



RESPONSE BY THE PCC TO HMIC INSPECTIONS OF CLEVELAND POLICE

INSPECTION DETAILS

Title of Inspection

Personal, Situational and Incidental Vulnerabilities to ASB Harm: A Follow up Study

Date Inspection Published

April 2013

Type of Inspection:

Cleveland Specific
 Follow Up
 Partner Inspection

National
 Thematic

Is Cleveland Police quoted in the Report?

Yes

No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

This is a Universities' Police Science Institutes (UPSI-Cardiff University) report which is a follow up study to their report in 2010 entitled "Rethinking the Policing of Antisocial Behaviour". The report is intended for the HMIC and some of the analysis and presentation of findings is detailed and complex.

The report focuses on why some people or communities may be more vulnerable or more likely to be negatively impacted by ASB than others.

The report identifies three main types of Vulnerability;

Personal Vulnerability - an individual or group's characteristics e.g. mental or physical health status.

Situational Vulnerability – the impact of ASB is amplified by the context in which it occurs e.g. area of social deprivation

Incidental Vulnerability - certain incidents that are more likely to induce harmful effects for victims in particular repeat incidents or incidents where the victim feels they are being personally targeted e.g. hate crime.

The report highlights that where these types of vulnerability overlap the harm caused by ASB is amplified further. The report analyses vulnerable repeat victims and high frequency (more than 10 calls in a twelve month period) repeat victims and the impact of ASB on them. It explores differences in the findings relating to age, gender and ethnicity.

There are a number of graphs comparing performance data and statistics for each of the 43 Police forces of England and Wales. Cleveland is relatively average across all areas and we do not feature as being significantly above or below the norm except in one area. Cleveland Police's performance is highlighted as having the lowest percentage of victims in the most acute area (high frequency repeat and vulnerable victim) which is clearly very positive. These comparisons do not prompt any additional research to be carried out by the force.

The report examines HMIC findings around ASB performance and Cleveland is highlighted in the category "all-round performance at point of report" as being one of the top 5 forces in the country.

An interesting point made in the report is that "Better police performance is unlikely to "drive down" the overall volume of calls on ASB, but it can improve victim satisfaction and public reporting of this type of crime". This comment is supported by findings around social deprivation and increased confidence in the police and their response leading to increased calls for assistance.

RECOMMENDATIONS & FORCE RESPONSE

Report Recommendation	Force Response
<p>The starting point for police call handlers should be simple standardised questions that 'guide' the conversation and provide a way in which to probe the context in which any individual is experiencing antisocial behaviour. Although there is often reticence about asking people 'personal' questions about their health status, for example, it should be noted that social surveys have a long tradition of questioning members of the public on these topics and there is no evidence that people take offense or refuse to answer questions of this nature. We suggest that the questions used in this survey of victim callers provide a useful starting point from which to record a vulnerable victim status. This should not be regarded as a 'one off' exercise carried out only at the initial contact the victim makes with police. Victim status is subject to change over time. For example, with repeated incidents of victimisation, an individual may</p>	<p>Question set for ASB for call takers is already have in place - no further action required.</p>

Report Recommendation	Force Response
<p>move from a non-vulnerable status to a vulnerable one. It cannot be assumed therefore that the circumstances of a repeat caller will remain unchanged.</p>	
<p>We suggest that individual forces interrogate their own databases for a time period of 12 months or more in order to identify what types of victim are presenting most frequently. The survey analysis of force differences reported here is limited in its representativeness as it covers only a one-month period. The local victim profile of police force areas will be shaped by 'macro' factors such as the level of deprivation in the areas covered by the force, as well as the demographic profile. Data linking individual records on victims to Census and geo-referenced data can assist in providing a more rounded view of local priorities and victim needs. It is here robust computer systems and I.T can add-value to, and shape, a grounded contextualised response to ASB in local areas.</p>	<p>We already carry out a variety of analysis on ASB to inform our tactical responses - no further action required.</p>
<p>Forces should look in detail at their victim profile and use this data to establish a formal policy statement on what type of response they will give to different types of victim. We strongly advocate that all available evidence is used in police action planning in order to respond appropriately to the diversity that exists among the victims of antisocial behaviour. Refuting popular stereotypes, the research evidence contained in this report shows that the repeat and vulnerable victim cannot be regarded as an elderly, affluent member of society with too few demands on their time other than to make 'nuisance calls' to the police about matters of trivia. All too often, the repeat and vulnerable victims are individuals living in difficult circumstances reaching out repeatedly to the police for assistance with an antisocial behaviour issue that is having a real and significant impact on their everyday lives.</p>	<p>This is already included in our ASB policy and is based on repeat victims and the assessment of risk and harm - no further action required.</p>

Comment:

One of the findings of the report, which did not generate an action, relates to the level of satisfaction of victims of ASB.

The report found that where the victim perceived there was any police action then there was a strong correlation with improved satisfaction regardless of what the action was. This was particularly evident in environmental ASB where the police action may not be immediately apparent to the caller.

The ASB policy is due for review this month and I will ensure that this report is included in that process.

Force Response Provided By: Acting Superintendent Dickson

PCC RESPONSE TO INSPECTION

Comment by the PCC:

I am extremely encouraged that the recommendations cited by HMIC are already fully embedded within Cleveland Police.

It is very positive to see Cleveland has scored "good" or "excellent" in a number of categories and rates in the top 5 forces in the country for overall system performance in key areas of ASB.

The reporting of Antisocial Behaviour incidents by the vulnerable can be very traumatic, having to recount an incident especially where they may have been a victim. It is very important that from the initial point of contact that the follow-up service provided by Cleveland Police is of the highest quality to ensure that where a crime has been committed, it is dealt with appropriately.

The PCC will monitor the implementation of recommendations via quarterly updates of the Risk, Audit & Inspection Monitoring Board.