned to Tactical Support Groups for public order needs.

The remaining 250 ALRs are now designated as being in “strategic reserve”, however are stored in several locations, not just at the five designated depots. Also as of 30 December 2002, the Police Service has substituted 49 ALRs with police cars and vans for use as patrol vehicles. The Police Service provided a three-year schedule for substituting a further 100 ALRs with police cars for patrol purposes. Administrative compliance for Recommendations 55 and 56 has not been fully completed. Administrative compliance for Recommendation 57 has now been completed and oversight will proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 58: Army Support-Security Demands

Patten Recommendation:

58. The role of the army should continue to be reduced, as quickly as the security situation will allow, so that the police can patrol all parts of Northern Ireland without military support.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/GOC

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Police Service provided a plan to reduce its dependence on military support, which in turn is contingent on the security situation. Documentation was also provided describing the areas and circumstances where the military provides support to the Police Service, the procedures used to acquire that support, and the extent of the support generally provided. The number of military personnel in direct support varies according to day-to-day operational requirements, however the overall troop level for this reporting period remained constant. The oversight process will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 59: Army Support-Public Order Demands

Patten Recommendation:

59. For as long as the prospect remains of substantial public order policing demands on the scale seen at Drumcree in recent years, the army should retain the capacity to provide support for the police in meeting those demands.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/GOC

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Police Service provided its operational plan for dealing with public order situations, including circumstances that must be present and procedures to be followed when utilising army support in public order situations. The document included extensive data on army assistance with public order incidents. See Recommendation 66 for further discussion about public order demands. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.



Recommendation 60: Emergency Legislation

Patten Recommendation:

60. Provided the threat of terrorism in Northern Ireland diminishes to the point where no additional special powers are necessary to combat it, legislation against terrorism should be the same in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Home Office

The Independent Commission recommended that, provided the threat of terrorism diminished to the point where no additional special powers were necessary to combat it, legislation against terrorism should be the same in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom. As noted in previous oversight reports, administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. A copy of the Terrorism Act was provided for reference and review, and oversight has proceeded to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 61: Records on the Use of Emergency Powers

Patten Recommendation:

61. In the meantime, with immediate effect, records should be kept of all stops and searches and other such actions taken under emergency powers.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/GOC

PSNI General Order 37/2001, which includes the new PACE forms, outlines in detail the justification and procedures for all stops and searches in an emergency, and establishes a reporting and review responsibility for all stops and searches made under the Terrorism Act. The Police Service has provided performance reports on the application of General Order 37/2001, covering the period January to September of 2002. These reports contain data from 28 of the 29 DCUs. In addition, through the Police Service, the General Officer Commanding provided a statistical report on the military use of emergency powers under the Terrorism Act.

Oversight visits indicate that there were deficiencies in the application of this Order and that several DCU Commanders were not proactively monitoring the use of emergency powers as required. These findings were confirmed in two separate and independent audits conducted by the Police Service's Change Management Team. Oversight will continue to monitor the application of the requirements outlined in General Order 37/2001.

Recommendation 62: Holding Centres

Patten Recommendation:

62. The three holding centres at Castlereagh, Gough barracks and Strand Road should be closed forthwith and all suspects should in future be detained in custody suites based in police stations.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Police Service

provided documentation stating that, with the closure of the three holding centres at Castlereagh, Gough Barracks and Strand Road, all prisoners arrested under section 41 of the Terrorism Act (2000) will now be held in the “temporary” custody suite located at Lisburn DCU. All three sites have been verified as closed for detention purposes. Construction of a permanent 20-cell joint custody facility at Antrim, to be opened in April of 2003, is still on schedule. Both the temporary custody facility at Lisburn and the permanent facility at Antrim incorporate the special conditions/safeguards for detaining terrorist suspects. The Police Service provided an inventory of the cells located at the various police stations, as well as the requested statistical reports on the number of persons detained. The Police Service is currently operating 22 separate custody suites.

A Scoping Study on the detention space needs for subjects charged with crimes of terrorism was provided by the Police Service. The Police Service also provided two consultant reports describing three different models, or different combinations of designated police stations, as future custody suites. The Police Service has prepared a consultation paper addressing among other things the future number and location of custody suites, with the next review scheduled for February of 2003. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 63: Video Recording in PACE Custody Suites

Patten Recommendation:

63. Video recording should be introduced into the PACE custody suites.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The issue of video recording in the 22 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) custody suites is still in question. There is no detailed plan for the implementation of this recommendation, and there is only a general plan for a three-year timetable of installation, however this did not contain information on important areas such as equipment and installation costs. If completed in the timetable provided, implementation would still be almost six years from the Independent Commission’s original recommendation. The need for a Code of Practice had initially been given as the reason for lack of progress on this recommendation, but the subsequent pilot project demonstrated that a Code of Practice was not in fact required.

A video recording system has been installed at Lisburn DCU for interviewing persons detained under terrorist legislation. A pilot project to test video recording equipment and procedures at Musgrave DCU has also been completed. This pilot project was evaluated and this evaluation, along with recommendations, was distributed within the Police Service to assist with the successful installation of similar equipment in other locations. A set of operating instructions based on the Musgrave video-recording pilot project has been adopted by the Police Service, which is also developing a business case for introducing video recording equipment to all PACE custody suites.



Recommendation 64: Inspection of Custody and Interrogation Suites

Patten Recommendation:

64. Responsibility for inspecting all custody and interrogation suites should rest with the Policing Board, and Lay Visitors should be empowered not only to inspect the conditions of detention (as at present), but also to observe interviews on camera subject to the consent of the detainee (as is the case for cell visits).

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Chief Constable/NIO

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Policing Board has extended the responsibility for inspecting all custody and interrogation suites to the current Custody Visiting Scheme. A comprehensive set of guidelines for the volunteers visiting detained terrorist suspects is pending approval by the Board. Due to issues of time-commitment and security, some volunteers expressed reservations about assuming a greater role, such as observing terrorist suspect interviews on camera. In the interim the Policing Board has agreed that only those custody visitors who are willing to assume an expanded role will be required to do so. The Board is attempting to resolve this issue. A Statutory Order allowing visitors access to detained terrorist suspects held at the Lisburn facility became effective on 31 May 2002.

The Policing Board requires monthly reports from custody visitors summarising their activities and ensuring that goals pertaining to detainees' complaints, as well as recommendations for physical improvements, are accomplished. During field visits by the oversight team, police records at several custody suites were inspected to verify that unannounced inspections by custody visitors occur routinely. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 65: Objective of an Unarmed Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

65. The question of moving towards the desired objective of a routinely unarmed police service should be periodically reviewed in the light of developments in the security environment.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Chief Constable will review this recommendation twice yearly, on 1 April and 1 October, and issue a determination to the Oversight Commissioner regarding the security situation. The Chief Constable reported that, as of October of 2002, the security situation was not appropriate for the implementation of this recommendation.

▶▶ public order policing



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland recognised that the public order policing experience of the police in Northern Ireland differed significantly from that of any other police force. It therefore saw the need for research into alternative tactical and strategic ways with which to address recurring public order situations. In addition, the Independent Commission made several recommendations that covered the role of the army, the establishment of a parade partnership and marshal training, and for identifying equipment that might be utilised by the police to better deal with public order situations and other emergencies.

Progress and Accomplishments

The first two research reports released by the Security Minister were well-researched and contain a detailed examination of alternatives to the plastic baton round (PBR). Based on this research, initiatives are underway by the Police Service to purchase six vehicle-mounted water cannon, in addition to hand-held CS spray for individual police officers. The Phase 3 report, released on 19 December 2002, points out that the research work by the Steering Group will continue into the various alternatives to the PBR. Unlike the Phase 1 and 2 reports however, the Phase 3 report also outlines certain approaches to conflict resolution. The Independent Commission recommended an immediate and substantive investment in a research programme in order to ultimately determine if there was an alternative to the PBR and if so, to set about its procurement. This approach was subsequently agreed to in the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan, and it is important to keep a focus on reaching and communicating a position on the potential replacement of PBRs, along with a specific timetable.

Both the Policing Board and the Police Service have extended considerable effort in implementing Recommendations 71, 73 and 74. There have been substantial improvements in the way the Police Service has handled public order situations. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures has been adopted by the Police Service to manage and record the deployment and use of the PBR. Appropriate training components for the PBR have been established for all levels within the Police Service. The Policing Board and Police Ombudsman are fulfilling their responsibility and authority to monitor police performance in public order situations.

Likewise, the Police Service is assisting both monitoring agencies by providing timely reports, including reports prepared by a DCU Commander that include the detailed circumstances as to why it was necessary to discharge baton rounds. In the support of best practices, the Police Service provided a document that outlines administrative procedures requiring a post-utilisation review of PBR incidents by four senior police officers. This review will identify policy, discipline, human rights or training issues that require follow-up action by the Police Service. The Police Ombudsman also released a report in May of 2002 which described seven incidents where the Police Service used PBRs in public order situations. The report concluded that the discharge of baton rounds in each case was fully justified and proportionate, as were the authorisations and directives given.

Finally, the oversight team attended operational briefings and preparations for the policing of a large-scale parade in Foyle DCU. The operational plan and the operational briefing process witnessed were excellent and rank among the best seen by the oversight team.

Areas of Concern

It is important that Government and the Police Service retain focus in the ongoing research into alternatives to the Plastic Baton Round. A final decision with time lines is required to meet the objectives of the Independent Commission.

Future Directions

Future oversight visits will focus on the evolving Police Service policy on post-shooting reviews of PBR use and the training component for the deployment and use of PBRs. Oversight will also review progress on the Policing Board's mechanisms for monitoring PBR incidents.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 66: Public Order Emergencies

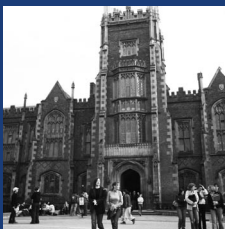
Patten Recommendation:

66. The Northern Ireland police should have the capacity within its own establishment to deal with public order emergencies without help from other police services and without more than the present level of support from the army.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. As of 30 December 2002 certain documents requested (for Recommendation 66), including cost documents, had not been provided. Documentation was received from the Police Service on the level of army support to the DCUs for August to October of 2002. A comprehensive plan dated 7 June 2002, detailing procedures to be followed in public order emergencies, was also provided. This plan outlined policies and procedures for police responses to potential public order problems associated with contentious parades and protests (see also Recommendation 59).

The Operational Order prepared by the Foyle DCU to handle the 7 December 2002 "Lundy Parade", as well as its execution on the day of the parade, was an excellent example of how the Police Service demonstrated a capacity to plan for and deal with public order incidents without relying on increased help from the army. Evaluators attended the pre-parade operational briefing, and were present to observe the performance of the Police Service during the actual parade by the Apprentice Boys. The operational plan and the operational briefing process comply fully with best policing practices, and could serve as a model for any police service. Unfortunately, events unrelated to the original parade ultimately caused a series of public order disturbances.



Recommendations 67 and 68: Conditions for the Approval of Parades

Patten Recommendations:

67. It should be a condition for the approval of a parade that the organisers should provide their own marshals, and the organisers and the police should work together to plan the policing of such events. This should involve as appropriate the representatives of the neighbourhoods involved in the parade route.
68. Marshal training should be further developed, with an appropriate qualification on successful completion of the training. All parades should be marshalled and, as soon as practicable, it should be a requirement that all potentially contentious parades requiring a decision or determination by the Parades Commission should be marshalled by qualified personnel.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Parades Commission

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. In response to Recommendation 67, the Police Service has amended two General Orders (43/2000 and 44/2000) to require during the planning process the recording of Police Service efforts to work with parade organisers and/or representatives of the involved neighbourhoods. The preparation for the December 2002 “Lundy Parade” is one example where the Foyle DCU and organisers/representatives involved in the parade route (City Centre) worked together to provide policing for the parade.

A full review of the current parade arrangements has been published in a report titled “The Parades Commission and Public Processions –2002”. The Government has sent out the report for consultation, including a review by the Police Service. The report recommends the creation of two organisations, one specialising in mediation and the second deciding on disputed marches, however it does not specifically address the Independent Commission’s recommendation that trained and qualified personnel marshal parades. No action or changes will take place until 2004. Oversight will proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendations 69 and 70: Public Order Equipment

Patten Recommendations:

69. An immediate and substantial investment should be made in a research programme to find an acceptable, effective and less potentially lethal alternative to the Plastic Baton Round (PBR).
70. The police should be equipped with a broader range of public order equipment than the RUC currently possess, so that a commander has a number of options at his/her disposal which might reduce reliance on, or defer resort to, the PBR.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

In June of 2000, the Northern Ireland Office formed a Steering Group to conduct research and identify a broader range of public order equipment. To date the Steering Group has prepared three separate in-depth research reports entitled “A Research Programme into Alternative Policing Approaches towards the Management of Conflict”. The Security Minister released the third, or Phase 3, report on 19 December 2002. This describes the extensive research into alternative less

lethal systems conducted over the previous 12-month period. The first two research reports are well researched and detailed, and contain an examination of alternatives to the PBR. Based on the research, initiatives are currently underway to purchase six vehicle-mounted water cannon. In addition, hand-held CS spray is being purchased for individual police officers. The December Phase 3 report conducts research along similar lines, as well as exploring issues related to conflict resolution. It remains important that Government and the Police Service work towards developing a concrete time line for reaching a final decision on alternatives to the PBR.

Further research is ongoing. The decision by the Police Service to add vehicle-mounted water cannon to the list of public order equipment available to the commander is intended to reduce reliance on the PBR. Until the research has been completed and approved, and a decision is made on an acceptable, effective and less potentially lethal alternative to the PBR, remaining performance indicators could not be addressed. Although administrative compliance for Recommendations 69 and 70 has not been fully completed, oversight has proceeded to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendations 71, 73 and 74: Police Performance in Public Order Situations

Patten Recommendations:

71. The use of PBRs should be subject to the same procedures for deployment, use and reporting as apply in the rest of the United Kingdom. Their use should be confined to the smallest necessary number of specially trained officers, who should be trained to think of the weapon in the same way as they would think of a firearm, that is as a weapon which is potentially lethal. Use of PBRs should in the first instance require the authorisation of a district commander. This should be justified in a report to the Policing Board, which should be copied to the Police Ombudsman. Wherever possible, video camera recordings should be made of incidents in which the use of PBRs is authorised.
73. The Policing Board and, as appropriate, the Police Ombudsman should actively monitor police performance in public order situations, and if necessary seek reports from the Chief Constable and follow up those reports if they wish.
74. Guidance governing the deployment and use of PBRs should be soundly based in law, clearly expressed and readily available as public documents.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

The Policing Board and Police Service have extended considerable effort in improving police performance in public order situations. General Order 50/2002, Requirements for Early Reporting to the Policing Board, outlines in detail Police Service policy and mechanisms for providing early reports to the Policing Board on the discharge of all PBRs and/or incidents of public disorder. Separate forms have been designed specifically to address these two reporting objectives. The Police Service has agreed to amend General Order 50/2002 to require DCU Commanders to include detailed circumstances and justifications as to the need to discharge baton rounds in their reports. This amendment and its application will be confirmed in the upcoming oversight visit.



