

# Review and Report

of the work of the **Northern Ireland Policing Board**  
**2003-2004**





# introduction

Professor Desmond Rea  
Chairman  
the Northern Ireland Policing Board

**Building effective and  
efficient policing...  
supported by the community.**

## **AS** Chairman of the Policing Board, I am pleased to present this new style review and report on the work of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

The Policing Board is responsible for overseeing policing in Northern Ireland on behalf of the community, and for ensuring the delivery of an effective and efficient policing service. In the same way that the police service is accountable to us, as a public body we are also accountable to the community, so it is important that we give you, the community, feedback on what we are doing.

Since its creation in November 2001 the Board has been getting on with the business on the policing agenda and substantial progress has been made in effecting changes to policing structures, processes and practices. This has not been change for the sake of change - but change that improves how the policing service is delivered to the community.

As a Board we are responsible for holding the service to account for the delivery of policing. One of the key ways we do this is through questioning the Chief Constable. We also monitor progress against the objectives and targets in the Annual Policing Plan and on all other aspects of policing in Northern Ireland.

This year police performance led to a reduction in vehicle crime and domestic burglary. Overall figures for the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 showed there were 14,500 fewer victims of crime. But whilst the PSNI have demonstrated success, crime and the fear of crime continues to exist in communities throughout Northern Ireland, particularly among

those that are vulnerable. Whilst it is no consolation to any victim of crime, I trust that the wider community will be assured that Northern Ireland is a relatively safe place to live and that we are working to make sure that the PSNI are dealing with crime effectively.

There is no doubt the police have an important job to do, but everyone within the community also has a part to play in making communities safer.

This year the work of the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) in local communities represented another important milestone for police / community relations. During the last year the DPPs have provided the forum for local people to become involved in having a say on how policing in their area is delivered. At a local level DPPs are also monitoring police performance against local policing plans and discussing issues of concern within local communities. The Board is extremely pleased with the progress and impact made by these groups at community level.

While it is important to review and report on progress to date, we must continually look to and plan for future policing needs and so we are committed to making sure that the PSNI has the necessary resources - both human and financial - to meet policing need. It is also the Board's hope that the restoration of the political institutions and a return to political stability in Northern Ireland will deliver full political support for policing and an environment where the threat of terrorism does not prevail.

But whatever the political climate, the Board has an important job to do and remains committed to getting on with the business on the policing agenda and securing for all the people of Northern Ireland a policing service which is effective, efficient and accountable to the community it serves.



## The role and work of the Northern Ireland Policing Board

### What is the Policing Board?

The Policing Board is an independent public body whose job it is to oversee policing in Northern Ireland. We were set up on 4 November 2001 as a result of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 - the legislation designed to put the recommendations of the Patten Report on policing into practice. We are not controlled by Government and have strong independent powers to carry out our work.

### What does the Policing Board do for you?

The people of Northern Ireland have a right to know what their police service is doing and how it is performing. It is important that the community has real influence over the way it is policed and that effective systems are in place to make sure the police are accountable for their actions.

The Chief Constable also has the right to act independently - this is called operational responsibility. But he must in turn answer for his actions to the Board. This process is what effective accountability is all about.

Our main duty under legislation is to make sure that the police in Northern Ireland are effective and efficient. This covers the actions of everyone who works for the Chief Constable.

Throughout the year the Board and its Committees monitor the work of the PSNI in detail and this review outlines some of our responsibilities and how we have carried them out.

## WHO'S WHO in the Northern Ireland Policing Board

The Northern Ireland Policing Board is made up of 19 members. Ten are political members from the Northern Ireland Assembly and nine are independent members appointed from the community following public advertisement.

Following the suspension of the Assembly in October 2002 the Policing Board was reconstituted by the Secretary of State to enable it to continue its work on behalf of the community.

### Members of the Northern Ireland Policing Board

- 1 Alex Attwood
- 2 Viscount Brookeborough
- 3 Denis Bradley (Vice Chairman)
- 4 Joe Byrne
- 5 Fred Cobain
- 6 Brian Dougherty
- 7 Sam Foster
- 8 Barry Gilligan
- 9 William Hay
- 10 Tom Kelly
- 11 Lord Kilclooney
- 12 Pauline McCabe
- 13 Alan McFarland
- 14 Eddie McGrady
- 15 Rosaleen Moore
- 16 Ian Paisley Jnr
- 17 Professor Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- 18 Suneil Sharma
- 19 Sammy Wilson



Further information on the Board's Members can be found on our website along with details of registered interests: [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)



You can download member's photos, access more information and read all our publications at our website:

[www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)



## The way we work

### How the board conducts its business

#### Meetings in public

By law, the Policing Board is required to hold at least 8 meetings in public each year. In the year 2003-2004 the Board held 10 meetings in public. At these meetings the Chief Constable provides a report to the Board on key policing issues and the Board questions him on issues relating to policing in Northern Ireland.

These meetings allow the public to see the accountability mechanisms working and anyone can come along and observe the Board meetings in public with the Chief Constable and his team. Details of the meetings are advertised and dates are also available from the Board's website, [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)

The meetings are generally held at the Board's Headquarters in Clarendon Dock but one meeting was held in Omagh. It is planned to hold a meeting in Armagh in November 2004.

