

Northern Ireland Policing Board's

Statistical and Research Strategy 2010-2014

Purpose

This document outlines the Northern Ireland Policing Board's (the Board) Statistical and Research Strategy during the period 2010 to 2014. The strategy's purpose is to:

- outline the Statistical and Research strategy for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2014,
- set out the strategic context of the statistical and research activity to be conducted, and
- show how this work is linked with the overall aims and objectives of the Board.

Many of the proposed activities will be undertaken to meet the Board's statutory obligations under Section 3 (3) (d) (ii) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to "*assess the level of public satisfaction with the performance of the police and district policing partnerships*" (DPPs).

Staffing and reviewing the Statistical and Research strategy

The three staff in the Board's Statistics and Research Branch (one Deputy Principal Statistician, who is both the Head of Branch and the Board's Senior Statistician, and two Assistant Statisticians) are on long term loan from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). They provide a professional, independent and impartial statistical and research service to the Board and DPPs. The Senior Statistician has overall responsibility for delivering the Board's Statistical and Research Strategy.

The strategy will evolve during its lifetime and this document outlines the planned statistical and research activities currently known. The strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and formally at the beginning of each year to take account of emerging work, ad hoc requests for statistical and research projects and changing priorities. It will then be presented to the Board's Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee (which has delegated authority for the Board's Statistical and Research Strategy and research budget) for approval.

Statistical and Research Strategy for 2010-2014 (as at June 2010)

Year 1 – 2010/11

- **District Policing Partnership (DPP) Public Consultation Survey 2010.**

The DPP Public Consultation Survey meets the Board's statutory requirement to assess the level of public satisfaction with the performance of the police and DPPs. It is conducted every two years, as per the DPP Code of Practice. Central Survey Unit, NISRA has conducted surveys in June 2003, May 2004, May 2006, February 2008 and most recently in February/March 2010 – all of which were postal surveys, issued to approximately one in ten households in Northern Ireland.

This Northern Ireland wide survey gives results for each DPP and questions asked include public attitudes to policing issues and priorities, police resourcing, satisfaction with local policing and knowledge/awareness of DPPs. The 2010 survey collected information for the first time at a Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Neighbourhood level and included questions on the public's views of Neighbourhood Policing and how it is perceived to be working.

The Board will publish the Northern Ireland results by September 2010 on its website – www.nipolicingboard.org.uk. The Board will report individual DPP findings to each DPP by 30 June 2010, who are responsible for publishing their own local results. The results will help DPPs provide input to both the annual (Northern Ireland wide) and local policing plans for 2011/12. The PSNI Neighbourhood level results will be supplied to PSNI for their analysis and use by 30 June 2010 and will help ensure the policing service in each area meets the individual community needs.

The 2010 DPP Public Consultation Survey cost approximately £140,000 and DPPs contribute 25% of the cost. The remainder of the survey cost is paid from the Board's DPP budget. (The survey is paid for over two years – postage, printing and preparation costs of £60,000 were paid in 2009/10, while the analysis costs of £80,000 will be paid in 2010/11.)

- **Omnibus Survey in September 2010.**

Since its creation in November 2001, the Board has commissioned the Policing Board module in the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey twice a year to assess public satisfaction

with the PSNI, the Board and DPPs. However during 2009/10 the Board agreed to conduct an annual Omnibus Survey from 2010/11 and to explore opportunities to collect more local level information, such as from the DPP Public Consultation Survey.

Northern Ireland Omnibus Surveys are carried out several times a year by Central Survey Unit, NISRA and seek the views of the Northern Ireland public on a range of issues, including policing. In September 2010, the survey will include the Policing Board module of approximately 23 questions and around 1,200 respondents aged 16+ will have a face to face interview with a NISRA interviewer.

The Board's Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee approves the proposed Omnibus Survey questions before they are commissioned. The Board publishes the results from the Omnibus Surveys within two months of receiving the data from NISRA on its website – www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Each Omnibus Survey question costs £850, so the approximate cost for the September 2010 survey of 23 questions is £19,550. (This cost is based on a full recovery cost basis – i.e. the cost of running the survey is paid for by the customers – which is similar to how the Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates costs for its Omnibus Survey. Discounts are given if the question is only asked of a subset of the sample.) The survey is paid from the Board's research budget.