Documentation has been received demonstrating that the Policing Board fully and actively monitors police performance in public order situations. The appropriate protocols have been established that addresses this responsibility. Since May of 2002 a committee of the Policing Board has been reviewing and monitoring all reports on the discharge of PBRs and/or incidents of public disorder. Where the Board deemed it necessary, follow-up reports have been requested from the Chief Constable.

As of November of 2002 the Police Service has limited the number of officers authorised (430) to fire the plastic baton round, and provided documents and several General Orders as evidence that complete training components for the PBR have been established. The use of PBRs has steadily decreased over time, from 1,236 PBRs discharged in 1998, 111 in 1999, 22 in 2000, and 91 PBRs fired in 2001. There was an increase between 2001 and 2002, with 255 PBR discharged as of 31 October 2002. It is reported that increased PBR use corresponds with increases in public order incidents, however this is an issue for the Policing Board to monitor. Video recordings are being made of some incidents where PBR use is authorised.

The Police Service will implement an internal administrative review procedure, generally considered a policing best practice, with respect to the use of lethal and less than lethal force. The Police Service will conduct an internal post-utilisation review of each incident involving the use of baton rounds. After the Police Ombudsman releases a report on a PBR incident, and provided there are no criminal or disciplinary proceedings pending, four senior officers will review the findings contained in the Ombudsman report, as well as any internal police reports. The review will determine if there is any policy, discipline, human rights or training matters that should be addressed. In this capacity, the Ombudsman released a report in May of 2002 describing seven PBR incidents. The Ombudsman concluded that in each case the discharge of baton rounds was justified and proportionate, and that the authorisations and directives given prior to discharge were proper.

As the oversight process continues, further review will examine the training component for the deployment and use of the PBR and the Policing Board's responsibility to monitor PBR incidents. Administrative compliance for Recommendations 71, 73 and 74 has not been fully completed, however oversight for those areas where administrative compliance has been achieved will proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 72: Police Officers' Identification Numbers

Patten Recommendation:

72. Officers' identification numbers should be clearly visible on their protective clothing, just as they should be on regular uniforms.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. PSNI General Order 33/2001, Wearing of Numeral Numbers and Rank Insignia on Riot Helmets by Officers of Inspector Rank and Above, explicitly requires all police officers to wear an assigned serial number so displayed as to be clearly visible when on duty and in uniform. Documents were provided which direct that identification numbers be displayed on protective clothing and on riot helmets. This recommendation will be evaluated and verified during the upcoming oversight visits.

▶▶ **management and personnel**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission called for extensive change to the management style of the Police Service, including devolving authority to district levels, enhancing the internal accountability structure, reducing lengths of tenure in specialised positions such as public order and security duties, and a more comprehensive sickness absence programme. Further recommendations proposed a rigorous programme of civilianisation to release uniformed police officers for patrol duties, as well as various other efficiency measures.

Progress and Accomplishments

In addition to managing a number of critical corporate initiatives, the Change Management Team continues to provide an outstanding liaison service between the oversight team and the Police Service. Finance Department has demonstrated leadership in developing a costed Policing Plan, which allocates budget funds against programme objectives. This was to complement the 2003/2004 Annual Policing Plan. Finance has also initiated mechanisms for the extension of devolving financial authority to DCUs. However, it is important that DCUs quickly receive the administrative managerial staff that will allow for the implementation of devolved authority.

The Finance and Resource Management (FARM) team, in conjunction with Change Management and Corporate Development, are working on evaluation criteria to bring financial management within the performance management system for DCU Commanders. A comprehensive Partnership Agreement now governs the respective responsibilities of District Commanders and elements of Finance Department.

The three Regional Commanders completed the first performance review of their respective districts in September/October of 2002, using an accountability technique designed with the assistance of Analytical Services. These visits served to focus district command staff on shared goals and accountability. However, as noted in our previous oversight reports, holding District Commanders to account for policing results, without first having provided them with the necessary decision making authority and administrative infrastructure, is problematic.

The Human Resource Planning Strategy endorsed by the Board in October of 2002 is a clear statement of leadership, establishing priorities across a broad range of issues. As a result the Police Service engaged an outside consulting team to begin the recruitment of support staff to take early action on the civilianisation recommendations of the Independent Commission. The initial priority is to hire civilian replacements for officers carrying out duties that do not require the skills and appointment of a police officer. The initial target is to fill 100 positions by April of 2003, with an additional 250 by April of 2004. The goal is to convert 650 positions by April of 2005.

Areas of Concern

A study completed by Finance revealed that DCU Commanders have limited scope to transfer savings across budget lines and restricted influence over resource allocation. The Independent Commission emphasised that managers must be allowed to manage, and recommended that District Commanders have fully devolved authority over the deployment of police officers and civilians within their command, devolved budgets and the authority to purchase a range of goods

and services, and to finance local policing initiatives. Without the freedom and ability to manage their financial resources as recommended, real devolution of decision making as recommended will never occur. In addition, although advertisements for the business and personnel manager positions in the DCUs have now gone out to the general public, the issue of providing these crucial administrative resources to DCUs has not been significantly progressed some three and one-half years after being recommended. As of 30 December 2002 no personnel managers had been appointed to DCUs, and only 8 out of 29 DCUs had business managers in place.

There has been little progress on the effective management use of the system of trend identification on public complaints. The Independent Commission's intent with this recommendation was to underscore the need for internal accountability mechanisms and sound management. In other words, they are designed to provide managers with opportunities for early intervention with employees to the benefit of the employee, the organisation and ultimately the public.

On the issue of trend information, the Ombudsman's office was given responsibility for making trend information on complaints against police officers available to the Police Service and to the Policing Board. This information is provided monthly and quarterly, and is sufficient in detail to allow the Police Service to develop an internal trend identification process. While indicators routinely include public complaints, other indicators within the Police Service such as sickness absence, poor performance and other identified risk areas are also significant. If implemented, all of these systems combined provide the Police Service with an early warning process to better manage its internal accountability. However, as of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had not implemented the use of the Ombudsman's information into such a system.

The high incidence of sickness absence continues to impede progress in many areas, including increasing the number of police officers for patrol and progress on the Police Service's policing with the community strategies. As of 30 December 2002 projected cumulative total sick days per police officer for 2002/2003 is approximately 20.7 days¹. While this figure is above the Policing Board's target of 18.5 days, it is below the 23.4 sick days per police officer experienced by the Police Service for the year 2001/2002.

The Policing Board and the Chief Constable accept that management of sickness absence should be a priority. The Police Service's Human Resources area continues to work to address high levels of sickness, and is consulting with medical advisors to improve the timeliness and responsiveness of reports from physicians caring for officers and support staff, with particular emphasis on long term absence cases. The Policing Board has also arranged for an independent medical assessment of the PSNI's current programme. The Chief Constable's Policy Committee is monitoring performance on a bi-weekly basis.

Finally, there has been little progress on the development of the Police Service's tenure policy.

Future Directions

The process of devolved management will remain a focus of review, with specific attention to staffing of civilian support positions in the DCUs and delegation of authority from Headquarters. Oversight will also look for progress on the implementation of the recommendation for a trend

¹Projected figures subject to verification.



identification system/early warning process. Further progress on reducing sickness absence rates will also be monitored, as will the Police Service's use of the medical discharge process. Finally, oversight will review progress on the Police Service's tenure policy.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 75: Police Management of Change

Patten Recommendation:

75. The Northern Ireland police leadership team should include specialists in change management. These may be either civilians or police officers, preferably both. The leadership team should produce a programme for change, to be presented to the Policing Board and reviewed periodically by the Board. The efficiency and effectiveness of each chief officer should be judged on the basis of, among other things, their capacity to introduce and adapt to change.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Change Management team has done an excellent job at keeping the change agenda high on the list of Police Service priorities. The change management function has been combined with corporate development, a critical link, and both report to one Assistant Chief Constable. The Home Office is currently researching a national system for appraising senior officers of ACPO rank. As senior officers in Northern Ireland are part of the national pay and appointment structure any developments applying to the PSNI must reflect the national approach.

Recommendation 76: Devolved Authority of District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

76. District commanders should have fully devolved authority over the deployment of personnel (officer and civilian) within their command, devolved budgets (including salary budgets), authority to purchase a range of goods and services, and to finance local policing initiatives. They should reach service level agreements with all headquarter support departments.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. A study completed by the Finance and Resource Management (FARM) project disclosed that DCU Commanders have limited scope to transfer savings across budget lines and restricted influence over resource allocation decisions. A significant number of human resource allocation decisions continue to be made by Headquarters, which then adjusts district budgets accordingly. However, the implementation of financial transactions processing was extended to North and South Regions and the devolution of financial processing in 29 DCUs is functionally complete.

The Police Service has only just begun to actively recruit crucial business and personnel managers. As of 30 December 2002 no personnel managers had been appointed to DCUs, and only 8 out of 29 DCUs had business managers in place. The business manager positions were also advertised by Grafton Recruitment however, and a further 7 business managers and 11 personnel managers were to be appointed in February of 2003. Oversight visits revealed several outstanding issues,

including the provision of information technology support, the effectiveness of shared business and personnel managers, staffing levels and training. It is unreasonable to hold DCU Commanders fully to account until these issues are resolved.

The FARM team and Corporate Development are developing evaluation criteria that bring financial management within the performance management system for DCU Commanders. Finance Department issued a comprehensive Partnership Agreement governing the respective responsibilities of District Commanders and the elements of Finance Department. The Agreement includes an instrument for performance measurement.

Recommendation 77: Police Appraisal System

Patten Recommendation:

77. It should be a high priority of management to ensure that the appraisal system is fully effective. This system should be used as part of the promotion and selection process. An officer's capacity for change should be assessed and should also be taken into account in the promotion and selection process.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The new appraisal system is approved for implementation on 1 April 2003. The briefing and training of personnel at Regions and Departments has commenced, supported by an internal communication and marketing initiative. All preparations are focussed on the scheduled launch of the system, followed by continuing administrative support and a formal performance review in September of 2003.

Recommendation 78: Accountability of District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

78. District commanders should be required regularly to account to their senior officers for the patterns of crime and police activity in their district and to explain how they propose to address their districts' problems.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The three Regional Assistant Chief Constables conducted performance inspections in September/October of 2002, with the second review planned for May of 2003. An accountability instrument designed with the assistance of Analytical Services ensured the use of common criteria focussing on the crime control and other goals established by the Police Service and the Policing Board. Administrative indicators such as sickness absence experience and financial management indicators were also introduced and will be expanded in future reviews. District Commanders and their staffs said that these initial reviews helped focus staff on shared goals and emphasised accountability. However, as noted in previous oversight reports the Police Service's plans for holding DCU Commanders accountable through monthly meetings and bi-annual reviews are only reasonable if the Police Service provides Commanders with the financial and personnel resources necessary to carry out their duties. Assessment of the process is ongoing.



Recommendations 79 and 80: Trend Information on Complaints

Patten Recommendations:

79. An automated trend identification system for complaints should be introduced.
80. The use of trend information should be followed up by management, and as appropriate by the department responsible for discipline, and guidance should be drawn up to help managers use this information effectively.

Lead Responsibility: Police Ombudsman/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. There has been little progress by the Police Service on developing and using a management system for trend identification on public complaints and other indicators. The Independent Commission's intent with these recommendations was to underscore the need for internal accountability mechanisms and sound management. In other words, these management systems are a preventive management tool designed to protect both the Police Service and the best interests of police officers, usually through the early identification of problems and possible remedial action. If implemented, such a system could provide the Police Service with an early warning process to better manage its internal accountability.

In one aspect, that of complaints against police officers, the Ombudsman's office was given responsibility for making trend and other information on complaints available to the Police Service and the Policing Board. The Police Ombudsman provides trend and complaints data to both the PSNI and the Board, in the form of monthly and quarterly reports. These reports provide numbers, types and the perceived underlying factors of complaints. Information provided is sufficient to allow the Police Service to supplement other internal indicators to establish an "early warning" or "officer performance" system. The Police Service has researched and is aware of such systems, which include complaint trend information as one indicator. However, as of 30 December 2002 the Police Service has not started to use such a system with the benefit of the data provided by the Ombudsman, and the intent of the Independent Commission for full management of internal accountability has not been achieved.

Recommendation 81: Random Checks on Officers' Behaviour

Patten Recommendation:

81. Police managers should use random checks as a way to monitor the behaviour of their officers in dealings with the public and their integrity.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Police Ombudsman

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. Internal Investigations Branch issued for consultation a plan on best practices for carrying out random checks. This closely follows ACPO standards and also the Police Service's requirements under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Act. The Ombudsman and the Police Service's legal advisor were actively consulted in the plan's design. Some intelligence-led tests have been carried out. Research into random drug testing is proceeding.

The Police Service's Professional Standards Strategy includes a provision for comprehensive management reports among other things. All employees are being trained on issues of ethics and values, which form a significant part of both the ongoing Course for All and the Beat Officers Course. The Code of Ethics, published in February of 2003, provides for internal discipline proceedings. Change Management and Corporate Development will carry out audits of the internal investigation function.

Recommendation 82: Ensuring High Ethical Standards

Patten Recommendation:

82. Police management should use all the tools at its disposal, including when necessary the administrative dismissal process, to ensure that high professional and ethical standards are consistently met.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. Regulations governing conduct and unsatisfactory performance were introduced in 2000. These regulations provide for administrative dismissal. Since the new regulations came into effect in 2000, one police officer has been administratively dismissed. The Code of Ethics will come into force in March of 2003. Statistics and case descriptions, and further evidence of the successful application of both conduct regulations and the Code of Ethics will be evaluated in upcoming oversight visits.

Recommendation 83: Tenure Policy On Police Postings

Patten Recommendation:

83. There should be a tenure policy, so that officers do not have inordinately long postings in any specialist area of the police.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. A tenure plan, which incorporated the requirements of our performance indicators, was referred to the Policing Board for consultation and endorsement in January of 2002. The Policing Board initially requested an impact assessment of the plan, which incorporated HMIC best practices. However, the Policing Board ultimately delayed endorsement of the tenure plan in order to focus on the broader issue of the Human Resource Planning Strategy as a whole. The Police Service is developing a modified tenure plan, where tenure will be linked to an overall career development strategy including promotion. It is unlikely that implementation can occur before April of 2003. Evidence of further results has not been provided.



Recommendations 84, 85, and 86: Management of Sickness Absence

Patten Recommendations:

84. Officers injured on duty should be treated as a separate category for sickness recording purposes.
85. A new policy should be formulated for the management of long-term sickness absence, incorporating appropriate arrangements for medical retirement, career counselling and welfare support. A system of rewards, as well as sanctions, should be introduced as part of the sickness management policy.
86. There should be a more detailed review of sickness absence, to establish underlying causes and to make recommendations to address them.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The policies and procedures required to deal with this recommendation are largely in place. The Employee Assistance programme is complete and comprehensive, and the Police Service has introduced a computer-based personal accident recording analysis system. Organisational changes to integrate the management of civilian employees with regular and full time reserve categories are nearing completion.