#### The work of the Board's Committees

In addition to the Policing Board monthly meetings, the majority of the Board's work is carried out through Committees. Each Committee has particular responsibilities and information on some of this work is provided in this review.

The Committees are:

##### Corporate Policy Committee

Chair: Professor Desmond Rea  
Vice Chair: Denis Bradley

##### Human Resources Committee

Chair: Pauline McCabe  
Vice Chair: vacant

##### Audit and Best Value Committee

Chair: Fred Cobain  
Vice Chair: Joe Byrne

##### Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee

Chair: Eddie McGrady  
Vice Chair: William Hay

##### Finance and General Purposes Committee

Chair: Sammy Wilson  
Vice Chair: Barry Gilligan

##### Community Involvement Committee

Chair: Denis Bradley  
Vice Chair: Viscount Brookeborough

##### Press and Public Relations Committee

Chair: Tom Kelly  
Vice Chair: Suniel Sharma

If you would like to find out more about any aspect of this work or would like to come along to a meeting in public - please contact the Board's Press and Public Relations Branch on 028 9040 8538

More information and copies of Committee agendas and minutes can be obtained from the Board's website, [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)

# People power

## Overseeing the use of human resources in the Police Service

Pauline McCabe is the Chair of the Human Resources Committee. This Committee is responsible for managing the Board's work in the following key areas:

- to promote and monitor the implementation of the Human Resources Planning Strategy;
- to ensure the most effective and efficient use of PSNI officers;
- to monitor the implementation of the Training, Education and Development Strategy;
- to monitor trends and patterns in recruitment; and
- to promote and support efforts to secure a more representative police service for Northern Ireland.



### Getting police officers onto the front line

In October 2002 the PSNI presented a Human Resources Planning Strategy to the Board. The purpose of this plan was to have more police officers on the ground delivering policing to the community through the District Command Unit (DCU) structure. The strategy ensures that officers are allocated to meet operational policing priorities and the achievement of the Policing Plan objectives. The strategy includes a detailed action plan with targets and timeframes. The Board endorsed the strategy and progress against targets contained in it is monitored by the Human Resources Committee and by an independent advisor who reports to the Board every four months.

In its first fourteen months, the plan delivered over 1,000 officers a day more than previously available, for operational policing duties. This was achieved by:

- redeploying officers from Headquarters to DCUs;
- significant improvements in sickness absence;
- giving more supporting roles to civilians to 'free up' officers for front line duties;
- reducing secondments and reducing the number of officers on restricted duties.

### Overseeing Training and Development

The training, education and development of the Police Service is fundamental to making sure that police officers and civilian support staff have the necessary skills to do the jobs we need them to do. In order for the Policing Board to demonstrate its confidence in the Police College's performance the Board is establishing a framework of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which will allow progress in the implementation of the PSNI's training, education and development strategy to be monitored.

These indicators focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of training, the role of training in driving the change management programme and, coupled with the implementation of the Board's Human Rights Monitoring Framework, the need for a human rights based policing approach to be at the heart of all training and development activity.

### Making sure the Police Service is representative of the Community it serves

The Independent Patten Commission envisaged a Police Service that is representative of, and supported by, the community it serves. A key component of achieving this is a successful recruitment programme. The goal of the



Police Service is to appoint 540 officers annually on a 50:50 basis (50% Catholic, 50% non-Catholic). To date there have been six recruitment competitions run by Consensia (the independent recruitment agency) resulting in over 30,000 applications with almost 36% of applications coming from Catholics and 37% from females.

The recruitment and selection process is consistent with best practice in contemporary human resources management and involves lay observers and lay assessors who contribute to the integrity and independence of the process. Overall the recruitment campaigns have resulted in nearly 1,000 applicants achieving a place in the Police College, a result by which we are extremely encouraged. As a result, in the last year, there has been a further improvement in the representativeness of the Service, with an increase in Catholic representation in the regular police service from 11.7% at the end of 2002/2003 to 13.9% at the end of 2003/2004. Female representation in the regular service has increased from 14.9% at the end of 2002/2003 to 16.5% in 2003/2004.

### Commitment for the future

There is no doubt that people are PSNI's most valuable resource. What PSNI officers and support staff do, and how they do it, determines the quality of service delivered to the community, the levels of success achieved in crime prevention and detection, and the extent to which people feel safe.

The Human Resources and Training, Education and Development strategies are hugely challenging, but the Board is very clear that they are at the heart of the effectiveness, efficiency and confidence building agenda. Progress will continue to be monitored and the Committee will work closely with the Chief Constable to ensure a creative, results-focused approach to the development and deployment of all officers and civilian staff.

BELOW, L TO R: Vice Chairman Denis Bradley and Chairman Professor Desmond Rea meet with Sir John Stevens.



# Overseeing Change

## The new Crime Operations Branch

**Another significant element of work that has been driven forward by the Board during the last year is securing full implementation of the recommendations that relate to the reorganisation of Special Branch and recommendations arising from other independent reports from Sir John Stevens, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) David Blakey and former HMIC Sir Dan Crompton.**

In the face of global terrorism and more particularly the events of 9/11, there is a recognised need for police services to be able to deal more effectively with terrorist activity. However, to ensure public confidence, it is also essential that there are proper systems of accountability in place for the management and dissemination of intelligence material.

