BTPA
British Transport Police Authority

The Forum
5th Floor North
74-80 Camden Street
London NW1 0EG

T: 020 7383 0259
F: 020 7383 2655
E: general.enquiries@btpa.police.uk

www.btpa.police.uk

Report to: Police Authority

Agenda item: 6

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Subject: Performance Review Group Q3 update

Sponsor: Chair, Performance Review Group

Author: Sam Elvy

For: Information and approval

1. Purpose of paper

1.1 To provide an overview of the main business done at, and the actions arising from, the quarter 3 meeting of the Authority's Performance Review Group (PRG).

2. Background

2.1 The Authority's new business cycle was launched in April 2010 and a Performance Review Group established to carry out detailed performance oversight activities in support of the work of the full Authority. This report summarises the key issues emerging from the quarter 3 meeting of the Group.

3. Standing items

3.1 **Performance dashboard:**

The Group received the Q3 performance dashboard and supporting commentary (attached to this report at Appendices Ai, Aii and Aiii) and discussions were focused on the following headline issues;

- All national targets are now being met
- An improved picture on number of local targets being met with completion of Problem Solving Plans being a focus for the last quarter of 2011/12

- The challenge of the disconnect between the fall in number of delay related 'incidents' and an increase in overall delay minutes
- Management of unexplained fatalities
- Ongoing focus on PCSO sickness
- New regular item on the oversight of Taser deployments
- Progress with projects – concerns arising around IT and impact of the delays to the Wide Area Network (WAN) project

3.2 **Operational Performance**

The Group noted the overall positive and improved picture in relation to national and local policing plan targets. All national targets were being achieved at the end of Q3 and more local targets were being met at the end of Q3 compared with Q2. Successful completion of outstanding PSPs will be a major focus for the final quarter of 2011/12.

3.3 Since the last quarter's review the Force was now meeting the national disruption offences target and there had been fewer offences this quarter than the same quarter last year and the overall offence numbers was now coming into line with the performance target when reviewed seasonally. As in previous quarters, most offences relate to trespass and vandalism. Of note is that live cable related offences have continued to fall although the Force highlighted that the price of copper had also recently fallen by 25 per cent so this, in addition to BTP's proactive work is likely to have had an impact on overall crime levels.

3.4 Disruption minutes had continued to fall from Q2 to Q3, broadly in line with falls in offences; however Members noted that year to date total delay minutes were up by 17% on 2010/11. BTP agreed that in proposing the current target their assumption had been that a reduction in offences and incidents would automatically lead to a reduction delay minutes; clearly experience this year had not borne this assumption out. Learning this year had revealed that volume of delay incidents, as well as the type of incidents, their location and the response of all partners had all had an impact on the overall scale of delay.

3.5 The Force described the impact that a number of particularly difficult fatalities had had on overall delay minutes and added that there had been an increase in the number of unexplained fatalities in 2011/12. Possible reasons for the increase in fatalities are currently being explored and it was noted that issues such as the current economic situation may be contributing to increased suicides on the rail network. BTP offered that challenging historic cases may have also led to BTP, rightly, erring on the side of caution when managing some of these unexplained fatalities. This had been identified as a possibility at a strategic level and the current approach to both decision making and management of unexplained fatalities is currently under review with the intention that this work could have a positive impact on reducing total delay minutes in the future.

3.6 Members noted the excellent work being piloted on London North Area around partial reopening of lines following a fatality and sought assurance that good practice such as this is being captured and promulgated throughout the Force. BTP gave assurance that these initiatives were regularly being reviewed through both Force Management Team (FMT) and other local meetings and the potential arising from the innovative approach taken on London North was already being explored across BTP.

3.7 Members noted that notifiable crime has continued to fall in 2011/12 but counter to this trend cycle crime had increased in the same period. BTP updated that the majority of these offences have been occurring in the London South and London North areas; as a result the force has been working locally to educate passengers about the need for adequate cycle security and the industry about providing secure cycle racks. Members queried the level response from train operating companies and were informed that there had been some great engagement on this but that overall the response was patchy and a view was emerging that current franchising arrangements did not always encourage this sort of investment. ACC Pacey informed the members that, although important, the force had to make a judgement about balancing this issue with other crime types when deciding how to focus resources on priorities.

3.8 Members suggested that the force could communicate to the industry the proportion of overall notifiable crimes that is accounted for cycle thefts, and to propose that operators are also able to do something locally, in partnership with BTP and passengers, about these numbers. Mr Valk has offered to share

some useful contacts that could provide advice on work undertaken in Holland, where cycle use is much higher.

3.9 Recent seasonal movements in overall sickness were noted, and although the total employee target was being met the ongoing challenge of PCSO sickness was explored. Some local feedback provided by Members from their Area liaison work reemphasising the issue of the impact that a small number of long term cases could have on overall figures. Members noted that the issue was being managed appropriately at the present time and that time was needed to allow for solutions currently in progress to work their way through into the data.

3.10 Members received Taser deployment data for the first time in order to increase the overall level of Authority oversight of the volume of usage and any issues arising from deployments. Historical contextual data was provided verbally and timeline data presented in a tabular format has been requested in future reports. Members queried whether Taser was delivering any operational benefits for BTP; ACC Pacey confirmed that this is the case although they are rarely used. The key benefits lie in being able to use them to defuse very serious and volatile situations in a way which minimises the risk of physical harm to both the public and BTP officers.