Human Resources is working with medical advisors to improve the timeliness and responsiveness of reports from physicians caring for police officers and civilian staff, with particular emphasis on long term absence cases. Human Resources is also conducting an audit of the performance of Health and Safety procedures and a new training strategy is underway. The new appraisal system will commence on 1 April 2003. A factor for absenteeism is included. The orientation and training of managers, DCU support staff and supervisors are also ongoing. Case conferencing directly involving DCU Commanders is contributing a sense of urgency and a local management dimension to the process of medical assessment. IT support for this programme at district level remains incomplete however, with priority being given to the DCUs in Urban Region. Regional ACCs have included sickness absence performance in their accountability sessions with DCU Commanders. However, DCU Commanders have yet to be provided with all business and personnel managers, so it is difficult to hold them fully accountable.

The Policing Board now actively monitors sickness absence on a quarterly basis, and has arranged for an independent professional assessment of the Police Service's sickness absence problem. The Chief Constable's Policy Meeting also receives sickness absence progress reports at two week intervals. Sickness absence figures reported by the Police Service show that as of 30 December 2002 the cumulative total for the period April - December of 2002 is approximately 15.7 days per officer per year. However, this cumulative figure does not take into account sickness absence for the months of January, February and March. If forecasted figures for these months are included, the projected cumulative total for 2002/2003 is approximately 20.7 days per officer per year. Although this projected total is above the Policing Board's target of 18.5 days for police officers, it is below the 23.4 days per officer per year experienced by the Police Service for the year 2001/2002. Due to the fact that these figures are projected, accuracy will be verified during the next oversight visit.

Recommendations 87 and 88 - New Police Fund/Funding for Widows' Association

Patten Recommendations:

87. A substantial fund should be set up to help injured police officers, injured retired officers and their families, as well as police widows.
88. The Widows' Association should be given an office in police premises, free of charge, and a regular source of finance adequate to run their organisation.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved, however they will continue to be monitored.

Recommendation 89 - Replacement of Assistant Chief Constables

Patten Recommendation:

89. The Assistant Chief Constables currently responsible for support services should be replaced by two civilian Assistant Chief Officers, one responsible for personnel issues and one for finance and administration.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendations 90, 91 and 92: Efficiency Initiatives

Patten Recommendations:

90. There should be a rigorous program of civilianisation of jobs which do not require police powers, training or experience, exceptions being made only when it can be demonstrated that there is a good reason for a police officer to occupy the position.
91. The Policing Board and the police service should initiate a review of police support services with a view to contracting out those services where this will enhance the efficient management of resources. Consideration should be given to allowing 'management buy-outs' of support services by police or civilian employees interested in continuing to provide those services as a private sector company, and in such cases management buy-out contractors should be offered a secure contract for at least three years to enable them to establish themselves before having to tender for renewal.
92. The police should commission a comprehensive audit of the whole police estate, to include outside experts, and develop a strategy for achieving an effective and efficient estate to meet the objectives for policing as outlined in this report.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/Chief Constable



Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The Policing Board requested that the Police Service address a number of human resource issues. In response, the Police Service developed a comprehensive and wide-ranging Human Resource Planning Strategy and presented it to the Board for endorsement. The Policing Board requested that the Police Service incorporate certain amendments. The Policing Board ultimately endorsed the modified Human Resource Planning Strategy in October of 2002. The Policing Board is monitoring civilianisation in context of a continuing review of the Human Resource Planning Strategy.

The Strategy lists the objective of achieving the civilianisation of 650 police positions by April of 2005. Baseline figures originally established in 2001 are to be updated, and the implementation plan redeveloped. First priority will be given to positions where a civilian replacement would free up an officer for operational assignment. April of 2003 is the target date for conversion of 100 posts, with an additional 250 by April of 2004 and a further 300 by April of 2005. All targets in the Strategy will be included in the 2003/2004 Annual Policing Plan. A civilian consulting firm, Grafton Recruitment, was engaged to conduct recruiting and screening. With regard to other efficiency measures, the Police Service initiated consultation on the outsourcing of postal services.

▶▶ **information technology**



A Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission recommended an urgent, independent and in-depth strategic review of the use of information technology (IT) in policing. Ambitious and far-reaching objectives were proposed to devise a properly resourced plan that would place the Police Service at the forefront of law enforcement technology within 3 to 5 years.

Progress and Accomplishments

An outside consortium was contracted to develop and implement a new Administrative Information System (AIS) and the Business Process Re-engineering project. The AIS includes office programming, internal e-mail, a PSNI Intranet and access to the Internet where necessary. A DCU Information Systems/Business Processes project was piloted in Belfast South DCU, designed to improve both operational and administrative processes. A strategy update in December of 2002 listed a number of enhancements towards the goals of the IT strategy.

Other information systems improvements undertaken by the PSNI were directly related to the major IT upgrades. They are:

- Project Barracuda – a radio system to serve the radio communications needs of the emergency services in Northern Ireland. The network will be available for service by June 2003. The first DCU is due to go live early 2004;
- Holmes II – installation of a second generation of this Home Office standard system for investigating major incidents with a target completion date of April 2003;
- Automatic Fingerprint Recognition – a new system was implemented in Fingerprint Branch in 2001. Expansion of workstations is underway during the current and forthcoming year.

The Policing Board called for progress reports on a bi-monthly basis. The Finance and Resources Committee of the Board consulted the Independent Validator in December 2002.

Areas of Concern

While common terminals were initially provided to the DCU management and support levels, as of 30 December 2002 front line operational functions both uniformed and CID remain deprived of this basic type of IT support. Operational police officers recognise the increasing importance of computers and linked systems for their work, and are eager to benefit from these tools as soon as possible.

Staffing of the IT function remains a critical factor. The PSNI is committed to contracting out as much work as possible, but there remains a substantial element to be managed and led internally. Significant vacancies still exist, particularly at the technician and programmer levels. User training was assumed by IT, however a training role was not originally anticipated for IT in earlier staffing plans. This new role has added a significant burden to its workload.

Future Directions

Critical systems, in other words those that will produce the biggest gains in terms of the effectiveness and efficiency of front line policing and the relationship with the community, were scheduled for implementation by March of 2003 in the original IT Vision plan, although schedules

have been modified and refined since 2001. Progress will be reviewed during the upcoming oversight visit, with particular focus on measuring performance against the PSNI's time lines and assessing systems improvements benefiting DCU Commanders, neighbourhood policing and investigative units. The critical issue of IT training will also be examined in further detail.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 93 - Development of Police IT Strategy

Patten Recommendation:

93. There should be an urgent, independent, and in-depth strategic review of the use of information technology (IT) in policing. It should benchmark the Northern Ireland police against police services in the rest of the world and devise a properly resourced strategy that places them at the forefront of law enforcement technology within 3 to 5 years. It should be validated by independent assessment. The strategy should deliver fully integrated technology systems that are readily accessible to all staff, and should take advantage of the best analytical and communications systems currently available. Users of the technology should play a key part in devising the strategy, and in assessing its implementation.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

The comprehensive planning requirements to satisfy this recommendation were completed, including the requirement for independent assessment. An outside consortium was contracted to develop and implement a new Administrative Information System (AIS) and Business Process Re-engineering. The AIS includes office programming, internal e-mail, a PSNI Intranet and access to the Internet where necessary. The Intranet will provide access to existing systems and to new capabilities. The delivery of common terminals and the training of staff parallel this activity.

A DCU Information Systems/Business Processes project was piloted in Belfast South DCU, designed to improve both operational and administrative processes. Operational aspects include tests of a new call grading procedure and improved information sharing with the criminal justice system. The study of an effective strategy for approaching systems integration is underway in liaison with ACPO.

Funding for the IT programme is included in the Government's estimates. Monies are released on approval of individual business cases. Staffing remains a critical factor. While PSNI is committed to contracting out as much work as possible, there remains a large element of the programme to be managed and led internally. The recruitment of a Head of Information Management, to be responsible for overseeing and reviewing the strategy and policy for the handling of information throughout the PSNI, has meanwhile been completed.

A strategy update was completed on 4 December 2002. The following enhancements are in place:

- IT for crime analysts enabling information led policing;
- Interim enhancement to the data network to support an increase in terminal numbers and roll out of the new data network;
- 580 common terminals are in place providing access to all existing applications plus an office "suite" of programmes;

- Crime recording is available, supported by a new business process and forms;
- A new system to support the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA);
- Radio communication re-organised to serve new districts and boundaries;
- Pilot sites created to provide new software for the command and control function;
- Pilot programme to replace the Station Occurrence Book.

The roll out programme for common terminals consists of 5 phases and will end by March of 2004. The short-term goal is to install 600 terminals, to provide an average of 20 terminals per DCU. The two-year programme intends to provide in excess of 6,000 terminals overall. The Police Service also reports progress in developing a system to improve information sharing with other elements of the criminal justice system.

Consultants were engaged to construct a risk assessment matrix as part of an overall PSNI risk management reporting system. A risk management workshop was held with consultants and a report is in final draft. IT staff are delivering training for DCUs and other new users on an as-needed basis, supplemented by bulletins reporting progress. The Finance and Resources Committee of the Policing Board will review progress on a bi-monthly basis. The Independent Validator reported to the Board in December of 2002.

▶▶ **structure of the police service**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission recommended re-structuring to encourage and facilitate policing with the community, including de-layering of the operational command organisation and a slimmer structure for Headquarters. Recommendations also called for the significant delegation of authority to District Commanders, including control over a devolved budget and all police resources within their district. Particularly important was the proposal of an amalgamated command for Special Branch and Crime Branch, in order to improve the organisation's ability to deal with rising levels of violent and organised crime. Also recommended was a substantial reduction in the number of officers engaged in security work. Other recommendations proposed the phasing out of the Full Time Reserve and the concomitant enlargement of the Part Time Reserve.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Policing Board recognised that the Police Service had a number of staffing issues that remained outstanding. The Board requested that these be addressed by the Chief Constable. In response the Police Service developed its Human Resource Planning Strategy. After recommending a number of modifications, the Policing Board endorsed the Police Service's Human Resource Planning Strategy in November of 2002. The Strategy is designed to meet the human resource needs of the Police Service over the next eight to ten years. In a positive move, the Chief Constable appointed a former HMIC Inspector to act as an independent observer in monitoring the Strategy's implementation. The observer's reviews will focus on a number of issues including the redeployment of police officers, organisational restructuring, recruitment, civilianisation, sickness absence and secondments. The Policing Board emphasises that the Strategy is one of the most important initiatives agreed between the Police Service and the Policing Board, and that its implementation is critical to the delivery of effective and efficient policing.

In another noteworthy example of the exercise of its monitoring and accountability function, the Policing Board requested that HMIC review certain Special Branch roles and the sharing of intelligence information within the Police Service. The review report was released by HMIC in November of 2002. The HMIC report is well-researched and detailed, and its recommendations are entirely consistent with policing best practices. Moreover, if implemented in full by the Police Service, as the Chief Constable has indicated, the recommendations for improved intelligence sharing should fulfil the Independent Commission's intent. Finally, the rapid endorsement of HMIC's recommendations by the Policing Board is another good example of its professional and consistent approach to ensuring police accountability.

The Regional Assistant Chief Constables completed the first round of accountability reviews with DCU Commanders and their staffs. There were numerous recent examples of the participation of DCU Commanders in strategic, corporate decision making. A bond of mutual support and co-operation between district commands appears to be characteristic of the new organisation.

Areas of Concern

In recommendations 98, 99, 100, 101 and 102 the Independent Commission commented specifically on issues relating to the role of Special Branch as part of the proposed changes to the policing of Northern Ireland. In essence these recommendations were based on the recognition

that the potential existed for an increase in violent crime, and that experiences elsewhere showed that a decrease in paramilitary-related crime was frequently followed by an increase in organised crime activity.

Unfortunately, the Independent Commission's projection in this regard has become reality, particularly with rapidly developing organised crime groups controlling smuggling, extortion and drug trafficking throughout Northern Ireland. Having anticipated this, the Independent Commission's recommendations focussed on having Special Branch utilise its considerable assets and experience to address the emerging threat of organised crime, and the violent criminal activity that invariably follows.

We fully recognise the need to balance the dual objectives of combating crime and dealing with terrorism, and there is clearly a need for a well-resourced, well-trained and fully supported intelligence capacity to deal with terrorist and other threats to national security. If anything, the threats to individual citizens and nations by extremely dangerous terrorists have increased dramatically over the past decade and unfortunately, violent and horrific terrorist acts once considered unthinkable have now become commonplace throughout the world.

The oversight team first identified the need for a strategy, plans and policies that would be utilised to achieve the amalgamation of Special Branch and Crime Branch in September of 2001. Initial plans submitted by the PSNI were limited and did not fulfil the Independent Commission's intent. Subsequent oversight requests for a modified plan were not met due to the Police Service's view that a number of external reviews of Special Branch prevented the PSNI from preparing additional plans or making any changes. Although the Policing Board agreed in principle with this position, it nonetheless requested that the PSNI provide a modified plan by November of 2002.

In a further example of its role in holding the Police Service to account, the Policing Board also requested that HMIC conduct a review of Special Branch. HMIC released its review in November of 2002. The review report is well-researched and contains a professional set of recommendations, which are consistent with policing best practices. This review provides the proper context for the PSNI to submit a plan that will ultimately fulfil the Independent Commission's intent. Nonetheless, any changes made will only now begin to have an impact, some 42 months after the Independent Commission first addressed this area. If the Police Service's intelligence function is to have any impact on crime and continuing violent activity by some, it is crucial that all of the HMIC's recommendations are implemented in full and without delay.

The Independent Commission recommended that there should be much greater delegation of decision-making authority to District Commanders, including control over a devolved budget and all police resources within their district. Once empowered to take decisions based on local circumstances, District Commanders can provide the best possible service to their local community. If the goal of policing with the community is to be achieved, more authority and control over human and financial resources will have to be devolved to District Commanders. Progress is also slow on staffing of the civilian business and personnel managerial positions in the DCUs. Oversight field visits have highlighted the crucial importance of filling these positions as quickly as possible. Positions have now been advertised publicly, however no specific time line for completion has been provided. The recent establishment of District Policing Partnerships further underscores the need for the meaningful devolution of decision making.



Due to the fact that some DCUs are smaller than others, the Police Service has instituted arrangements whereby certain employee resources are shared between two or more DCUs. Field evaluations have revealed that supervisors at the district level concluded that sharing employees was not effective, often creating difficult working conditions and heavy workloads.

Future Directions

The oversight process will continue to measure progress with the slimming down of Headquarters and particularly on increased devolution of decision-making authority to the district level. Oversight will also monitor progress and time lines on the implementation of the recommendations made by HMIC regarding Special Branch.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendations 94, 95 and 96: Creation of New District Commands

Patten Recommendations:

94. There should be one district command for each District Council area.
95. In general, each district command should be headed by a Superintendent and resourced sufficiently to be self-contained for day-to-day policing purposes and capable of marshalling strength to cope with most unexpected demands. However, in the districts with small populations the commander should be a Chief Inspector, and the districts should draw on assistance from larger neighbouring district commands for functions in which it is not feasible for a small command to be self-sufficient.
96. The divisional layer of management and the regional headquarters should be removed, and there should be a direct reporting line from each district commander to the appropriate Assistant Chief Constable at central police headquarters. District commanders in smaller council areas, whatever their rank, should have such a direct reporting line, reflecting the accountability arrangements we have recommended. There should be much greater delegation of decision-making authority to district commanders than is the case now with sub-divisional commanders, including control over a devolved budget and all police resources in their district.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

The organisational structures for the regions and District Commands are complete. As of 30 December 2002, some 20 months after the establishment of DCUs, only 8 of 29 DCUs had civilian business managers while none of the personnel managers were in place. Grafton Recruitment is advertising for further positions, but specific time lines for completing this crucial initiative have not been provided. As we have reported previously, the devolution of decision-making authority to DCU Commanders is one of the lynchpins of the new beginning to policing envisioned by the Independent Commission. Interim orders remain in place to accomplish transitional goals, but some elements of devolution remain unresolved, including extended authority over staffing.