The same applies to how the Police Service carries out murder investigations. The public must be assured that murder and serious crime investigation procedures, policies, process and practices meet the highest possible standard and are in line with UK police practice.

The Board needed to be satisfied that the recommendations made were being fully addressed and moved forward by the police service so that the public could have full confidence in these critical areas of work.

The Policing Board asked the Chief Constable to consider how best the changes could be made and in June 2003 the Police Service advised that a new Crime Operations Department would be established. Over the last year Members of the Board have received regular briefings on this subject and rigorously questioned the Chief Constable and his senior officers on the implementation of the new structures.

At the Board's most recent briefing, Members were assured that significant progress had been achieved, and this view was supported by officers from the Stevens, Blakey and Crompton teams who have been reviewing progress on-the-ground on behalf of the Board.

The Board supports the view of the Police Service that the dedicated structure and staffing of Crime Operations Branch will deliver a better public service and the Board will continue to make sure that work in this area is closely scrutinised.

### Appointing senior officers to the police service

The Board's Corporate Policy Committee is responsible for appointing senior officers and civilians to the PSNI.

To date the Board have appointed Chief Constable Hugh Orde, Deputy Chief Constable Paul Leighton and 4 Assistant Chief Constables: Duncan McCausland; Roy Toner; Peter Sheridan and Judith Gillespie.

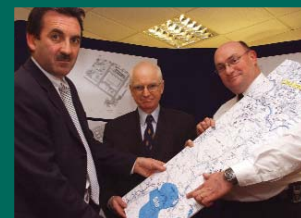


## Top of the Class

### A 21st Century College for a 21st Century Service

The delivery of a new PSNI Training College is an issue which the Board has been determined to drive forward in line with our commitment to ensuring a world class policing service.

Barry Gilligan is the Board's representative on the Police College project board. In February 2004 the Policing Board approved the purchase of a site for a new Police College at Desertcreat, close to Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, with a projected timescale for completion of Autumn 2007.



ABOVE, L TO R: Barry Gilligan, Professor Desmond Rea and Deputy Chief Constable Paul Leighton consider the Police College site plan.

The College will be built and operated under a Public / Private Partnership (PPP) which will provide for higher quality and more effective public service provision. This will be the largest PPP project undertaken in Northern Ireland and represents a huge investment which will also be of benefit to the whole community.

Unique features incorporated into the plans for the new College include a simulated learning centre which will allow officers to deal with real life situations in the confines of a safe training environment.

The College will help ensure that officers have a training facility that will truly meet future policing needs in Northern Ireland.

# Ensuring a human rights based approach to policing



## The Policing Board is responsible for monitoring the police to make sure they act in line with the principal Human Rights legislation, the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee is chaired by Eddie McGrady and is responsible for monitoring the performance of PSNI in complying with the Human Rights Act 1998 and for ensuring that high ethical and professional standards are maintained.

This section reports on the work of the Committee in overseeing this critical area of work.



Below: Keir Starmer, Human Rights Advisor to the Policing Board

## A unique Code of Ethics for policing

Making sure that the police service respect and protect human rights, promote equality and embrace diversity is critical to public confidence in the PSNI.

In February 2003, the Policing Board published a new Code of Ethics for PSNI. The code, which is unique in British and Irish policing is based on the European Convention on Human Rights; it is designed to ensure human rights standards in everyday policing as it sets out the non-negotiable standards of behaviour expected of our police officers.

The publication of the Code of Ethics was the first critical step in making sure that the PSNI met its responsibilities in this area. The next critical step was for the Board to develop an effective monitoring mechanism.

## A robust human rights monitoring framework

As a result this has been the single most important piece of work for the Committee over the last 12 months, and we have devoted considerable energy to the development, and subsequent launch in December 2003, of our Human Rights monitoring framework.

Two human rights barristers have helped in this task, Keir Starmer QC and Jane Gordon. They completed a series of meetings with key personnel within PSNI, and with a range of interested stakeholders in the field of human rights, in order to develop this

robust monitoring framework.

Since December 2003 considerable work has been undertaken in implementing this framework and whilst it is too early to make an assessment - this we hope to do later in the Autumn - the Committee believes the framework itself provides a human rights blueprint for reviewing how the PSNI grounds human rights culture and practice into policing.

We have also been encouraged by the co-operation shown by PSNI, and commitment of other interested human rights groups, in enabling and helping us to deliver on our statutory human rights duties.

In addition to this area of work the Committee also examines and analyses information on a range of issues including complaints against individual officers, internal disciplinary cases, officers on suspension, compensation claims against the service etc - all of which paint a picture of the service.

While the number of officers against whom complaints are sustained is fairly small, and while a relatively small number feature in the other categories above, it is very important to the Board that any



behaviour which falls short of the high professional and ethical standards is dealt with appropriately, and that any learning is disseminated throughout the service.

The Committee meets regularly with staff of the Police Ombudsman's office and with relevant branches within PSNI. In the last twelve months the Committee has also met with the Human Rights Commission to discuss issues of common interest associated with human rights compliance in PSNI.