3.11 **Cable theft**

Members noted that live cable offences had reduced by 15 per cent year date compared with last year and that since Network Rail resources had been deployed in October 2011, offences had reduced by 35%. BTP suggested that recent successes had been helped by increased industry efforts and improved national awareness; including the current trial with scrap metal dealers in the North Eastern Area – Operation Tornado.

3.12 BTP also updated on progress with the new legislation explaining that the remaining questions are largely around content and timing rather than principle. There is acknowledgement that, although new legislation will work for a period of time, offenders will eventually work adapt to it and as such the Force is already working to better understand the end markets and disposal routes for stolen metal.

3.13 BTP noted that it had not yet received any money in relation to the £5 million national taskforce funding, which has been announced. Discussions are ongoing about whether the funding is only for this business year or whether it can be rolled forward into next. The Group agreed that there was not sufficient time left this year for the funding to be fully utilised as effectively as possible. Members noted the need for any activity funded by the metal theft task force to be identifiable, so that reassurance can be provided to the Authority and Government about its use and impact. ACC Pacey informed the Group that governance plan is in place and an internal bidding process will be overseen by the ACPO Metal Theft Working Group.

3.14 **HMIC Report Card Inspection: Data Quality**

Members noted the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) recommended by HMIC; the Force added that there was some concern that these were observations rather than tightly defined areas for focused improvement. The Group will receive a further update on progress at its next meeting in May.

4. Thematic reports received

4.1 **BTP Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (EDHR) Strategy: 'people & culture' theme**

4.2 The Force noted that the report had been significantly scaled back since its last presentation and that, as presented it, probably didn't include sufficient contextual information or metrics for the Authority to form a view about progress towards the stated objectives. The next thematic EDHR report would be presented differently to address these concerns.

4.3 BTP asked Members to note its ongoing challenge to recruit female officers, with the most recent recruitment window receiving in excess of 4000 applicants of which only around 22% were from female candidates. BTP has work ongoing to understand the possible barriers which might deter female applicants - the nature of BTP's work, a lack of some specialist posts found in other forces and the perception that officers can be deployed anywhere in the country were highlighted as possible reasons for this.

4.4 Members did note BTP's recent improved position from 35th to 25th in the Stonewall annual top 100 employers' workplace

equality index which highlights the UK's best employers for gay, lesbian and bisexual staff; again making BTP one of the better ranked forces in the index.

4.5 **Protective services theme: Critical Incidents**

Members received a presentation on the nature of, and BTP's approach to, managing critical incidents[1]. Of particular interest to members was the increasing influence the media (both the formal press and growing social media) had on how BTP needed to manage such incidents including how, where and the speed with which BTP needed to release, and monitor non-BTP releases of, information. Members felt that this topic was of sufficient interest to the full Authority that a more detailed piece of work be carried out and presented in due course.

Recommendation: the Authority receives a presentation on the challenges, and BTP's approach to the challenges, of managing media relations (press and social media) at its meeting in May or thereafter following publication of the new national standards for media engagement recommended by HMIC

4.6 **Thematic report: force training strategy**

BTP provided a short update on progress with the Learning and Development (L&D) strategic review and presented year to date performance figures for delivery of planned training.

4.7 Members expressed concern that the required compliance rate for mandatory training was set at only 90% and that some Areas were failing to achieve this figure. BTP explained that the compliance rate for frontline officers was higher than this (closer to 98%) as this overall figure included officers that were largely office based. Members noted that these officers might be deployed in an emergency and that regular refresher training was essential for all deployable staff and the current figures were a cause for concern and should be improved.

4.8 Members also explored BTP's success rate for OSPRE[2] (Sergeants and Inspectors) exams and noted that while BTP's

[1] This presentation is restricted but is available in hard copy from the Executive.
[2] Objective Structured Performance-Related Examination

success rate had improved but was still relatively low compared with many other forces with pass rates for part 1 exams of 52% for PC to Sergeant and 56% for Sergeants to Inspectors. BTP updated that OSPRE candidates are currently self selecting and the Force is looking at ways to be involved in identifying the most appropriate officers to put forward for these exams.

4.9 Members noted the low numbers of employees that had completed Olympics training courses thus far, particularly at Bronze Command level, and the apparently low attendance rates for some of the booked courses. This raised concerns both about BTP's capability during the Olympics and the value being delivered by the delivery of such training. Operation Bench[3] was noted a having had a significant impact on planned Olympic training in 2011. Members also questioned the 'spiky' nature of training delivery and asked what efforts were underway to ensure training delivery was spread as smoothly as possible during the year. There was some discussion about the accuracy of the data as presented and Members requested an update on actual the status of these figures.

4.10 **Scoping discussion: developing and maintaining a firearms capability**

The Group noted that the BTP firearms unit should be up and running before the next meeting of the Group in May, the Executive will liaise with the Force to establish the areas of interest to be covered.

5. Issues for Q4 meeting

5.1 In addition to the standing items the Performance Review Group will be considering the following at its next meeting in May;

- An update on Stop & Search usage for Q3&4
- A review of progress on the HMIC Data Quality inspection Areas For Improvement
- An overview of progress with year 1 of the 2011-14 Strategic Plan
- Update on EDHR Strategy: 'Organisational Processes' theme
- Protective services thematic: firearms

[3] The policing of the summer disorder in August 2011

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to note progress made and issues noted by the Group at its quarter 3 meeting.

6.2 Members are invited to ask any supplementary questions arising from the issues reported in this paper and/or its supporting documentation.

6.3 The Authority receives a presentation on the challenges, and BTP's approach to the challenges, of managing media relations (press and social media) at its meeting in May or thereafter following publication of the new national standards for media engagement recommended by HMIC