Policy for the devolution of financial authority is in place but as of 30 December 2002, DCU Commanders continue to have only limited scope over financial decision making. Commanders have restricted influence over resource allocation within their respective areas, with resource allocations continuing to be made by Headquarters, and district budgets adjusted accordingly.

All DCUs have published objectives and some have included input from local consultative committees. The establishment of District Policing Partnerships in 2003 will enable the districts to move forward with the establishment of collaborative local goals. Corporate Management has conducted a partial audit of the programme for change. Regional Assistant Commissioners now conduct regular reviews of DCU performance, however this must be balanced against the lack of managerial resources which DCU Commanders continue to face.

Recommendation 97: Reorganisation of Police Headquarters

Patten Recommendation:

97. There should be a slimmer structure at police headquarters - one that reflects the shift of focus towards community policing and the delegation of responsibility to district commanders, and permits a more rigorous and strategic approach to management. There should be no more than one Deputy Chief Constable. The number of Assistant Chief Officers should be reduced to six from the present twelve. The position of 'Deputy Assistant Chief Constable' should be deleted forthwith. The rank of Chief Superintendent should be phased out.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/NIO

The Chief Constable, in the Human Resource Planning Strategy, spelled out restructuring and redeployment plans for Headquarters. The Policing Board had requested this. After recommending certain modifications, the Board endorsed the Strategy in November of 2002. One of the goals outlined was to have 5,400 regular police officers in DCUs, compared to the 4,620 currently in place. To achieve this Headquarters strength, which stands at 1,666, would be reduced by 34%, or approximately 566 posts. In addition Regions which have a current strength of 1,214 are to be reduced by 214 posts, or approximately 18%². The time line for the achievement of this goal is 31 March 2005. Senior managers are responsible for achieving specified reductions in their areas. With respect to the number of senior officers in the PSNI, the number of Assistant Chief Constables or equivalent positions remains at ten, with staffing decisions determined by the Policing Board.

Recommendations 98, 99 and 101: Special Branch

Patten Recommendations:

98. Special Branch and Crime Branch should be brought together under the command of a single Assistant Chief Constable.

99. There should be a substantial reduction in the number of officers engaged in security work in the new, amalgamated command.

101. The support units of Special Branch should be amalgamated into the wider police service.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/NIO

In January of 2002 the Police Service provided a conceptual policy paper describing the (then) Chief Constable's plan for bringing Special Branch operations into compliance with the Independent Commission's recommendations. We noted at the time that the plan did not meet

²Figures quoted are accurate as at September of 2002.



the Independent Commission's intent in that it did not indicate how a restructured Special Branch would provide timely and accurate information to police officers investigating violent or organised crimes. A modified plan was requested of the Police Service, however it advised that this could not be provided until a number of other external reviews into Special Branch were completed. The Policing Board agreed with this rationale in principle but requested that the Police Service nonetheless provide a modified plan by November of 2002. As of 30 December 2002, a revised plan and implementation schedule had not been provided to the Oversight Commissioner.

The Policing Board had requested HMIC to conduct a focused review into the handling and sharing of information between Special Branch and other parts of the Police Service. The Police Board received the report on 6 November 2002, which included 11 recommendations to improve intelligence sharing. The Police Service evaluated HMIC's report and notified the Policing Board that, following a scoping study relating to resource implications and procedural changes, all 11 recommendations would be implemented. It will now be necessary to expeditiously implement all of the required changes, and this should satisfy the Independent Commission's intent and recommendations.

Special Branch and Crime Branch came under the command of an Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) on 1 April 2001. The ACC Crime is directly responsible for six branches and a departmental support unit. The number of police officers engaged in security work has decreased by approximately eight percent, all of which is due to severance or natural attrition, since the Independent Commission released its report³. Additional reductions of up to 10 percent for each of the next three years are included in the Human Resource Planning Strategy, which was requested by the Policing Board and endorsed in November of 2002. Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been fully completed.

Recommendation 100: Informing District Commanders about Security Operations

Patten Recommendation:

100. Security officers should be required to keep their district commanders well briefed on security activities in their districts, and district commanders should be fully consulted before security operations are undertaken in their district.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

The new system for briefings of District Commanders, and the new role given to Regional ACCs of controlling arrest and search operations by specialist teams, remains in effect. DCU Commanders verify that intelligence sharing is more formalised than in the past and there has been an increase in both the quantity and quality of intelligence information received. In addition, the DCUs have been made aware of the availability of and procedures for requesting specialised assets. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed pending full implementation of Recommendations 98, 99 and 101.

Recommendation 102: Police Postings in Security Work

Patten Recommendation:

102. Officers should not spend such long periods in security work as has been common in the past.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The service-wide tenure policy, which includes security postings, has not yet been approved by the Policing Board pending their review of the implementation of the Human Resource Planning Strategy (see also Recommendation 83). Status information has been received on the number of police officers currently serving in Crime Department. The tenure policy will also apply to appropriate positions within the Crime Department. Evidence of a documented exception and appeals policy has not been provided.

Recommendation 103: Phasing Out of Full Time Reserve

Patten Recommendation:

103. The future police service should not include a Full Time Reserve.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

The Full Time Reserve (FTR) was formed in 1972 to perform security work and to free up regular police officers to perform day-to-day response to call and investigatory duties. As of October of 2002 the FTR consisted of 1,908 members. The Independent Commission recommended that the Police Service should not include the FTR, and that it should be phased out over time.

The Policing Board and the Police Service reached an agreement in November of 2002, based on the Human Resource Planning Strategy submitted by the Chief Constable, to retain the FTR until April 2005, at which time it would begin to be phased out. The Police Service advises that between April of 2005 and the Autumn of 2006, or over an 18-month phase-out period, the actual severance of FTR members will take place. The Police Service projects that in March of 2005 the size of the FTR will be at 1,391 members and that by March of 2006 this will be reduced to 500 members.

The Police Service has provided a copy of the Human Resource Planning Strategy and the current complement of reservists by numbers and location. While administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed, implementation of this recommendation is progressing.



Recommendation 104: Enlargement of Part Time Reserve

Patten Recommendation:

104. There should be an enlarged Part Time Reserve of up to 2,500 officers, the additional recruits to come from those areas in which there are currently very few reservists or none at all.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

The Independent Commission noted that the Part Time Reserve (PTR) had low recruitment from Catholic and Nationalist areas. It recommended that the PTR be locally recruited from every neighbourhood in Northern Ireland, and that it come from those areas from which there are currently very few reservists or none at all. This would make it more representative of the community while also enhancing the connection between the police and the community. This was accepted in the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan, which confirmed the broad objective of recruiting in under-represented areas. The Chief Constable's authority to recruit for the PTR is spelled out in section 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

The Human Resource Planning Strategy requested by the Policing Board and prepared by the Police Service includes an implementation plan for the deployment of 2,500 members of the Part Time Reserve in the 29 DCUs. A contract has been extended to Consensia to begin a pilot recruiting project in January of 2003. Four DCUs, Banbridge, Coleraine, Lisburn and Newtownabbey, have been designated as pilot areas for recruitment. However, it is not clear that these four pilot testing areas meet the intent of targeting under-represented areas. It is particularly important that the Independent Commission's recommendation for recruiting in under-represented areas is achieved. Our future evaluations will focus on this aspect. Also, as of 30 December 2002 we had not been provided with a specific recruiting plan which identifies factors used to judge applications, stipulations regarding recruiting locations or evidence of target goals or timetables. Delays in implementing this recommendation also mean that reports reflecting screening results, evidence of appeal procedures, adequate orientation and training programmes, or information on numbers, location, and diversity of representation of an enlarged PTR were not provided.

▶▶ size of the police service



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission compared the strength of Northern Ireland's police service with those in the rest of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and recommended that if the security situation did not significantly deteriorate the police service be reduced in size over the next 10 years. The model proposed included an initial downsizing over three years through an early retirement or severance programme, and a phasing out of the Full Time Reserve (FTR).

Progress and Accomplishments

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has implemented a well-defined and comprehensive severance programme for regular police and members of the FTR. The programme includes comprehensive outplacement services provided by a contracted organisation. Services are continually evaluated by the PSNI using a variety of processes, including participant surveys.

Since the inception of the severance programme a total of 1,700 police officers have applied for severance, out of a total of 2,705 who were eligible. Of a total of 638 members of the FTR who were eligible for severance, 264 have applied⁴. As noted in previous reports however, the Police Service may have permitted too many experienced police officers or those with needed skills, to depart under severance. This issue has been recognised by the Policing Board and the Police Service, and a modification to the severance programme now allows the deferment of certain applicants for severance from 2002/2003 to 2003/2004, and from 2003/2004 to 2004/2005.

The Independent Commission projected that in Year 3 of its calculations, or by fiscal year 2002/2003, the Police Service would have 7,116 regular police officers available for duty. The Independent Commission also projected that by 2002/2003 the Police Service would have phased out the Full Time Reserve (FTR). As of 25 October 2002 the Police Service had approximately 7,166⁵ regular police officers at its disposal, as well as approximately 1,900 members of the FTR. The total number of police officers available for duty is therefore approximately 9,066. Current service contracts for members of the FTR have been extended until 2005, when the Police Service intends to phase out the FTR over an 18-month period.

At the request of the Policing Board the Police Service prepared an assessment of the impact proposed reductions in staffing would have on providing an effective level of service. The assessment also outlined a number of initiatives that the Police Service could pursue in order to make police officers available for patrol duties, including the reduction of sickness absence, civilianisation and internal re-deployments of policing resources, particularly those dedicated to security-related functions. These measures are spelled out in the Human Resource Planning Strategy.

Areas of Concern

There are no specific areas of concern for this report.

⁴Members leaving on severance by age as at 27 November 2002. Data provided by PSNI.

⁵Staffing, Distribution and Rank Breakdown as at 25 October 2002. Figure includes student officers and officers on secondment.

Future Directions

The oversight process will continue to compare progress at meeting multi-year recruitment, severance and other targets intended to reach and maintain a Police Service of 7,500 regular police officers. The willingness of the Police Service to address the needs of civilian members will be evaluated, as will the discrepancies between figures provided for levels of outplacement and training support.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 105: Future Size of the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

105. Provided the peace process does not collapse and the security situation does not deteriorate significantly from the situation pertaining at present, the approximate size of the police service over the next ten years should be 7,500 full time officers.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

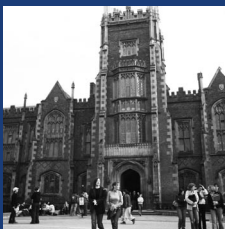
Following a request by the Policing Board, the Police Service provided projections in their Human Resource Planning Strategy for achieving a complement of 7,500 regular police officers by 2005. After requesting amendments, the finalised Strategy was endorsed by the Policing Board in November of 2002. The Strategy is a comprehensive and well thought-out document that incorporates the continued appointment of an equal number of Catholic and other than Catholic recruits for each intake, and a modified severance programme that allows for the deferment of certain police officers. Specifically, the modified programme defers 120 current applicants for severance to 2003/2004. In addition, all applicants from 2003/2004 are deferred to 2004/2005.

The Independent Commission projected that in Year 3 of its calculations, or by fiscal year 2002/2003, the Police Service would have 7,116 regular police officers available for duty. The Independent Commission also projected that by 2002/2003 the Police Service would have phased out the Full Time Reserve (FTR). As of 25 October 2002 the Police Service had approximately 7,166⁶ regular police officers at its disposal, as well as approximately 1,900 members of the FTR. The total number of police officers available for duty is therefore approximately 9,066.

The Police Service's Human Resource Planning Strategy also outlined a number of initiatives that would be pursued to make more police officers available for patrol duties. These included the reduction of sickness absence, increased civilianisation and security post optimisation.

The Human Resource Planning Strategy proposes an increase to local policing resources by increasing the deployment of regular police officers to District Command Units from approximately 4,620 at present, to 5,400 by 2005. To accomplish this Headquarters staff are to be reduced by approximately 30%, and Regions by 18%, between now and 2005. With the exception of the current status of the FTR, the full implementation of the Police Service's Human Resource Planning Strategy would serve to accomplish the goals as set out in this recommendation.

⁶Staffing, Distribution and Rank Breakdown as at 25 October 2002, Op. Cit.



Recommendations 106 and 107: Severance Arrangements

Patten Recommendations:

106. The early retirement or severance package offered to regular officers and full time reservists aged 50 or above should include a generous lump sum payment according to length of service, pension enhancement up to five years, early payment of pension commutation entitlement and payment in lieu of pension until pensionable age is reached. Full time reservists should be treated as far as possible in the same way as regular officers.

107. Regular officers with more than five years service and all full time reservists, leaving the police service before the age of 50, should receive a substantial lump sum payment.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

The Police Service's comprehensive severance programme has been operational for three years. Documents provided show that members of the Full Time Reserve are being treated as far as possible in the same way as regular police officers. The severance programme is a good example of a technically and logistically sound human resource strategy, operating efficiently even in the absence of authorising regulations. The NIO has advised that regulations are in the final stages of completion. However, as noted by the Independent Commission, a police officer's desire to take advantage of early retirement opportunities must be balanced against the organisation's need to retain certain skill sets. The Police Service has only recently introduced modifications, which would allow it to defer severance under certain circumstances.

The Voluntary Severance Support Unit provides important informational field presentations on the availability of the severance programme across the organisation. The Police Service continually analyses the impact of the severance programme on its ability to provide policing services. A one-year review of the severance programme was conducted in 2001, with an evaluation of the presentations in 2002. The Northern Ireland Office recently commissioned a consulting firm to conduct a review of the voluntary severance programme⁷. The review found that the programme had been successfully implemented and had achieved the dual objectives of reducing the size of the Police Service and addressing the balance of its composition. The review also recommended that the use of the Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust in the delivery of outplacement support and training be increased (see also Recommendation 108)⁸.

During years one and two of the severance programme (i.e. 2000/2001 and 2001/2002) 1,127 regular police officers and 148 members of the Full Time Reserve voluntarily left the Police Service under the severance programme. An additional 568 regular officers and 116 members of the reserve have applied under the provisions for 2002/2003. The first police officers left the Police Service under the severance programme in January of 2001. Modifications being considered, in order to maximise the number of officers on patrol, include the deferral of police officers who have applied to depart under severance between 1 January and 31 March 2003 to a later date. In addition, severance for 2003/2004 will be deferred to 2004/05. This deferral is included in the Police Service's Human Resource Planning Strategy requested by the Policing Board. Arrangements are being made to ensure that deferral does not financially disadvantage those persons affected.