The Policing Board is committed to making sure that the Police Service meets the high standards set out in the code in their delivery of the policing service. The community deserves no less. But equally when the police carry out their duties in accordance with the code they have the right to expect the full support of the whole community and they will certainly have the support of the Policing Board.

■ ■ ■ Copies of the Human Rights Monitoring Framework are available at [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)

# Bringing policing closer to the community

## The role and work of District Policing Partnerships

### The Board's Community Involvement Committee

is responsible for considering ways to enhance and strengthen all aspects of community involvement in policing and to ensure that the views of the public on the delivery of the policing service are taken into account.

One of the Committee's key areas of work is the development and implementation of policing with the community as a core function for all police officers.

Local District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) have now been established by the Board to help bring policing closer to the community and allow the community to have a say on policing issues. These new groups pave the way for improved police community relations and provide a forum for local people to raise policing issues with police in their area.

### The role of a District Policing Partnership

There are 25 DPPs set up to date in council areas throughout Northern Ireland. Made up of local council representatives and independent members appointed by the Policing Board, these groups are responsible for monitoring the performance of police at a local level.

Anyone can attend a DPP meeting and ask questions of the DPP or the local police on issues relating to the policing of their area. To find out more contact your local District Policing Partnership Manager.

### Finding out what the community think about policing

Last year, the Board carried out the largest public consultation on policing; 60,000 households across Northern Ireland, or 1 in 10 homes, received the Board's public consultation survey.

In addition to supporting the Board's work, this survey was designed to help the DPPs identify key issues of community concern in each council area.

This was the first Northern Ireland-wide public attitude survey ever undertaken by the Policing Board. The results of this survey showed that across Northern Ireland the 6 biggest crime issues are:

- domestic burglary (55%)
- underage drinking (47%)
- speeding (43%)
- young people causing a nuisance (43%)
- vandalism (39%) and
- attacks on the elderly (39%).



Above: Vice Chairman Denis Bradley talks to a group of students about policing in Northern Ireland.

When asked which activities people thought the police should concentrate most resources on in their area, the response was

- beat/foot patrolling 68%,
- investigating crime 58%,
- prompt responses to emergencies 57%
- more resources put into crime prevention 55% and
- greater resources directed to vehicle patrolling 47%.

This information was used in establishing priorities for policing and an assessment of overall police performance is contained in this review. Through the work of the Board, and at a local level, the District Policing Partnerships, work is ongoing to make sure that the police are tackling these important issues.

### Attacks against older people and ethnic minorities

The Survey showed that 39% of respondents cited attacks on the elderly as one of the 'biggest problems' in their area. The Board shares this public concern and has met with organisations representing older people and on their behalf have raised important issues with the NIO Minister.

In addition, following a spate of attacks in South Belfast the Board met with groups representing ethnic minorities. Any attack, at anytime, on anybody, for whatever reason is intolerable and must be condemned.

The PSNI are working to tackle this scourge on our society, but they cannot work in isolation and the vulnerable in society will remain vulnerable unless they, and the police service, have the full

support of the entire community in dealing with those whose behaviour is calculated to intimidate, instil fear and harm.

### Attacks on DPP Members

While there are many encouraging things to report on the work of the DPPs it is deplorable that many DPP members across the country have been subject to intimidation and attack over the last number of months. Such behaviour has not shaken the resolve of DPP members, or their families and the Board would like to record and pay tribute to the DPP members for the role they are undertaking and for the support they are being given at a local level.

### Supporting your local police

The police have an important job to do but if they are to be really effective in making communities safer, community help and support is required. Everyone has an important part to play, whether that be by looking out for a neighbour, giving the police information about suspicious activity or generally taking care of property and belongings.

Local DPPs are also developing ways in which the community can help the police in preventing crime and details will be published locally.

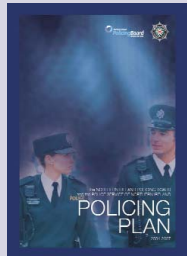
Earlier this year the Board lent its support to a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme that is being introduced in Northern Ireland. This type of community initiative can help reduce the fear of crime and help make those that are vulnerable feel safer.

Further information on the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme can be obtained by contacting your local police.

### How to contact your local District Policing Partnership

Antrim District Policing Partnership	028 9446 3113
Ards District Policing Partnership	028 9182 4070
Armagh District Policing Partnership	028 3752 9600
Ballymena District Policing Partnership	028 2566 0441
Ballymoney District Policing Partnership	028 2766 0254
Banbridge District Policing Partnership	028 4066 0609
Belfast District Policing Partnership	028 9027 0382
Carrickfergus District Policing Partnership	028 9335 1604
Castlereagh District Policing Partnership	028 9049 4546
Coleraine District Policing Partnership	028 7034 7034
Cookstown District Policing Partnership	028 8676 2205
Craigavon District Policing Partnership	028 3831 2587
Derry District Policing Partnership	028 7137 6565
Down District Policing Partnership	028 4461 0857
Fermanagh District Policing Partnership	028 6632 5050
Larne District Policing Partnership	028 2827 2313
Limavady District Policing Partnership	028 7776 0300
Lisburn District Policing Partnership	028 9250 9279
Magherafelt District Policing Partnership	028 7939 7979
Moyle District Policing Partnership	028 2076 2225
Newry District Policing Partnership	028 3031 3260
Newtownabbey District Policing Partnership	028 9034 0011
North Down District Policing Partnership	028 9127 8054
Omagh District Policing Partnership	028 8224 5321
Strabane District Policing Partnership	028 7138 2204

NOTE: a DPP has not yet been established in Dungannon and South Tyrone Council area.



