



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

HM Inspector of Constabulary Zoë Billingham

Everyone's Business: How are Forces
Responding?

Everyone's Business

- HMIC was commissioned by the Home Secretary in September 2013 to inspect the police response to domestic abuse:
 - Overall police response to victims of domestic abuse is not good enough
 - Many forces need to take decisive action now
 - A priority on paper but not translating into operational reality
 - Too often it is the poor relation to other police activity
- 'Everyone's Business: Improving the Police Response to Domestic Abuse', which summarised the main findings & made a series of recommendations was published in March 2014

Main Findings of Report

- Police response to victims of domestic abuse is not good enough; forces need to take decisive action now
- A priority on paper but not translated into operational reality; the poor relation
- Police attitudes too often judgmental (despite improvements over the last decade and commitment of many excellent officers)
- Skills to identify and tackle domestic abuse lacking
- Core policing is not happening: investigating the offence and safeguarding the victim
- Four forces of serious concern: required to provide immediate action plans and re-inspection

Recommendations

- Making domestic abuse a priority – a renewed drive at national and local level:
 - Role for central Government – strong challenge on the progress forces are making possibly via a national oversight and monitoring group
 - Force action plan drawing on HMIC report. PCCs hold to account (PCC ‘checklist’) and HMIC re-inspect
 - Chief constables to conduct thorough leadership review
 - Consistent, comparable accurate data including views of victims
 - Minimum standards in core policing activity
 - Urgent review of risk assessment
 - Fundamental review of training
 - Perpetrator targeting and management

Force Requirements: Priority into Practice

- Visible leadership and clear direction
- Management and supervision; reinforcing attitudes and behaviours
- Skills, training and better understanding of domestic abuse
- Prioritise action on domestic abuse in daily activity of frontline officers
- Measure success through performance management systems
- Promotion, recognition and reward for officers and staff
- **Voices of victims must be heard**
- Restatement of core policing standards with intrusive supervision

Force Domestic Abuse Action Plans

- Overall significant work invested in production of plans
- Action plan received from all 43 police forces (varying quality in terms of content & format)
- 38 forces submitted plan following the national action plan self assessment template
- Forces asked to RAG rate actions within plans – 12 did not rate any actions & 19 assessed 70% of actions as green
- 40 forces published plans on their website
- HMIC held 4 panels to assess the robustness and quality of each action plan

Observations from Assessment Panel

Number of recurrent issues:

- Very few forces prioritised actions within their plans; should be done according to victim risk & need
- Reliance upon one or two key individuals to progress activity
- Most plans extremely process driven; reliant upon new steering group/ policy
- No clear indication of the anticipated outcomes of activity & the impact for victims
- Unclear how progress against actions would be measured

Commissioning Services

- **Recommendation 10 in ‘Everyone’s Business’:**

Police and crime commissioners should consider the findings and recommendations of this report when commissioning services for victims of domestic abuse. In particular, they should take note of the strong value placed on the role of independent domestic violence advisers (IDVAs) by the victims, police and other criminal justice agencies

PCC Checklist

- Checklist produced for PCCs to support them in holding the force to account for delivery of improved services to victims consisting of nine questions:
 1. How well does the force deal with initial contact?
 2. How effective is the force's initial response?
 3. How effective is the force at investigating crimes & safeguarding victims?
 4. How well does the force work with partners?
 5. How effectively is victim feedback obtained and used?
 6. How effective is the force in preventing domestic abuse?
 7. How effective are the force's mechanisms for ensuring that the stated priority translates into an operational reality?
 8. How effective is the force's training on domestic abuse?
 9. How effective are the force's supervision arrangements in respect of domestic abuse?

Next Steps

- **Feedback** - HMIC have provided all forces with written feedback on the quality of their action plans (*Jan 2015*)
- **PCC Engagement** - HMIs are discussing progress against force action plans at the quarterly meetings they hold with PCCs/Chief Constables (*On going*)
- **Further Inspection** - HMIC will inspect forces' progress on domestic abuse as part of its new PEEL all force inspection programme & publish a stand-alone report (*Autumn 2015*)
- **Updated Guidance for PCCs** - HMIC are planning to update & reissue the PCC 'checklist' after the follow up inspection (*Autumn 2015*)



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Contact: Easternregion@hmic.gsi.gov.uk