⁷Deloitte & Touche, Review of Voluntary Severance Scheme for the Northern Ireland Office, 2 December 2002.

⁸Ibid.

Recommendation 108: Retraining Programme for Police Officers

Patten Recommendation:

108. The Training and Employment Agency should develop measures for police officers (and civilians) seeking other employment, in consultation with police management and the staff associations. The Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust should have a role in this programme, and should have enhanced staffing and funding to enable it to deal with a substantially larger workload.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Training and Employment Agency/PRRT

The VSSU, assisted by an outside firm, provides outplacement services that include pension advice, independent financial advice and career counselling. Outplacement resource centres have been established that provide general assistance and allow police officers to search for job opportunities and prepare CVs. The Police Service conducts and has provided an annual review of the effectiveness of the programme.

Penna Sanders & Sidney consider the Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust (PRRT) as one of the preferred suppliers of outplacement and training support. For example, data provided by the Police Service indicates that the PRRT has provided 22% of all outplacement training to date. However, the PRRT does not agree with this figure⁹ and maintains that its services are not being used to the extent possible. The PRRT's estimate of usage is approximately 5%. This discrepancy remained unresolved as of 30 December 2002. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed.

Recommendation 109: Opportunities in GB Police Forces for Reservists

Patten Recommendation:

109. Police recruiting agencies in Great Britain should take full account of the policing experience of former RUC reservists in considering applications for employment in police services in Great Britain.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Home Office

The need to provide opportunities in police forces in Great Britain for former members of the FTR is contingent upon a decision to phase out the FTR. The phasing out of the FTR will commence in 2005. The Police Service is deferring any further action until the 2003/2004 fiscal year. Ensuring that current members of the FTR have employment opportunities in policing elsewhere can now proceed in anticipation of the eventual phasing out of the FTR. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

⁹Deloitte & Touche, Op. Cit., pg. 33, *Role of Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Unit*.



Recommendation 110: Opportunities with the UN for Reservists

Patten Recommendation:

110. The British government should offer former reservists the opportunity to participate in British policing contingents in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/FCO/Home Office/Chief Constable

The Police Service has made arrangements to allow members of the Full Time Reserve to participate in UN missions, however specific opportunities for former members of the FTR to participate have not yet been identified. The Police Service is deferring further action on this recommendation until the 2003/2004 fiscal year. The phasing out of the FTR will commence in 2005. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

▶▶ **composition and recruitment**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland envisaged a police service that is representative of and supported by the community it serves. A key component of achieving a representative police service is a sound and successful recruitment programme that reaches, attracts and is supported by all segments of the population, especially those segments that are under-represented. Several recommendations address the various components of a sound recruitment programme that will attract, fairly test, objectively vet, and select applicants in a way that results in a diversified police service that is representative of, and can be supported by, the community.

Progress and Accomplishments

The NIO, the Policing Board and the Police Ombudsman, who all regularly interact with the Police Service, have outlined their plans to ensure that their staffs are diversified to the degree possible and consistent with applicable legislation.

The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides the legislative authority for the contracting of independent agencies for the recruitment of police officers and civilian support staff. The Consensia Partnership was hired in January of 2001 and has completed three police officer recruitment competitions. A fourth recruitment campaign was launched in October of 2002. The recruitment programme is well designed, aggressive and meets contemporary policing standards. It is extensive, imaginative and is designed to reach members of the community not adequately represented in the Police Service. The recruitment advertising strategy employed by the Police Service has been recognised by winning an award. The strategy is also aimed at serving police officers in the United Kingdom (UK) and the Republic of Ireland.

During the first three recruitment competitions Consensia received a total of 38,819 requests for applicant information packs, which resulted in 17,102 actual applications being made. Of these 35% were from Catholics. For the fourth competition Consensia received 8,574 requests for applicant information packs, which resulted in 4,407 actual applications being made, of which 34% were from Catholics. The first three competitions have been concluded and resulted in a total of 582 applicants being appointed to police training. These Catholic and other than Catholic applicants were hired in accordance with the 50:50 principle as spelled out in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Women represent approximately 32% of all applicants appointed to recruit training to date. It should be noted that the number of Catholic applicants has remained fairly consistent throughout the four competitions that have been undertaken since the Police Service launched its revised recruitment campaign.

The selection process includes lay involvement and a revised standard of merit, vetting procedures and criminal conviction criteria, approved by the Chief Constable, which are consistent with other UK police services. Applicants must meet core competencies and stringent medical standards. The Secretary of State has appointed an independent assessor to validate disqualification decisions in cases where an applicant is aggrieved. The Policing Board has ratified the appointment of an independent member to the Chief Constable's Vetting Panel. Independent community observers check the testing facility to ensure it is adequate for testing purposes, and evaluate whether the assessment process follows established protocols. An external contractor has also been engaged

by Grafton Recruitment to monitor, assess and ensure the quality of its recruitment procedures.

The Police Service continues to have a work experience programme in schools, and career advisors attend school career fairs, as the PSNI looks at increasing community support and long-term recruitment opportunities. Statements by public officials, including those at a ministerial level, along with statements made by church and other leaders, have encouraged young people from all communities to join the Police Service. In addition, the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) has removed its ban on members of the Police Service from belonging to the GAA.

On 28 June 2002 the Police Service selected Grafton Recruitment, an international firm with offices throughout Northern Ireland, to recruit civilian support staff. Grafton Recruitment provides the Police Service with a merit pool of potential candidates from which an equal number of Catholics and those who are other than Catholic are appointed. Grafton also recruits for positions for which less than six posts are available, and which therefore do not come under the 50:50 requirement. Like the Police Service's recruitment programme for police officers, Grafton's programme for recruiting civilians is also well-designed and innovative, and meets contemporary policing and human resource standards. The advertising strategy is based in part on information gained from focus groups, and has been extensive, imaginative and designed to reach under-represented groups.

As of 30 December 2002 Grafton had conducted competitions for Press Officer and IT Specialist positions. These competitions resulted in merit pools of 19 and 49 respectively. Since competitions in each case were for six or more positions, the 50:50 requirement applied. A competition for Driving Instructors is currently underway. The initial response to these competitions appears to be sufficient to allow for the appointment of applicants representative of the broader community, even in those cases where less than six posts need to be filled, however data is preliminary.

Finally, regulations allowing for part-time work, job sharing and career breaks by civilian employees of the Police Service have been in effect for several years, and there is increasing use of these opportunities. Regulations have also been approved which authorise part-time work and job sharing for regular police officers.

Areas of Concern

Several recommendations call for efforts to ensure that the entire Police Service, police officers and civilians alike, is representative of the community as a whole. To date this objective is being accomplished for police officers only, with the appointment of 582 men and women who together are equally representative of the Catholic and the other than Catholic communities. The long-term aim of a Police Service representative of and supported by the community it serves requires that there be full cross-community support. Despite this, the unequivocal and unqualified support that is necessary to meet the long-term objective of creating a police service that is representative of, and respected by, the community as a whole has not been forthcoming. As the Independent Commission first noted in 1999, the support of all community leaders is imperative if the new beginning to policing is to become a reality, and if the people of Northern Ireland are to gain the police service they both require and deserve.



Community representativeness is a concern as it relates to civilian employees. The Police Service is complying with the requirement that an equal number of Catholics and other than Catholics is appointed where six or more civilian posts are available. This does not apply to fewer than six posts. The Police Service has not yet met the Independent Commission's recommendation of achieving a balanced and representative civilian workforce (see also Recommendation 111). In 1999 the percentage of Catholic support staff in the PSNI was approximately 12.3%. By October of 2002 the percentage of Catholic support staff, at approximately 12.8%, had barely increased. The Police Service has not provided evidence of a comprehensive strategy or plan to achieve a more representative civilian workforce, including goals and time lines. At this pace, it is unlikely that civilian staff of the Police Service will be representative of the broader community in the near future.

The Police Service has used internal trawls to staff unfilled or new civilian positions. It should be noted that such methods do not necessarily serve the objective of creating a more representative workforce. While internal trawls provide existing staff with transfer and promotional opportunities, they merely re-distribute rather than change the representativeness of existing staff. In addition, any further delays in the more aggressive recruitment of civilian staff not only prevents the effective civilianisation of the Police Service, it ultimately impedes the release of trained police officers for patrol and other duties.

Finally, some three and one-half years after the Independent Commission released its report the Police Service has yet to establish procedures for all police officers and recruits to register their interests and associations. The authority for the Chief Constable to do so has been in place since the coming into force of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. What would appear to be a relatively straightforward recommendation, consistent with accepted notions of openness and transparency, has yet to be implemented.

Future Directions

The evaluation team will continue to review the progress of the recruiting programme, and will follow up with recruits once they are assigned to operational duties. The oversight team will review progress on the full development of a recruitment strategy for civilian support staff, including goals and time lines. Finally, we will closely examine the issue of the registration of police and recruit officers' interests and associations.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 111: Transfer of Police Civilian Staff

Patten Recommendation:

111. The Northern Ireland Civil Service management should facilitate transfers of civilian members of the police service to other Northern Ireland departments and should co-operate with the Policing Board and the Chief Constable in achieving a balanced and representative civilian workforce.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board/NIO

The Police Service employs two distinct groups of civilian support staff: those directly recruited by the PSNI, and those who are seconded from the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The Government

has determined that it is not possible for the Civil Service to re-absorb the large number of Civil Service staff currently employed by the Police Service, nor would it be practical for the employees concerned. The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan committed to a package of measures, the effect of which would ultimately be a more representative civilian workforce and one which is more effectively integrated into the Police Service. However, the PSNI have not yet provided evidence of the development of a comprehensive plan or strategy with goals and a timetable to transfer civilians or take other actions to increase civilian representativeness. Civil Service staff who accept a promotion within the Police Service will be required to give up their Civil Service status and become employees of the PSNI.

To date 338 civil service employees have elected to give up their Civil Service status and remain with the Police Service. In addition, the number of direct civilian recruits to the Police Service increased from 791 in 1999 to 1,594 by October of 2002. However, the number of Catholic civilian support staff did not appreciably increase. In 1999 the percentage of Catholic support staff was approximately 12.3% of the total population of PSNI civilian staff. By October of 2002 this number had increased by only 0.5%, to 12.8%. At this pace it is unlikely that civilian staff of the Police Service will be representative of the broader community in the near future.

When recruiting directly for six or more posts at the same level, the Police Service is required by sections 44 and 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to appoint an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholic. In June of 2002 the Police Service appointed Grafton Recruitment as the independent agent for the recruitment of civilian support staff. As of 30 December 2002, Grafton Recruitment had conducted two successful competitions for civilian support staff, with a third competition currently underway.

While it is recognised that internal trawls provide advancement opportunities for existing civilian staff, it is also recognised that these processes do not alter the overall representativeness of the workforce in a way that was intended by the Independent Commission. In the longer term the continued use of internal trawls to fill civilian positions may have a negative effect on attempts to make the Police Service's civilian workforce more representative of the broader community it serves.

The Police Service has not provided evidence of a management-led programme for enhancing the integration of police officers and civilian staff, which encompasses the civilianisation of posts (see also Recommendations 53 and 90), and the training, education, development and management of support staff (see also Recommendation 129).



Recommendation 112: Staff of Policing Board, NIO and Police Ombudsman

Patten Recommendation:

112. Every effort should be made to ensure that the composition of the staff of the Policing Board, the NIO Police Division (or any successor body), and the office of the Police Ombudsman should be broadly reflective of the population of Northern Ireland as a whole, particularly in terms of political/religious tradition and gender.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Police Ombudsman

The Northern Ireland Office, the Policing Board and the Police Ombudsman, all of which regularly interact with the Police Service, have each established plans and practices to ensure that their staffs are diversified to the degree possible and consistent with applicable legislation.

Recommendations 113 and 115: Support from Community Leaders/Liaison with Schools

Patten Recommendations:

113. All community leaders, including political party leaders and local councillors, bishops and priests, school teachers and sports authorities, should take steps to remove all discouragements to members of their communities applying to join the police, and make it a priority to encourage them to apply.

115. Liaison should be established between all schools and universities and the police service in Northern Ireland immediately, and work experience attachments and familiarisation days should be organised with active support and encouragement from community leaders and teachers.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance with these recommendations has not been completed. The Independent Commission noted that the key to making the Police Service more representative of the communities it serves is that community leaders, including political party leaders and local councillors, bishops and priests, school teachers and sports authorities, take steps to remove all discouragements to members of their communities applying to join the police, and make it a priority to encourage them to apply. If the Independent Commission's vision of a new beginning for policing is to become a reality, it is absolutely critical that the Police Service has the active support of all communities in Northern Ireland. The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan also wanted to see liaisons established between the Police Service and all schools, colleges and universities. As of 30 December 2002 the Police Service had not provided an implementation schedule to establish outreach initiatives, for liaisons with all schools and universities, with a particular emphasis on those schools with which there is presently no liaison.

The Catholic Church and public officials, including those at the ministerial level, have publicly expressed support and encouragement for young people to join the Police Service. This support has contributed significantly to the success of the recruitment programme for police officers. The Policing Board's Community Affairs Committee, in conjunction with the Chief Constable, has been assigned the task of determining how best to ensure continued support.

The Police Service continues to develop a Citizen and Safety Education Programme, which includes representatives from several sectors of education, including the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and representatives from integrated education establishments. In addition, the Police Service conducts career conventions, career talks, distributes literature at several schools and accepts applications for the work experience programme.

Between September of 2000 and June of 2001 the Police Service took the work experience programme to 109 Protestant and 108 Catholic schools, which represents 24% of Catholic schools. 45 non-designated schools were also included. Similarly, between September of 2001 and June of 2002 the work experience programme was taken to 116 Protestant and 110 Catholic schools. 35 non-designated schools were also included.

Recommendation 114: Gaelic Athletic Association

Patten Recommendation:

114. The Gaelic Athletic Association should repeal its rule 21, which prohibits members of the police in Northern Ireland from being members of the Association.

Lead Responsibility: GAA

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendation 116: Pilot Police Cadet Schemes

Patten Recommendation:

116. Provided there is active support and encouragement from local political and community leaders, pilot police cadet schemes should be set up.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Section 42 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the establishment of a Police Cadet Scheme. However, the Police Service does not anticipate the development of a Cadet Scheme until 2005. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

Recommendation 117: Recruitment Agency/Lay Involvement in Recruitment

Patten Recommendation:

117. The police should contract out the recruitment of both police officers and civilians into the police service. There should be lay involvement, including community representatives, on recruitment panels.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Consistent with legislation, the Police Service contracted the Consensia Partnership, an independent recruitment agency, in January of 2001 to recruit police officers. The first recruitment



competition was held in March of 2001, and Consensia is now administering the fourth recruitment competition. Lay assessors and lay observers actively participate in each competition.

Consensia's recruitment programme is well-designed and aggressive. Advertising is specifically designed to reach all communities, particularly those currently under-represented in the Police Service. Advertising encompasses Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. Consensia received a total of 38,819 requests for applicant information packs, which resulted in 17,102 actual applications being made over the first three recruitment competitions completed as of 30 December 2002.