# MEASURING AND MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS

## Working to the plan The Policing Board's target for effective policing

### The Policing Board is responsible for issuing a Policing Plan for Northern Ireland each year.

This plan shows how the PSNI intends to provide a policing service to the community and one of the Board's key roles is holding the PSNI to account for performance against the plan. The Board monitors performance in a number of ways:

- Through quarterly performance reports by the Chief Constable
- Through reports provided at its monthly meetings in public
- Through the work of the Board's Committees
- By asking questions on specific issues
- Through the work of the District Policing Partnerships

### The Board's assessment of police performance in the 2003 -2004 financial year

Set out below is the Board's assessment of police performance during the last year. In summary, results show good police work for the year. Overall crime is down by 10.2% and the clearance rate for recorded crime stands at 27.4%, which is an increase of 4.4 percentage points on the 2002-2003 year.

Specific initiatives undertaken by the PSNI to proactively tackle vehicle crime and domestic burglary have been very successful with reductions in vehicle crime of 17.2% and in domestic burglary of 11.7%

The following outlines the main positive outcomes and areas where targets were not achieved by the PSNI during 2003/04.

#### Main Positive Outcomes

There were positive outcomes in performance in the:

- confidence levels in the policing of public disorder - 76% achieved against 75% target
- number of domestic burglaries - down by 11.7% to 8,944

- number of vehicle crimes - down by 17.2% to 12,875
- number of detections for non-wearing of seat-belts - up by 59% to 18,458
- detections for drink/drug driving up by 32% to 3,264 and dangerous/careless driving detections increased by 40% to 3,095
- number of seizures of illicit drugs - up by 31.8% to 2,347 seizures
- and the number of persons charged/summoned for drug supply offences as a proportion of those arrested - up to 19.2% from 15.4%

#### Targets Not Achieved

Targets were not achieved in the following areas:

- processing of custody and bail cases - 55.7% for custody cases and 64.6% for bail cases against 85% target
- confidence levels in the percentage of people who think the police do a good job - 62% achieved against 70% target
- overall equity of treatment - 72% against the target of 75%
- satisfaction levels for patrolling - 36% compared to the target of more than 45%

#### Briefings on Targets

Throughout the year the Board received comprehensive briefings each quarter from the PSNI on their contribution to:

- the delivery of the educational aspect of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy the Northern Ireland Community Safety Strategy
- progressing the priorities agreed by the Organised Crime Task Force and
- implementing the Northern Ireland Drugs Strategy.

The Board acknowledges the important work of the PSNI in these areas and their success in working in partnership with other organisations and agencies. In particular the Board welcomes the PSNI work in reducing the fear of crime including crimes against the older person. It is these types of crime that affect quality of life and successful PSNI initiatives to proactively tackle crime

must be built on to ensure a safer community for all.

#### Other Areas of Performance

The Board notes the following areas in respect of:

- Racist and Homophobic Crime - incidents reported during 2003-04 were double that reported in the previous year.
- A total of 453 racist incidents was reported along with 71 homophobic incidents.
- Domestic Violence - 16,926 incidents reported compared to 15,512 the year before - an increase of 9.1%. And domestic violence offences rose from 7,961 to 8,565 in 2003-04 - an increase of 7.6%.

#### Security Situation

The number charged with terrorist offences was 102, the number of shooting and bombing incidents decreased to 207 and 71 respectively from 348 and 178 previously. The number of deaths as a result of the security situation decreased from 15 to 7 and the number of casualties arising from paramilitary-style attacks decreased from 309 to 298.

#### Organisational Effectiveness

Progress was made on the implementation of the Human Resources and the Training, Education and Development (TED) Strategies. The Human Resource Planning

Strategy is critical to the overall delivery of the policing service and the Board believes that it is essential to address resource issues by ensuring the right people are in the right place doing the right job. There is more information on the Human Resource Plan and the TED Strategy in this Review - see page 4.

#### Change Programme

The PSNI is continuing to work hard at implementing and driving forward the changes set out in legislation and in the Government's Implementation Plan on the Patten Report, and the Board receives regular updates from PSNI Accountable Officers. The Reports from the Police Oversight Commissioner provide further independent evidence of what has been achieved.

#### Viewpoint

When compared with performance figures from the UK - the PSNI are making headway in tackling crime. Northern Ireland is a relatively safe place to live but crime and the fear of crime within our communities remains a serious issue. High profile attacks on those that are older and those that are more vulnerable reinforce the need for the police and the community to work together to make communities safer places to live.