- **Independent research into the views and experiences of policing of people with learning disabilities in Northern Ireland.**

In conjunction with the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (OPONI), the Board will appoint a suitable service provider to conduct research into the views and experiences of policing of people with learning disabilities in Northern Ireland. The research findings will inform the Board, OPONI and the PSNI about the issues they should be aware of in providing a service to people with learning disabilities. It is expected that the findings will make recommendations on how this service can be improved and enhanced. On the basis of this research, the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee will consider the potential for a Human Rights thematic inquiry in this area.

The research will be procured during summer 2010 and conducted during Autumn/Winter 2010/11. It is planned to publish the research results during 2011 on the Board's and

OPONI's websites. The research is expected to cost approximately £25,000, with the Board contributing £10,000. This research will be paid for from the Policy Directorate budget.

- **Police Administration Branch Customer Satisfaction Survey.**

The Policing Board is responsible for the consideration and decisions in respect of ill health, injury on duty and other pension applications. The Board's statisticians, in conjunction with the Board's Police Administration Branch Manager, conduct a biennial customer satisfaction survey in order to review the level of effectiveness and service provided by Police Administration Branch, on behalf of the Board, in the administration and management of such pension applications. The only associated costs for this email survey are statistician and Police Administration Branch staff costs.

- **Policing Board Community Engagement Reference Group Members' Survey.**

In order to assist with a review of and the Board's support for the operation of its Community Engagement Reference Groups, the Board's statisticians will undertake surveys among the Reference Group Members. The survey results will help Board officials evaluate the Board's support for the Community Engagement Reference Groups and will identify ways in which the service can be improved. The survey will be conducted in liaison with the Board's Community Engagement Branch. The only associated costs for this survey are statistician and Community Engagement Branch staff costs.

Year 2 – 2011/2012

- **District Policing Partnership (DPP) Public Consultation Survey 2012.**

It is planned to conduct this biennial survey in February/March 2012. However, pending the outcome of the ongoing work to integrate the current functions of DPPs and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) by May 2011, this may be a partnership consultation survey.

- **Omnibus Survey in September 2011.**

The cost for future surveys is likely to rise as Central Survey Unit, NISRA reviews the Omnibus Survey costs annually. However there may be efficiency savings as the questions are reviewed annually and thus the number of questions asked may reduce.

- **PSNI Quality of Service Survey.**

In the second half of 2010/11, PSNI plans to introduce Quality of Service surveys in each of the 29 PSNI Area Command Units. The surveys will question victims of offences against the person, domestic burglary, hate crime, criminal damage and persons affected by anti-social behaviour. The surveys will monitor victim/user satisfaction with the quality of service provided by police in relation to first contact with the police, police actions to deal with the incident, follow up/being kept informed by the police, treatment by police staff and the overall service. PSNI propose to conduct 200 telephone surveys with victims/users in each Area per year. The surveys will provide information at an Area level on a rolling monthly basis once 12 months' data has been collected.

Results will be used internally by PSNI to increase victims'/users' satisfaction with the police. The results will be shared with the Board when six months' data has been collected. The results will also be shared with individual DPPs and the Board's statisticians will assist DPPs interpret these findings in order to help DPPs monitor local police performance. There will be no cost to the Board for these surveys.

- **Policing Board Staff Attitudes Survey.**

A staff attitudes survey is conducted among all Board staff approximately every two years. Surveys have been conducted in December 2002, June 2004, January 2006, January 2008 and January 2010 by Central Survey Unit, NISRA and the 2008 and 2010 surveys were completed online. Central Survey Unit's statisticians analyse the results and send a full report to the Board's statisticians. An action plan is drawn up based on these results to improve working practices and relationships as appropriate.

The survey is paid from the Board's research budget and the 2012 survey is expected to cost approximately £5,000.

- **Press and Public Relations Branch Customer Satisfaction Survey.**

The Policing Board's statisticians, in conjunction with the Board's Communication Manager, conducted a customer satisfaction survey during 2008 in order to measure customers' satisfaction with the service provided by the Board's Press and Public Relations Branch. It is planned to conduct this survey again during 2011/12 to ensure that the service still meets customers' requirements. The only associated costs for this survey are statistician and Press and Public Relations Branch staff costs.

- **Independent Custody Visitors' Satisfaction Survey.**

The Board's statisticians, in conjunction with the Board's Service Monitoring Branch, plan to undertake a satisfaction survey among independent Custody Visitors in 2011/12 (previous surveys were conducted in 2003 and 2008). Custody Visitors are volunteers from the community who make unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the welfare of people being held in custody. They look, listen and report to the Policing Board on what they find, which assists the Board in monitoring how the PSNI meets its responsibilities under the Human Rights Act.