Since the Police Service launched its new recruiting programme, nearly 36% of applications have been from Catholics, and over 37% have been from women (see also Recommendations 118 and 119). Consensia is modifying its website, www.selectnipolice.org, to allow potential candidates to request applicant packets and apply electronically. Applicants who pass the initial selection test are now exempted from having to re-take the test if they are not selected. However, these applicants must still complete the remainder of the selection process. An independent assessor was appointed by the Secretary of State to validate decisions in cases where an applicant is disqualified. The lay assessors involved in monitoring the selection process have demonstrated dedication and close attention to duty.

The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 authorised a similar programme for the recruitment of civilian support staff. Out of six short-listed firms Grafton Recruitment was selected on 28 June 2002 for the recruitment and selection of civilians. Grafton's civilian recruitment programme is well-designed and innovative, and meets contemporary policing and human resource standards. Advertising strategies are imaginative, have broad, international coverage, and are designed to reach under-represented groups. Other tasks performed by Grafton include job analysis, job descriptions, media selection, training of interviewers and establishing merit pools.

Consistent with legislation¹⁰, when recruiting for six or more civilian posts at the same level an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholic must be appointed. When recruiting for less than six posts the 50:50 recruiting requirement does not apply. Independent community observers check the testing facilities to ensure adequacy, and evaluate whether assessment processes follow established protocols. However, there is no lay assessor participation in the actual selection process. Grafton has engaged the services of an external contractor that monitors civilian recruitment and assessment procedures for quality assurance.

Recommendations 118 and 119: Functions of New Recruitment Agency

Patten Recommendations:

118. The recruitment agency should advertise imaginatively and persistently, particularly in places likely to reach groups who are under-represented in the police.

119. The agency should advertise beyond Northern Ireland, in the rest of the United Kingdom and in the Republic of Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Recruitment Agency

The Police Service and Consensia provided materials illustrating that the advertising programme for police officer recruitment included extensive, imaginative and persistent advertising in places likely to reach groups currently under-represented in the Police Service. The programme includes press, television and on-line advertising which covers Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. In addition, radio, outdoor billboard and cinema advertising are also used. The response from all communities has been positive and has provided a sufficient merit pool of recruits from which the Police Service is able to appoint an equal number of Catholics and other than Catholic recruits to police training (see also Recommendation 117). Applicant and recruitment data are as follows:

Police Officer Data				
	Competition 1	Competition 2	Competition 3	Competition 4
Request for Information	20,283	9,607	8,929	8,574
Applications Received	7,518	4,910	4,674	4,407
Percent Catholic	35.6%	38.7%	35.2%	34.0%
Percent Non-Catholic	64.4%	61.3%	64.8%	66.0%
Percent Female	40.9%	37.8%	37.3%	32.3%
Merit Pool	602	453	419	Not Final

Consensia is working to develop outreach programmes that will further enhance contact with young people and minority groups. Focus groups actively involving serving police officers are being held to assist with the development of these programmes.

With respect to the recruitment of civilian support staff, Grafton Recruitment has provided materials illustrating an advertising strategy based in part on information gained from focus groups. The material provided is extensive, imaginative and designed to reach groups who are currently under-represented in the Police Service. The strategy includes on-line and press advertising in specifically designated professional publications related to the positions being advertised. The strategy primarily covers Northern Ireland, but also the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. Responses to the various advertising campaigns appear to be sufficient to allow for the appointment of applicants representative of the broader community. Grafton Recruitment continually evaluates its advertising strategies and makes adjustments as required.



Recommendations 120 and 121: Selection of Recruits

Patten Recommendations:

120. All candidates for the police service should continue to be required to reach a specified standard of merit in the selection procedure. Candidates reaching this standard should then enter a pool from which the required number of recruits can be drawn.

121. An equal number of Protestants and Catholics should be drawn from the pool of qualified candidates.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Section 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the recruitment of qualified applicants on a 50:50 ratio between those identified as Catholic and those identified as other than Catholic. Through its contract with Consensia the Police Service has recruited and selected police officers for training consistent with the 50:50 requirement. The Chief Constable has approved other selection criteria, which are consistent with those used by other police services in the United Kingdom. Consensia continually evaluates the pass/fail rate and other aspects of each stage of the selection process, and has made several modifications to date (see also Recommendation 117). Applicants are required to meet an established set of job-related core competencies and medical standards.

Applicants successfully completing the selection process are entered into a merit pool and, aside from having to fulfil their actual police training, are considered fully capable and qualified to perform the duties of a police officer. Each of three past competitions has provided a merit pool from which an equal number of Catholic and those other than Catholic are selected for appointment to the PSNI's police training facility. Over the three campaigns, 69% of applicants who have passed the initial selection were not selected for the merit pool.

The goal of the Police Service is to appoint 540 police officers annually. Through December of 2002 the recruiting and selection process provided three merit pools totalling 1,474 candidates from which a total of 582 applicants have been appointed to recruit training. The 582 persons were appointed according to 50:50 requirements as spelled out in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. As of 30 December 2002 competition four was ongoing. Recruit training and field performance success rates of all graduates will be evaluated as progress occurs.

Sections 44 and 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 require that where there is a recruitment competition for six or more vacant civilian staff posts at the same level, an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholic should be appointed from the merit pool of qualified candidates. Through its contract with Grafton Recruitment the Police Service has established a process for the selection of civilian support staff that is consistent with this requirement. Applicants are required to meet an established set of job-related competencies.

The Police Service and Grafton Recruitment have established an evaluation component to assess each step of the selection process. As of 30 December 2002 two successful competitions for six or more posts at the same level have been completed, and in both cases a merit pool was established sufficient to provide for the appointment of an equal number of Catholic and other than Catholic civilian support staff. Grafton is conducting an additional nine competitions for positions where there are less than six posts available.

Recommendation 122: Opportunities for Part Time Working and Job Sharing

Patten Recommendation:

122. Priority should be given to creating opportunities for part time working and job-sharing, both for police officers and police service civilians, and career breaks should be introduced.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable

Details of existing Police Service policy for part time work and job sharing programmes for regular police officers and members of the Full Time Reserve are spelled out in previous oversight reports. Policy for civilian staff is further advanced than that for police officers. Although the Police Service allows regular and reserve police officers to use unpaid leave for the purpose of career breaks, it has yet to develop a policy authorising such breaks which is consistent with the intent of this recommendation. The Police Service indicated that a review of existing policy was not anticipated before the Summer of 2003. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

Recommendation 123: Child Care Arrangements

Patten Recommendation:

123. Child care facilities should be introduced where practicable, or child care vouchers and flexible shift arrangements offered.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service has been conducting research on childcare initiatives since 1999, however there is no clear evidence that this recommendation is being progressed. The Police Service has not provided evidence of a plan to assess the practicality, including security considerations, of introducing childcare facilities or providing other options to assist with childcare expenses. The Police Service has also not provided a clear timetable for implementing this recommendation.

Recommendation 124: Length of Recruitment Process

Patten Recommendation:

124. The recruitment process should be reduced to no more than six months.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Recruitment Agency

The Police Service and Consensia are in full compliance with the requirements of this recommendation. Applicants generally report high levels of satisfaction with Consensia's selection process. Any concerns expressed by applicants are reviewed by Consensia and the Police Service, and are addressed. Consensia continually evaluates all aspects of the selection process to identify any other concerns, such as the number of applicants not appearing at various stages of the selection process.



In order to address this issue, Consensia conducted a telephone survey with applicants who had failed to appear at various selection stages. Results showed that many applicants had difficulty getting time off work, while others cited high levels of publicity around the recruiting process. Other administrative issues were also noted. Consensia has addressed these issues, in part by increasing the number of evening and weekend testing opportunities being made available.

Recommendation 125: Disqualification from Entry into the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

125. Young people should not be automatically disqualified from entry into the police service for relatively minor criminal offences, particularly if they have since had a number of years without further transgressions. The criteria on this aspect of eligibility should be the same as those in the rest of the United Kingdom. There should be a procedure for appeal to the Police Ombudsman against disqualification of candidates.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

An Independent Assessor was appointed by the Secretary of State in May of 2001 for a period of three years. Data provided by the Police Service for the first two recruitment competitions describes the number and reasons why police officer applicants were disqualified during the selection process. Data were also provided showing the results of the Independent Assessor's adjudication of applicants' appeals. None of the data provided indicate that there is a predisposition to disqualify applicants on the basis of community background. This recommendation will proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 126: Registration of Interests

Patten Recommendation:

126. All officers - those now in service as well as all future recruits - should be obliged to register their interests and associations. The register should be held both by the police service and by the Police Ombudsman.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Police Ombudsman

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission first recommended this in September of 1999. The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan also accepted this recommendation. The authority to require the registration of notifiable memberships is spelled out in section 51 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. As of 30 December 2002 no evidence of an administrative order, consistent with this legislation, requiring all officers to register and update their interest and associations with the Chief Constable had been provided.

Recommendations 127 and 128: Functions of New Recruitment Agency

Patten Recommendations:

127. The recruitment agency should seek to identify Northern Ireland Catholic officers in other police services, including the Garda Siochana, contact them and encourage them - particularly those in more senior ranks - to apply for positions in the Northern Ireland police.

128. Lateral entry of experienced officers from other police services, and secondments or recruitments from non-police organisations should be actively encouraged.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Recruitment Agency/Policing Board

Section 45 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the Policing Board in respect to senior police officers, and the Chief Constable in respect to other ranks, to seek applicants from other police services, including the Garda Siochana. Each recruitment competition has included advertising throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, but results at this time do not indicate a significant interest from outside Northern Ireland in joining the PSNI.

In April of 2002 the governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, as well as the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly, entered into an agreement to introduce the necessary administrative and legislative measures to enable UK and Republic of Ireland police officers to apply for certain posts in each others police services. The agreement includes a similar provision regarding secondments for periods not exceeding three years. This process raises a number of legal and administrative issues which must now be resolved. These relate to rates of pay and rank structure among other things. Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed.

▶▶ **training, education and development**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland addressed the subject of Training, Education and Development and focussed on the restructuring of this critical area as being pivotal for a successful transformation of the Police Service.

The Independent Commission Report recommended the development of a Training, Education and Development (TED) Strategy for both the recruit and in-service training programmes. The TED Strategy was to clearly demonstrate the inter-connection between the overall aims of the Independent Commission, and the objectives and priorities set out in the future policing plans of the Policing Board and the PSNI.

The Report emphasised the importance of a new state-of-the-art Police College as critical to the long-term success of the training programme and the transformation of Northern Ireland's policing service. The new Police College was seen as the cornerstone to providing recruit officers, as well as seasoned police and civilian personnel, with an environment conducive to modern learning and development techniques.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Policing Board approved the TED Primary Reference Document in April of 2002, with the proviso that the Police Service complete a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA) as well. The Policing Board also indicated its intent to closely monitor developments on other training issues including the TNA, Design and Evaluation and Human Rights training.

The Policing Board noted that the Training College is one of the cornerstones of the new Police Service. The Board believes that: "the establishment of a new Police Training College is an absolute necessity in order to ensure that the PSNI has a world-class training facility for a modern, first-class police service". This echoes the view of the Independent Commission. However, some three and one-half years after being recommended, work on the College has not started, and the earliest projection for completion is 2007. The Policing Board endorsed the Police Service's business case for the new College, and agreed that the proposal be submitted to the Northern Ireland Office for further action. It is imperative that this recommendation be pursued without delay, and that the PSNI is provided with a first-rate training facility as soon as possible.

The Foundation Faculty's excellent training programme for student and probationary officers is a key milestone in the TED Strategy. The programme is continually assessed with a view to ensuring that it remains progressive and in line with current training best practices. An upcoming assessment of the initial 21 training sessions by the University of Ulster will provide a further opportunity to surface problems or add content where necessary.

The Foundation Faculty's Tutor Training Programme is another successful project, with very positive results thus far. Assessments of recent interviews with probationary constables have highlighted good levels of satisfaction with training and also high levels of commitment and determination among new constables. The tutor trainers themselves are very capable and have indicated in interviews that the high quality and dedication of recent recruits bodes well for the future of the PSNI.

The delivery of the Course for All to police officers and employees of the PSNI was well underway at the end of our evaluation period on 30 December 2002. While our concerns with the course and its shortcomings are detailed later, the Course for All does represent a significant PSNI effort. Members of the oversight team attended a number of Course for All sessions throughout Northern Ireland. Course attendance is designed to mix police officers of all ranks with civilian employees, which is a positive step. The Course provides a basic introduction to the areas of constitutional arrangements (a one-hour video presentation), personal and organisational change, the new Code of Ethics (human rights based) and an introduction to Policing with the Community and Problem Solving.

Establishing a Learning Advisory Council by the Executive Leadership Faculty, and setting up Design Workshops that include community representatives from the academic sector as well as from commercial, marketing and other private sector organisations, are seen as positive developments. Integrating the Executive Leadership Faculty into the Garnerville facility is also seen as positive. The initiatives proposed by the Executive Leadership Faculty go a long way toward meeting the Independent Commission's aims for executive learning and development within the Police Service.

Finally, the Police Service's training programme for civilian analysts deserves credit for its rapid development from the design stage to implementation. The future success of the PSNI's intelligence-led policing model depends heavily on the evolving criminal intelligence function, both at the headquarters and DCU level. The civilian analysts interviewed thus far are enthusiastic about their work, and express a high degree of satisfaction with the level of professional training they have received.

Areas of Concern

The Independent Commission saw Training, Education and Development as the cornerstone of meaningful and long-lasting police reform in Northern Ireland. Our earlier reports have highlighted the critical need for a new Police Training College, the impact of not having an adequate facility, and also the slow progress made on this recommendation to date. As of 30 December 2002 the Police College project remains problematic, with an appropriate site not yet selected. The current target for completion of the College is 2007, which will be a challenge given the progress to date.

The Independent Commission recommended in September of 1999 that, as soon as possible, police and civilian members of the Police Service be instructed on the impacts of new constitutional arrangements on policing, policing arrangements recommended by the Independent Commission, and on other changes to the criminal justice system. Additionally, human rights, management and information technology training were recommended. The Government agreed with these recommendations and we indicated in September of 2001 that we required evidence of a curriculum for the course dealing with these areas, along with detailed records of attendance. Further, we requested evidence that the Policing Board measures progress in these areas.

As of 30 December 2002, administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed, specifically with respect to the new constitutional arrangements and the new policing arrangements set out in the Independent Commission's report. All reforms to the criminal justice system have not yet been completed. The Police Service designed the Course for All with modules that covered the change process and constitutional arrangements, the new Code of Ethics (human



rights), policing with the community and problem solving. Concerns with respect to human rights training are covered in more detail in the Human Rights chapter. Management and IT training are covered below.

In our Report No. 6 we had voiced several concerns, not the least of which was the fact that the Course's objectives were extremely ambitious. Experience indicates that dealing with material of this complexity, and at an appropriate level of detail, requires more time than the two days that have been allotted to the Course. Several evaluators had an opportunity to observe the Course for All and our earlier concerns are somewhat borne out. It is our view that the Course for All, specifically with respect to Recommendation 141 (Constitutional arrangements) is not adequate. Considering that this is a particularly important area, given the impacts the Commission's recommendations have on almost every aspect of policing in Northern Ireland, there is very little time spent on examining the issues.