Our 2004-2007 Policing Plan can be downloaded from our website: [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)

### Performance comparison of PSNI and England and Wales forces for 2003/04

Criteria	Northern Ireland	England and Wales
Overall Recorded Crime	Down by 10.2%	Up by 1%
Violent Crime	Up by 1%	Up by 12%
Sexual Offences	Up by 21.2%	Up by 7%
Robbery	Down by 21%	Down by 6%
Domestic Burglary	Down by 11.7%	Down by 8%
Vehicle Crime	Down by 17.2%	Down by 9%
Overall Detection Rate	27.4%	23.5%

# MEASURING and MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS



## Monitoring police performance through local policing plans

District Policing Partnerships are now working in all but one district council area. An important part of what they do is to ask local people what they think of policing and crime in their area and then pass that information to the local police District Commander. In this way they work with their local police to help draw up local policing plans for their own areas.

They also check how well the police are doing to meet the targets set out in the local policing plan, and through local public meetings, provide a forum for members of the public to ask police questions about police performance and issues of concern within local communities.

■ ■ ■ For further information about the work of the DPP in your area and how you can have your say - please contact the DPP Manager in your area - see box on page 7.

## Overseeing the police budget

**The Policing Board is responsible for negotiating the annual policing budget for the PSNI.**

Whilst the Chief Constable has day to day responsibility for managing the budget, he must report to the Board on how the money is spent. In doing this, the Board must make sure that what the police do is cost effective and efficient, and that value for money is achieved in spending the budget.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee is responsible for this area of work and is chaired by Sammy Wilson.



### Effective financial management

With a budget of £670 million it is essential that there is effective accountability for the policing spend. The significant resources allocated to policing means that effective financial management is a key issue both for the Board and for the Chief Constable.

At each meeting of the Committee, the PSNI Director of Finance and Support Services provides a report on financial matters relating to PSNI. Up to date management accounts are tabled throughout the year and Board

members review PSNI expenditure and question the Director of Finance and Support Service on the accounts.

The Committee is also responsible for examining the Financial Outturn Report for the Financial Year and the Annual Accounts. The most recent outturn report for 2003/04 showed revenue spending of £646.4 million and Capital spending of £20.4 million, and an additional £31.1 million relating to changes required under the Patten report. The budget requirements for PSNI are submitted before the start of each financial year and the scrutiny of these figures provides an essential oversight control into the budgeting process and allows any areas of concern to be highlighted at an early stage.

As a large part of the policing budget is spent on salaries, one area where the Committee has focused attention is the police overtime spend. The police service must reduce spending in this area by 10% over the next 3 years which will realise a saving of £5.4m on the police budget.

### Devolving budgets to local Commanders

Another important step forward for the PSNI is the devolvement of budgets and associated accountability to 29 District Command Units. This is being managed under the Finance and Resource Management Project (FARM) project.

By devolving budgets, local Commanders will be responsible for deciding how the budget can best be used to deliver the policing service within their area. They in turn will be accountable to the Chief Constable for how this money is spent.

### Funding for the future

In addition to monitoring the current budget the future spending needs of the PSNI must be considered and planned for. Recently the Committee reviewed the 3 year forward financial budget for PSNI, and received an in-depth presentation on the contents of the budget and the reasons behind why certain levels of expenditure are predicted and where

efficiencies will be gained.

As cuts to public spending are likely in the years ahead, it is essential that financial resources are used effectively and efficiently. The Board is committed to making sure the PSNI has the resources it needs to do its job properly, but it must also be assured that where efficiency savings can be made - these must be realised.

### Information Systems Strategy

Another important area of the Committee's work has been monitoring progress with the implementation of the PSNI Information Systems Strategy (IS Strategy).

The PSNI must make sure that it has the right information technology systems in place to support its work and this strategy is designed to make sure that the systems in place meet the communication needs of all officers and staff within the police service. The Board believes that the full implementation of this strategy will greatly assist the service in the delivery of the policing service to the community.

Over the last year the Committee has reviewed progress on the implementation of the strategy through regular updates from the PSNI. As this project represents a substantial investment, validation of the strategy provides the Board with independent reports on the progress being made.

### Land and buildings

Whilst the Chief Constable has day to day responsibility for the management of the police estate, the Board is responsible for holding, obtaining or disposing of property for police purposes. Much of the police estate is in need of modernisation and the Chief Constable is currently completing a review to assess what the requirements are for the future. New purpose built stations, such as that opened in Coleraine earlier this year, represent the future for the police estate and the Board is committed to making sure that the facilities available meet the needs of the police service and the community.

## Ensuring efficiency and value for money

The Audit & Best Value Committee plays an important public role on two fronts. It has responsibility for monitoring, evaluating and challenging key areas of the Board's work and the work of the PSNI itself to ensure that both organisations are effectively and efficiently run and Best Value is achieved.

Fred Cobain is Chair of this Committee and much of its work and its responsibilities are governed by statute, principally the Police (Northern Ireland) Acts 1998 and 2000. During this year, the most significant areas of work undertaken have been:

- Monitoring, evaluating and challenging the effectiveness, economy and efficiency arrangements of the Board and PSNI as required under Part V of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000; and
- The outsourcing of the Board's own internal audit function.

During 2003/2004 the Committee monitored the implementation of PSNI's Best Value Review programme and ensured that effectiveness, economy and efficiency arrangements were in place. For example, earlier this year, the Committee welcomed the reassignment of 14 police officers who had been working in the PSNI's postal section. Civilianisation of various positions within PSNI is a key part of the Human Resources Planning Strategy and as a result of this review 14 police officers returned to front line policing duties.