The results will provide information on the Custody Visitors' views of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and will also be used to help plan the induction, training and development of new Custody Visitors who will take up their posts during 2012/13.

The Board's statisticians also plan to undertake exit surveys with Custody Visitors who leave the scheme once their term of office is completed. The results will also be used to develop the Scheme as outlined above. The only associated costs for these two related surveys are statistician and Service Monitoring Branch staff costs.

Year 3 – 2012/2013

- **Omnibus Survey in September 2012.**
- **PSNI Quality of Service Survey, as outlined in 2011/12.**
- **Police Administration Branch Customer Satisfaction Survey, as outlined in 2010/11.**

Year 4 – 2013/14

- **Omnibus Survey in September 2013.**
- **Policing Board Staff Attitudes Survey, as outlined in 2011/12.**

Other ongoing statistical and research activity within the Policing Board

Between 2010 and 2014, the Board's statisticians will continue to provide statistical and research services to the Board, its committees, Members and officials on a regular and ad-hoc basis. Such activities will include:

- Collecting and interpreting statistical information to (i) monitor current and (ii) help determine future performance indicators and targets contained in the Annual Policing Plan;
- Providing routine and ad-hoc statistical and research advice, guidance and information to the Board, four of its six sub-committees, Board Members and officials to assist in the monitoring of key PSNI strategies. The statisticians interpret relevant statistical, social research and survey information and publications for the above group;
- Monitoring and reporting complaints against the PSNI (collected by OPONI), statistics on the Use of Force and PACE/JSA stops and searches (collected by PSNI) and statistics on the operation of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme (operated by the Board);
- Conducting research in support of the Board's obligations under the Equality Legislation;
- Conducting ad-hoc survey work, research and data collection which allows Board Members and officials to carry out their functions, including, but not limited to, assisting the Board in monitoring the effectiveness of DPPs; and
- Providing professional analysis, advice and support on customer satisfaction, internal staff surveys and other surveys conducted by or within the Board.

The Board's statisticians will also continue to provide a statistical and research service to DPPs to enable them to monitor local police performance and to carry out their public consultation exercises. This role may change pending the outcome of the ongoing work to integrate the current functions of DPPs and CSPs by May 2011 but the Board's statisticians will continue to provide the necessary advice and guidance as requested and required.

Procurement of statistical surveys and research

The Department of Finance and Personnel's (DFP) advice on the use of consultants (which the Policing Board follows) states that "*external consultants should be employed only when it is necessary and will provide value for money. If a department has staff with the skills to carry out a proposed assignment, then it should consider carrying out the assignment using*

its own resources". NISRA is regarded as such an in-house resource, particularly as it is used by all Northern Ireland Government Departments, its Non Departmental Public Bodies and arms length bodies to provide professional statistical and research services. Thus Central Survey Unit, NISRA is approached when the Board considers conducting any statistical surveys to see if it can provide the service.

As NISRA does not currently offer a research service, the Board procures research services through competitive tendering. The Board's Procurement Guidelines state that a tendering process must take place when using public funds, if the work cannot be completed using an in-house source, including NISRA. Following these Guidelines, the Board will ask the Department of Finance and Personnel's Central Procurement Directorate to conduct a procurement exercise when it is seeking proposals for any research project. This allows researchers that the Board is unaware of to submit proposals and ensures a "level playing field". The Board can consider unsolicited or speculative research proposals but will not award research without competitive tendering.

District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) and statistical surveys/research

DPPs have a responsibility to conduct public consultation within their local DPP area. The Board's statisticians offer all DPPs guidance, support and advice on statistical and research issues, including but not limited to, analysing the quarterly PSNI Area Commander's Reports to DPPs to assist DPPs monitor local police performance and assisting DPPs conduct their public consultation exercises. A number of DPPs procure organisations to consult with the public and each DPP is responsible for procuring and managing such work.

Working in partnership with other organisations

Although the Board recognises the advantages of working in partnership to fund crosscutting research, the Board (like other organisations) will continue to set its own research priorities and fund and manage projects initiated by it. This is largely driven by legislation, equality obligations and current policing needs. Where possible, the Board works in partnership with other organisations - such as PSNI, OPONI and the Department of Justice.

Statistics and Research Branch

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