The area is introduced very well with a 12 minute video in which two eminent Commissioners from the Independent Commission, Dr. Maurice Hayes and Mr. Peter Smith, QC, outline the changes and impact. However, that was not followed by any in-depth discussion leading to the "full understanding of the impact on policing" envisioned by the Independent Commission. Our evaluators observed that there appears to be a reluctance to deal with this issue in any more than a perfunctory manner.

The human rights area is covered sufficiently via the introduction to the Code of Ethics, however, needs to be followed with the human rights training discussed in the Independent Commission's recommendations. This is also an area of concern discussed in the Human Rights chapter. Finally, records of administration of training have not yet been supplied, however, will need to be completed and sufficient when supplied at the completion of the Course for All cycle.

The lack of a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA) continues to remain a concern. This issue has now been raised in several of our reports. The lack of a comprehensive TNA affects several of the Police Service's initiatives, including the ability to establish DCU training requirements. This in turn will affect the Police Service's ability to realise its objectives with respect to devolution of authority, and also those related to policing with the community. The absence of a TNA will also impede the full implementation of the Police Service's entire Training, Education and Development Strategy.

The Independent Commission's report articulated a need for the Police Service to make use of off-site training facilities for learning and developmental opportunities. The purpose was twofold: to remind police officers that they remained members of the larger community and also to expose police officers and members of the community to one another. The use of university facilities has not been pursued and this desired opportunity for open communication between police officers and the general public has not occurred. There is no evidence as to what options, if any, were considered to make off-site attendance a reality. It is interesting to note that both the University of Ulster and the Policing Board spokespersons were in favour of off-site training if done in a format that does not endanger the student officers or fellow students. It was pointed out that a large number of police officers attend university campuses in Northern Ireland throughout the academic year on a personal basis.

The lack of progress on the Independent Commission's recommendation regarding Service Level Agreements (SLAs), between the DCU Commanders and Training, remains a concern. The Independent Commission recognised that, while there will be training and education common to all police officers, different DCUs might have additional training demands unique to their needs. Previous oversight reports stressed the crucial importance of SLAs, and delays were seen to affect a number of areas including the ability of DCU Commanders to structure their training and their community policing programmes, as well as assisting in a more rationalised use of organisational training resources. SLAs will be even more critical now that the DPPs are beginning to operate in conjunction with the DCU Commanders, with an expectation of fully trained officers delivering on the core community policing objective.

SLAs also serve to support the overall devolution initiative the organisation has undertaken. Considering that SLAs have been successfully employed in other parts of the Police Service, including criminal intelligence and crime analysis, it is difficult to understand the reason for their delay in training, widely acknowledged as a critical area of change for the Police Service.

As an example of the impact from the lack of SLAs, it was mentioned that District Training Officers are using personal equipment to retrieve information from colleagues or to use the Internet to review training material from police services around the world. District Training Officers identified a further irritant in that they were unable to benefit to the same extent in the training upgrade opportunities that counterparts in Garnerville are accustomed to. These upgrade training opportunities not only sharpened personal abilities but are scored in the assessment process for promotional opportunities. Such issues appear to point to an organisational emphasis on trainers at the centre as opposed to those in the districts. This is an example of an issue that would in all likelihood have been resolved previously had SLAs (and a Training Needs Analysis) with DCUs been completed as intended by the Independent Commission.

Notwithstanding the positive remarks by the probationary officers about the overall student officer training process at the Garnerville Police College, there were issues raised that will be followed up during the upcoming evaluation visit. Of particular interest were the statements by a number of persons interviewed that the course content speaks to the issue of diversity and human rights but does not delve into the issue of sectarianism. The concern from students is the apparent reluctance of Training staff to discuss the reality of sectarianism. Students stated that the most important concern facing them on the police front-line is the issue of sectarianism and the events that stem from conflicting views.

There was a strong impression that the reluctance to deal with the issue emanated from training staff unwillingness to generate difficult and uncomfortable environments for the student officers. The young, educated and sophisticated probationary officers were willing to explore the issue of sectarianism as a way to develop a mutual understanding of differences and how police officers are expected to respond to conflict arising from sectarianism. It is an area of concern that will be pursued during the next assessment phase.

Finally, there is no evidence of when the training curricula will be made available to the public. It will be important to evaluate the impact of the release to the public of the training curricula as another variable that encourages public input and perhaps more importantly the public's



greater understanding of the training that the PSNI provides to student officers and in-service members. It is a best practice for police services to provide their training curricula as well as the broad lines of the course content. It is an important transparency issue that speaks to the willingness of a police service to be open with the public that it serves. The public attendance at training sessions is in policy draft form and is not expected to be released in the near future. It is important that openness and transparency are not only spoken of, but also realised.

Future Directions

We will continue to monitor progress on increasing the number of civilian training instructors employed by the Police Service. Also of continued interest is evidence of progress on the Police Training College. In addition, oversight will focus on the development of a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis and on the developments of Service Level Agreements, particularly those with District Command Units. Finally, on a related note, we will look for progress on the devolution of decision-making authority and financial and human resources to support the training function at the district level.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation I29: Training, Education and Development Strategy

Patten Recommendation:

I29. A training, education and development strategy should be put in place, both for recruit training and for in-service training, which is linked to the aims of this report and to the objectives and priorities set out in the policing plans. These plans should incorporate training and development requirements.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Policing Board approved the TED Primary Reference Document (PRD) that forms the guide and framework for the future development of a comprehensive TED Strategy. In the interim, the PRD serves as the basis for course development for in-service training. In addition, some 20 months after the release of the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan, the Police Service still lacks a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA). This remains a serious concern as the lack of a TNA impedes the development of a fully costed, organisational training budget. This in turn impedes the implementation of the entire Training, Education and Development Strategy. Also affected is the establishment of the broad training needs of DCUs and ultimately, the achievement of the Police Service's objectives.

Recommendation I30: Training and Development Budget

Patten Recommendation:

I30. A total training and development budget should be established, covering all aspects of training, and this should be safeguarded against transfers to other sub-heads.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. There is an expectation that allocation of a dedicated budgeted training and development plan will be in place by the end of this fiscal year. As of 30 December 2002 a business case for the acquisition of software to enable costings to be charted was in place. The ability to identify variance and to make appropriate adjustments for greater budgetary control and analysis will be undertaken once software is in place.

Recommendation 131: New Police College

Patten Recommendation:

131. The Northern Ireland police should have a new purpose-built police college and the funding for it should be found in the next public spending round.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission noted the critical aspect of this recommendation, and the Policing Board noted that the Training College is one of the cornerstones of the new Police Service. The Board believes that: "the establishment of a new Police Training College is an absolute necessity in order to ensure that the PSNI have a world-class training facility for a modern, first-class police service". As of 30 December 2002 there had been little progress noted. However, the Policing Board has since approved the business case put forward by the Police Service and the proposal has now been forwarded to the NIO.

Progress on the College is widely recognised as crucial for a number of reasons, including the new beginning envisioned by the Independent Commission, the need for the Police Service to have facilities that will continue to permit its aggressive recruiting programme, and to allow for the development of facilities that support a modern policing agency. 2007 is given as the target date for completion of a new College, however the search for an appropriate building site has only just begun. It is critical that this issue is progressed as soon as possible. Evidence and documents not supplied relate to reports outlining the objectives and timetables, the plan for meeting requirements in the interim, and the comparative data relating to interim measures versus a new facility.

Recommendation 132: Service Level Agreements on Training

Patten Recommendation:

132. There should be service level agreements between police districts/departments and the police Training Branch setting out what the Branch is expected to deliver to the district or department concerned.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed and there remains minimal progress. The Independent Commission recommended this critical device as a way of delivering training to DCUs. The DCUs have been in existence for 2 years, and in our previous reports we noted that delaying SLAs would affect the ability of DCU Commanders to fully meet



their responsibilities with respect to delivering a policing and community service.

Evidence has not been supplied for the following: a policy statement and procedures for the Service Level Agreements; a DCU analysis of their training requirements, including numbers and timetables, with a consequent central training review of the needs and executive approvals; once needs are delivered against the SLAs, Training Branch needs to indicate the results achieved along with evaluation.

Recommendation I33: Civilian Input into Recruit Training

Patten Recommendation:

I33. There should be a high degree of civilian input into the recruit training programme. The director of the training centre (and the new college when this is opened) should have both academic qualifications and management expertise. Civilian instructors should be employed, or brought in as necessary to conduct as many elements of the training programme as possible. Some modules of recruit training should be contracted out to universities and delivered on university premises, ideally together with non-police students.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed. The Independent Commission noted the importance of increasing civilian input, as a means of not only conveying expertise but also demonstrating that the Police Service is an integral part of the community. A Police Service proposal for including civilians on institutional staff has not been provided. Information was provided that the current ratio of police officer training staff to permanent civilian training staff is 7:2, which has not significantly changed. However, the Police Service has made progress in increasing the number of training hours with civilian instructors that recruits are exposed to. For example, in areas such as traffic and driver training, first aid and communications training, recruits are primarily exposed to contract civilian instructors. Another area that is not progressing relates to modules delivered on university premises. While security is generally raised as a concern, examples of alternative solutions have not been provided.

Recommendation I34: Training of Civilian Recruits

Patten Recommendation:

I34. Civilian recruits to the police service should also attend the police college, and do some of their training together with police officer recruits.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. Recruit training modules amenable to joint training programmes between police and civilian personnel have been developed. The integration of police officers and civilian support staff in joint training programmes has been put on hold until April of 2004, when other major commitments to the Course for All and the Part Time Reserve training will be completed.

Recommendation 135: Achievement of Academic Qualifications by Recruits

Patten Recommendation:

135. Recruits who do not already have degrees should be encouraged to acquire appropriate academic qualifications during the first two years of their career. Encouragement should be given to those officers who wish to go on to study further relevant qualifications.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed, and the recommendation will be the subject of ongoing evaluation. Data from the first graduates will be available in May of 2004, which reflects the time needed to achieve their Diploma. The Diploma in Police Studies is a programme that recruits are encouraged to enroll in during the first two years of probationary service. Since November of 2001 all students are required to obtain a Certificate in Police Studies prior to becoming a police officer. The statistics provided from the first student officer intake under the new student officer training programme is encouraging and demonstrates that police officers are taking advantage of the advanced education programmes.

Recommendation 136: Timing of Attestation as a Constable

Patten Recommendation:

136. Attestation as a police officer should take place only upon successful completion of the recruit training course. A sufficiently rigorous standard should be required for success in that course; and completion of the course should be marked by a graduation ceremony.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board/NIO

The first annual report, with data on experience during the first year of this programme, will be available in May of 2003. This will supply the data requested relating to completion rates and separation from the police service with the reasons.

Recommendations 137, 138 and 139: Contents of Recruit Training Programme

Patten Recommendations:

137. The hours spent on drill should be considerably reduced.

138. Problem-solving and partnership approaches should be central to the recruit training course, and scenario exercises should be further developed as training tools.

139. Community awareness training for police recruits should be developed to include representatives of all the main political and religious traditions in Northern Ireland. Community awareness should not be seen as a stand-alone element of recruit training; it should be integrated into all aspects of training.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board



Administrative compliance for these recommendations has been completed except for the Policing Board review, which is expected later in 2003. The Board has indicated its intention to focus on training, education and learning in the upcoming year. The Personnel and General Purposes Committee is in the process of developing the review and monitoring mechanisms to ensure progress and compliance with the Board's Policing Plan as well as the recommendations of the Independent Commission.

Recommendation I40: Tutor Officer Scheme

Patten Recommendation:

I40. The Northern Ireland police should introduce a comprehensive tutor officer scheme. Tutor officers should be carefully selected, according to their commitment and adaptability to the new style of policing, and trained.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. Oversight evaluators have conducted a number of interviews with probationary constables and tutor officers at different District Command Units. The effectiveness of the programme continues to impress the evaluators. The Tutor Constables programme is a best practice model that will reap benefits for the PSNI as the graduates begin to work on the police front line. The oversight process will continue the evaluation and verification of this recommendation.

Recommendations I41, I42, I43 and I44: Training Needs and Priorities

Patten Recommendations:

- I41. Every member of the police service should have, as soon as possible, a course on the impact on policing of the new constitutional arrangements for Northern Ireland, the new policing arrangements set out in this report, and the reforms of the criminal justice system.
- I42. As a matter of priority, all members of the police service should be instructed in the implications for policing of the Human Rights Act 1998, and the wider context of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- I43. All police managers should have management training, as appropriate, and every manager should at some stage of his/her career do a management course in a non-police environment, such as a business school or university. Use should be made of management workshops, so that managers can discuss and develop with each other how best to reshape the police organisation.
- I44. Every officer and civilian in the service should undergo adequate training in information technology.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The Independent Commission recommended in September 1999 that, as soon as possible, police and civilian

members of the Police Service be instructed on the impacts of the new constitutional arrangements on policing, policing arrangements recommended by the Independent Commission, and on other changes to the criminal justice system. Additional areas included human rights, police management training, and information technology (IT) training. The Government accepted these recommendations and we indicated in September of 2001 that we required evidence of a curriculum for the course dealing with these areas, along with detailed records of attendance. Further, we requested evidence that the Policing Board measures progress in these areas.

As of 30 December 2002, administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed, specifically with respect to the new constitutional arrangements and the new policing arrangements set out in the Independent Commission's report. All reforms to the criminal justice system have not yet been completed. The Police Service designed the Course for All with modules that covered the change process and constitutional arrangements, the new Code of Ethics (human rights) and policing with the community and problem solving. Concerns with respect to human rights training are covered in more detail in the Human Rights chapter. Management and IT training are covered later.

In our Report No. 6 we had voiced several concerns, not the least of which was the fact that the Course's objectives were extremely ambitious. Experience indicates that dealing with material of this complexity, and at an appropriate level of detail, requires more time than the two days that have been allotted to the Course. Several evaluators had an opportunity to observe the Course for All and our earlier concerns are somewhat borne out. It is our view that the Course for All, specifically with respect to Recommendation 141 (Constitutional arrangements) is not adequate. Considering that this is a particularly important area, given the impacts the Commission's recommendations have on almost every aspect of policing in Northern Ireland, there is very little time spent on examining the issues.

The area is introduced very well with a 12 minute video in which two eminent Commissioners from the Independent Commission, Dr. Maurice Hayes and Mr. Peter Smith, QC, outline the changes and impacts. However, that was not followed by any in-depth discussion leading to the "full understanding of the impact on policing" envisioned by the Independent Commission. Our evaluators observed that there appears to be a reluctance to deal with this issue in any more than a perfunctory manner.

Evidence has been provided of a career development-training programme to ensure that police managers have access to business and management training. A Learning Advisory Council comprised of internal, external and community representatives has been established by the Executive Leadership Faculty (ELF). It is a forward-thinking approach that cements the intent of the Independent Commission of having a balanced mix of subject matter experts with civilians providing input into the development of training programmes. The aggressive five year training projection by ELF is that 3,200 police officers will be accredited over the period.