# Independent Oversight

## The role of custody visitors and community observers

**Injecting independent oversight** is an essential part of the new policing arrangements in Northern Ireland. Local people who volunteer in these unique roles report on their contribution to policing here.

### Volunteering to make a difference: the Custody Visiting Scheme

On a regular basis around 50 people from all walks of life throughout Northern Ireland volunteer to give up a few hours of their own time to visit police stations in their areas. Arriving unannounced they check on the welfare of anyone who is being held in custody and inspect the conditions in which they are being held.

This volunteer work is part of a scheme run by the Northern Ireland Policing Board called the Custody Visiting Scheme. Custody Visiting is perhaps one of the most unusual volunteer roles around. It isn't a paid role, so what exactly motivates people to visit the inside of a police station? Marianne Craig, a local custody visitor explains what it is all about:

"I live in Armagh and began volunteering as a custody visitor 4 years ago and have been Armagh Custody Visiting Scheme's Team Leader since April 2004. As a retired social worker, I decided to get involved as I felt I had the necessary skills and qualities for the custody visiting role. I had been looking for a new challenge for some time and whilst I had no direct experience of policing, through my job and other volunteer work I had a real concern about the health and welfare of others and knew I could bring my skills and knowledge to this role.

During the visit we'd be looking out for a variety of things, for example, if the person has received any medical treatment, has access to toilet facilities, has been regularly checked on according to guidelines etc. We're also there to make sure the detainee is aware of their rights and to answer any questions they may have.

In terms of what I personally get out of my role as a custody visitor, I believe that I and my custody visiting colleagues provide independent assurance to the wider community that the police must work to strict guidelines and do everything by the book where detainees are concerned.

Most visits are quite straightforward and uneventful, but then, every so often, you'll find that your presence has really made a difference to someone and that makes it all worthwhile."

### Key facts and figures on the Custody Visiting Scheme

- During 2003/2004 a total of 973 visits were made to the 24 custody suites located throughout Northern Ireland.
- During these visits 947 detainees were present and almost 50 percent agreed to be seen by custody visitors.
- Items of concern during visits can range from the poor quality of meals and drinking water to issues of a more serious nature such as identifying potential safety hazards in cells.
- All issues are referred to the Policing Board and are raised with the PSNI.

■ ■ ■ For more information on the Custody Visiting Scheme visit the UK Custody Visiting website at [www.icva.org.uk](http://www.icva.org.uk)

### Independent Oversight: Independent Community Observers

Community Observers are volunteers from the community who observe the police recruitment processes to make sure that, so far as practicable, the same procedures are applied to all applicants joining the PSNI; and assess the adequacy of the facilities and arrangements for applicants.

This independent community oversight helps to provide openness and transparency and an assurance to the

Policing Board and the wider public that the recruitment processes within the Police Service are fair and equitable.

Reflecting on the work and what the personal rewards of the role are, Jack Walls, Community Observer says:

"Candidates are told why we are there and what we will be doing and I think it is really important they recognise that the whole process is now very open and transparent. Our role is another oversight layer in the new policing arrangements in Northern Ireland and therefore very important for ensuring community confidence. All the observers share the view that the role may be small but it is an essential part in ensuring fairness in the recruitment of police officers and what we are doing will be of lasting value to the community"

### Key facts and figures on Community Observer Scheme

- During 2003/2004 the 40 Community Observers observed PSNI Recruitment Competitions five and six for full time officers and a total of 186 visits to various parts of this recruitment process were made.
- Their role also includes observing and reporting on the recruitment of part-time officers and in 2003 / 2004 Community Observers viewed the recruitment process for these officers in Coleraine and Lisburn.
- During 2003 / 2004 Community Observers also observed the recruitment process for civilian support staff. A total of 18 visits were made to observe the recruitment of Business Managers, Station Enquiry Assistants, Personnel Officers and Trainee Police Analysts.

■ ■ ■ Further information on either of these schemes can be obtained by contacting the Policing Board's Scheme Administrator on 028 9040 8500. Recruitment for Custody Visiting has just been completed but it is likely that a recruitment competition for Community Observers will be held early next year.



# The Policing Board as an organisation

## Advice and support

The Board and its Committees are supported by a 60-strong team of officials led by Chief Executive Trevor Reaney (who was appointed in January 2004). The staff support the smooth running of the organisation in achieving its objectives and Board Members in their work. The Board is organised into a number of branches covering the following areas of activity:

- Administration
- Audit and Best Value
- Communications
- Community Affairs
- Compliance
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Office Services
- Policy
- Planning
- Research and Statistics
- Secretariat
- Service Monitoring

In the 2003/2004 financial year, the cost of the Policing Board was £6.4 million of which £2.4 million related to District Policing Partnership costs.

## Senior Board Officials

- Trevor Reaney** Chief Executive  
**Peter Holt** Director of Communications  
**David Jackson** Director of Community Affairs  
**Sam Hagen** Director of Corporate Services  
**David Wilson** Director of Planning  
**Sinead Simpson** Director of Policy

## Freedom of Information and the Northern Ireland Policing Board

Freedom of Information is about making the decision-making process of government and all public bodies - including the Northern Ireland Policing Board - more open, transparent and accountable.



Since its establishment in November 2001, the Board has been committed to ensuring that it is an open and accountable public body and our statutory responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will play an important part in further delivering this commitment to the community, which are already enshrined in the Board's Core Values.

'Accessibility' and 'Accountability' have been part of the Board's ethos and culture since its establishment and are the first two of the Board's 10 Core Values that are contained in its Corporate Plan.

In line with the Board's statutory duties under the Freedom of Information, during 2003 the Policing Board developed, adopted and had its Publication Scheme approved by the Information Commissioner.

The Scheme details information the Board routinely makes available and ensures that a significant amount of



Above: Board Chief Executive Trevor Reaney

information on the work of the Board is made public. The entire Publication Scheme is available on our website and copies of it were distributed to all public libraries in Northern Ireland.

Work is ongoing to make sure that the Board has the appropriate systems and procedures in place to facilitate the effective handling of requests for information from 1 January 2005 onwards and further information on this area of work can be obtained by contacting the Board's Freedom of Information Compliance Manager on 028 9040 8592



## A culture of openness and transparency

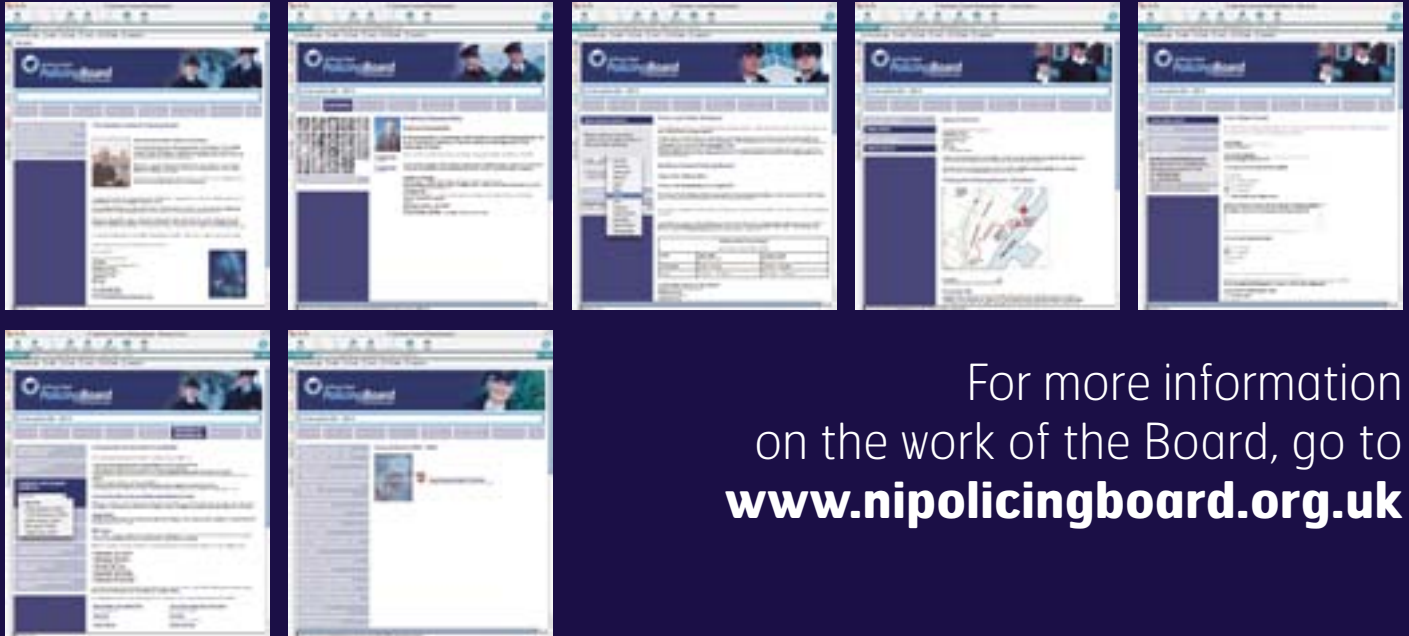
In monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the Police Service, the Policing Board's Press & Public Relations Committee, which is chaired by Tom Kelly, has responsibility for a number of key areas, including monitoring Police Service press and public relations policies and activities.

The Committee also monitors progress in delivering PSNI's openness and transparency policies. Recommendation 37 of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (Patten Commission) stated that 'The Police Service should take steps to improve its transparency...'

As with the Board itself, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will play an important part in further delivering its openness and transparency commitments to the community.



# Want to find out more?



For more information on the work of the Board, go to [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)



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## Complaints policy

The Board is committed to providing a high level of service and expects all its employees to carry out their duties in a professional and courteous manner. Every effort will be made by staff to deal efficiently and effectively with you our customers. However, if you are unhappy with the way in which the staff of the Board have engaged with you, or are unhappy with our internal processes or procedures then you can complain. A copy of the Board's complaint policy is available on request or can be downloaded from the Board's website. Contact details are provided above.

## Alternative formats

A summary of this Review will be made available on request in accessible formats such as in braille, large print, disc and audiocassette, and in minority languages to meet the needs of people not fluent in English. Requests for alternative formats should be made to the Northern Ireland Policing Board at the address above.