The Information Technology Training Programme is underway with a completion date for the first phase expected in March 2003. The PSNI has indicated that police and civilian staff will be provided with training in information technology appropriate to their job requirements. Training in the introduction of the Intranet for all relevant employees, uniform and civilian, has been



outsourced to the main tender or the provision of the system. It is an area that will be evaluated and verified during the next assessment period.

Recommendation I45: Joint Training with Civilian Analysts

Patten Recommendation:

I45. Opportunities should be taken for joint training with civilian analysts, and members of other police services.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The programme for joint training with civilian analysts and police personnel has been advanced extensively. The integration of civilian analysts with police personnel has been accomplished and training is occurring in two areas: Serious Crime and Crime Reduction. The PSNI reported that as of November 2002 a total of 875 personnel (police and analysts) have been involved in joint training ventures. There was also joint training on the Crime Reduction Course undertaken at the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science in London. The initiatives to develop a proposal to set up an Assessment Centre that will support the provision of the NVQ (Intelligence Analyst) PSNI analysts are regarded as a positive.

There have been several training days allocated for analyst training with other police services in North America including San Diego, California; Lakewood, Colorado; Overland Park, Kansas; the Arizona State *Gang Task Force*; and Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. There is a Memorandum of Understanding with the Scottish Police Crime Pattern Analysis and Serious Crime Investigations on shared training. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation I46: Neighbourhood Policing Training Programme

Patten Recommendation:

I46. The Northern Ireland police should draw on the success of neighbourhood policing in such places as the Markets area of Belfast in developing a neighbourhood policing training programme for all members of the police service. Standard training for neighbourhood officers should include modules on such community problems as domestic violence, child abuse, rape, drugs and youth issues and this training should be updated as necessary.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission recognised the importance of this training to assist in a transition from a security to a community policing environment. As of 30 December 2002 evidence of a Neighbourhood Policing curriculum has not been provided. The Community Beat Officer's course is intended to satisfy this recommendation, however was only a pilot course as of 30 December 2002. This is a concern since community policing is a core theme for the Police Service and Policing Board and clearly requires trained officers to deliver such a programme.

Recommendation 147: Publication of Training Curricula

Patten Recommendation:

147. The training curricula for the police service should be publicly available, and easily accessible, e.g. on the Internet.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. A plan to provide details of training curricula to be made available to the public has not been provided. However, an exhaustive list of courses available from the different faculties and specialisations has been collated into a course directory. It is expected to be included on the PSNI Intranet once it has been rolled out across the organisation. There is no indication to date that it will be accessible to the public on the PSNI Internet web site. In view of the transparency issue that this recommendation addresses, it requires follow-up. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

Recommendation 148: Public Attendance at Police Training Sessions

Patten Recommendation:

148. Some training sessions should be open to members of the public to attend, upon application, priority being given to members of the Policing Board or District Policing Partnership Boards, Lay Visitors, or other bodies, statutory or non-governmental, involved in working with the police.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission noted that it was important that these sessions should be open to the public and in particular, that groups such as the Policing Board and DPPs attend. This was seen as a matter of transparency, as well as practicality. We have requested evidence of a programme relating to public attendance, in particular policy and timetables. As of 30 December 2002, these had not been provided. However, Policing Board members are provided a standing offer to access police training, as well as representatives of organisations mandated to conduct controlled studies of police training programmes. There are plans to provide specialised training to members of the DPPs and DCU Commanders will be provided specialised training in conjunction with the Policing Board. This area will be monitored as a future direction since it relates to transparency. It will be a concern if the Police Service cannot move toward a more open and transparent delivery of training.

Recommendation 149: Pilot Citizens Course

Patten Recommendation:

149. The new police college should offer a pilot citizens course, to assess demand in Northern Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission recommended this in September of 1999 as a matter of transparency. The recommendation was accepted, with a pilot course to be developed and implemented by September of 2002. In September of 2001 we requested the policy, curriculum and an implementation schedule. As of 30 December 2002 this has not been provided and has now been deferred by the Police Service until 2005. This area will be monitored as a future direction since it relates to transparency. As noted previously, it will be a concern if openness and transparency to the public cannot be achieved in the training area.

▶▶ **culture, ethos and symbols**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

Lead responsibility for the critical issues of name and symbols was assumed by the Northern Ireland Office, while the Police Service managed the detailed research and consultation challenges of designing and procuring new uniforms. The Police Service has responsibility for defining a neutral working environment. The Policing Board has a critical role to play in interpreting community values and their expression in the change process.

Progress and Accomplishments

Careful and diligent work by the Policing Board, combined with sound planning and logistical control by the Police Service, resulted in a critical early success to the new beginning envisaged by the Independent Commission. The change of name came into effect on 4 November 2001, with the badge and flags being changed on 5 April 2002. A complete change of uniform was also achieved on 5 April 2002.

A police memorial policy was established and a Garden of Remembrance is funded and under construction. An order was issued to introduce policy for a neutral working environment, and audits completed for all police stations.

Areas of Concern

The order laying down conditions to sustain a neutral working environment has yet to be published as a General Order, pending resolution of a legal interpretation. This in no way impedes observance of policy.

Future Directions

Progress on site preparation for the Garden of Remembrance made through the Winter months will be reviewed and verified in the upcoming oversight visit.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 150 - Name of the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

150. While the Royal Ulster Constabulary should not be disbanded, it should henceforth be named the Northern Ireland Police Service.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendations 151: New Police Badge

Patten Recommendations:

151. The Northern Ireland Police Service should adopt a new badge and symbols which are entirely free from any association with either the British or Irish States.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendations 152: Flying of Union Flag

Patten Recommendations:

152. The Union flag should no longer be flown from police buildings.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendations 153 - Flying of PSNI Flag

Patten Recommendations:

153. On those occasions on which it is appropriate to fly a flag on police buildings, the flag flown should be that of the Northern Ireland Police Service and it, too, should be free from associations with the British or Irish States.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendation 154 - Police Uniform

Patten Recommendation:

154. The colour of the current police uniform should be retained, but a new, more practical style of uniform should be provided to police officers.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendation 155 - Police Memorials

Patten Recommendation:

155. Police memorials in police buildings should remain as they are and where they are.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Police memorials in police buildings remain in place. Site preparation for the Garden of Remembrance commenced in 2002 with major construction scheduled for February/March of 2003. The museum project is included in financial estimates but construction awaits substantial completion of the Garden.



Recommendation 156: Neutral Working Environment

Patten Recommendation:

156. The maintenance of a neutral working environment should become an assessed management responsibility at all levels of management.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

This recommendation has been implemented, with the exception that a General Order to replace the existing directive order has not been promulgated, pending resolution of a legal issue. The new appraisal system to be introduced in April of 2003 requires evaluation on responsibility for maintaining a neutral working environment. A site inspection of all facilities was conducted in 2002. Maintenance is now a command and supervisory responsibility.

▶▶ **co-operation with other police services**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission was asked to make proposals concerning the scope for structured co-operation with An Garda Síochána and other police forces. The Independent Commission discussion in this area recognised the excellent operational co-operation between the (then) Royal Ulster Constabulary and other police agencies around the world. However, it noted that co-operation could be improved. The Independent Commission also noted that the globalisation of crime required police services around the world to collaborate with each other more effectively, and that the exchange of best practice ideas between police services would help the effectiveness of domestic policing.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Inter-Governmental Agreement was signed by representatives of the British and Irish Governments on 29 April 2002, and British and Irish legislation to give effect to the agreement remains on track for the Spring of 2003. Protocols for short and long-term personnel exchanges have been agreed upon between the PSNI and An Garda Síochána. Joint disaster planning is proceeding with a 'table top' exercise completed and an actual exercise planned for the Spring of 2003. The PSNI has been involved in peacekeeping missions, although these have been recently limited due to resourcing issues. Secondments of police officers (generally senior) are occurring, however, there is limited secondment into the PSNI.

Areas of Concern

As noted in our Report No. 6 the PSNI has established informal contacts with several police training facilities. However, the PSNI has not yet developed formal or systematic collaboration agreements with those institutions, covering issues such as faculty exchanges and joint in-service training. While the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendations in this area was to open the Police Service to other ideas, it also reflects the related absence of progress in the training area.

A longer-term concern relates to the strategic development of the PSNI's capacity to draw on the experience of police services from around the world, while at the same time developing and contributing PSNI experience to global policing issues. The Police Service and Policing Board have rightly focussed in the shorter-term on reducing the peacekeeping contingent to deal with domestic needs. However a continued ad hoc approach, to the Independent Commission's broader intent of increasing the experience and capacity of the Police Service through north-south, UK and global exposure, is a longer-term concern.

Future Directions

Despite the signing of an Inter-Governmental Agreement, legal advice was that legislation was required, both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, to give effect to the expressed intent. This is not expected until the Spring of 2003. The oversight process will examine results in this area for our next report.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendations 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163 and 164:

Co-operation Between the Police Service and An Garda Síochána

Patten Recommendations:

157. The Northern Ireland police and the Garda Síochána should have written protocols covering key aspects of co-operation.
158. The present pattern of meetings between the police services in Northern Ireland and the Republic should be enhanced by an annual conference, designed to drive forward co-operation in areas of common concern.
159. There should be a programme of long-term personnel exchanges, such as fixed-term secondments, between the Northern Ireland police and the Garda, in specialist fields where co-operation between the two services is most needed, such as drugs, and in areas such as training.
160. Consideration should be given to posting liaison officers from each service to the central headquarters and/or border area headquarters of the other.
161. There should be structured co-operation between the two police services in training.
162. There should be joint disaster planning between the Northern Ireland police and the Garda Síochána and the plans should be tested by regular joint exercises.
163. Consideration should be given to establishing a provision for an immediate exchange of officers and pooling of investigative teams after major incidents with a substantial cross-border dimension, akin to the arrangements which exist between Kent and police services of France and Belgium.
164. Every effort should be made to ensure that fast, effective and reliable communications are established between the Garda and the Northern Ireland police both through improved radio links and through compatible IT systems.

Lead Responsibility: British and Irish Governments/Chief Constable/Garda Commissioner

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed, however, the signing of the Inter-Governmental Agreement by the British and Irish Governments on 29 April 2002 generated some results. Legislation from both Governments is required to allow exchanges for officers operating with police powers, and that is currently being prepared by both Governments for enactment in the Spring of 2003. Protocols for short and long-term personnel exchanges have been agreed upon between the Police Service and An Garda Síochána, and are scheduled to commence in January of 2003.

As previously reported, the first Annual Conference between police services was held in May of 2002. The next one is scheduled for the Autumn of 2003. A tabletop joint disaster planning exercise was conducted in November of 2002, and a joint live exercise is currently being prepared for the Spring of 2003. Some short-term exchanges in the training area have occurred and more are scheduled.



As of 30 December 2002 long term exchanges of personnel from specialised areas had not occurred, although this is scheduled to commence in January and February of 2003. Initial exchanges will involve personnel from the areas of Roads Policing and Assets Seizure. Confirmation of an exchange of HQ liaison officers has not been received, nor evidence of operational pooling of resources to deal with major incidents with cross-border dimensions. No new results relating to cross border communications had occurred.

Recommendation 165 - Joint Database Development with the Garda

Patten Recommendation:

165. Joint database development should be pursued as a matter of priority in all the main areas of cross-border criminality, such as drugs, smuggling, vehicle theft and terrorism.

Lead Responsibility: British and Irish Governments/Chief Constable/Garda Commissioner

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. As of 30 December 2002 there have been no results to report

Recommendations 166 and 167 - Personnel Exchanges with GB Police Services

Patten Recommendations:

166. A determined effort should be made to develop exchanges, and long-term secondments, between the Northern Ireland police and police services in Great Britain.

167. There should be training exchanges and some joint training between the Northern Ireland police and police services in Great Britain.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable

A memorandum of understanding covers management exchanges and long-term exchanges continue. Twelve police officers are currently on exchange with ranks ranging from Chief Superintendent to Constable. This is primarily a one-way exchange, with limited exchanges into the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Recommendation 168: Links Between Police Training Colleges

Patten Recommendation:

168. Consideration should be given to structured links between the four principal police training establishments in the British Isles, namely Bramshill (England), Templemore (Republic of Ireland), Tulliallan (Scotland), and Garnerville or the proposed new police college in Northern Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/NIO/Other Government Departments

There have been informal contacts between the PSNI and other training establishments, but formal agreements have not yet been developed except in the area of crime analysis.

Recommendations 169 and 170: International Training Exchanges

Patten Recommendations:

169. International training exchanges should be further developed, focusing in particular on matters where the police in Northern Ireland need overseas police co-operation and on best practice developments in policing worldwide. There should be co-operation with other police services in the field of research.

170. The police should develop opportunities to provide more training for overseas police services in their areas of excellence.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Only limited progress has been made in creating a programme for international exchanges. Furthermore, because the research unit has been reorganised, the development of collaborative links with foreign police services with respect to the study of “best practices” remains ad hoc and un-systemised. The PSNI does assist in training police personnel from abroad on an ad hoc basis.

Recommendation 171: United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

Patten Recommendation:

171. The Northern Ireland police should be ready to participate in future United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/FCO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed and information is updated periodically. As of 28 November 2002, 80 PSNI officers were serving in international missions: 7 in Bosnia; 58 in Kosovo; 1 in East Timor; and 14 to the Central Service.

▶▶ oversight commissioner



A. Chapter Summary

Background

It was the belief of the Independent Commission that an independent and eminent person, from outside the United Kingdom or Ireland, should be selected to oversee the implementation of its recommendations. The Governments agreed and Mr. Tom Constantine was selected, accepted the duty and was appointed in May of 2000 for a three-year term. Statutory backing is found in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, at sections 67 and 68, and in Schedule 4.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Oversight Commissioner has established an office and small staff in Northern Ireland, along with a United States and Canadian team of experienced senior law enforcement and academic experts to evaluate and report on the progress of change. This is the first public report for 2003. Full details can be located on our web site at: www.oversightcommissioner.org

Areas of Concern

There are no concerns at the present time. Full co-operation from all agencies and organisations has been provided and is expected to continue. Adequate current resourcing and support have been received from the Government, along with respect for our complete independence.

Future Directions

Reports will be submitted three times per year on an approximate schedule of May, September and December.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 172 - Appointment of Commissioner

Patten Recommendation:

172. An eminent person, from a country other than the United Kingdom or Ireland, should be appointed as soon as possible as an Oversight Commissioner with responsibility for supervising the implementation of our recommendations.

Lead Responsibility: Oversight Commissioner

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

Recommendations 173, 174 and 175: Functions of Commissioner

Patten Recommendations:

173. The government, the police service, and the Policing Board (and DPPs) should provide the Oversight Commissioner with objectives (with timetables) covering their own responsibilities, and should report on the progress achieved at the periodic review meetings, and account for any failures to achieve objectives.

174. The Oversight Commissioner should in turn report publicly after each review meeting on the progress achieved, together with his or her observations on the extent to which any failures or delays are the responsibility of the policing institutions themselves or due to matters beyond their control.

175. The Oversight Commissioner should be appointed for a term of five years.

Lead Responsibility: NIO

Reports are being provided by the different agencies in response to the Oversight Commissioner's requests. In turn, the Oversight Commissioner is reporting publicly three times per year. Since the writing of this report the mandate of the Oversight Commissioner has been extended until May of 2005.





▶▶ notes