



HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY IN SCOTLAND

Assurance Review

Contact Assessment Model

- Terms of Reference

February 2022

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) is established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012¹ and has wide ranging powers to look into the 'state, effectiveness and efficiency' of both the Police Service of Scotland (Police Scotland) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).

We have a statutory duty to ensure that the Chief Constable and the SPA meet their obligations in terms of best value and continuous improvement. If necessary, we can be directed by Scottish Ministers to look into anything relating to the SPA or Police Scotland as they consider appropriate. We also have an established role in providing professional advice and guidance on policing in Scotland.

- Our powers allow us to do anything we consider necessary or expedient for the purposes of, or in connection with, the carrying out of our functions
- The SPA and the Chief Constable must provide us with such assistance and co-operation as we may require to enable us to carry out our functions
- When we publish a report, the SPA and the Chief Constable must also consider what we have found and take such measures, if any, as they think fit
- Where our report identifies that the SPA or Police Scotland is not efficient or effective (or best value not secured), or will, unless remedial measures are taken, cease to be efficient or effective, Scottish Ministers may direct the SPA to take such measures as may be required. The SPA must comply with any direction given
- Where we make recommendations, we will follow them up and report publicly on progress
- We will identify good practice that can be applied across Scotland
- We work with other inspectorates and agencies across the public sector and co-ordinate our activities to reduce the burden of inspection and avoid unnecessary duplication
- We aim to add value and strengthen public confidence in Scottish policing and will do this through independent scrutiny and objective, evidence-led reporting about what we find.

Our approach is to support Police Scotland and the SPA to deliver services that are high quality, continually improving, effective and responsive to local needs.²

This assurance review will be undertaken by HMICS under section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and will be laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 79(3) of the Act.

¹ Chapter 11, Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

² HMICS, [Corporate Strategy 2017-20](#) (2017).

Our review

Introduction

1. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) has committed to a statutory inspection of Police Scotland's Contact Assessment Model as part of its Scrutiny Plan for 2021-22.

Aim

2. The aim of this assurance review will be to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of the Contact Assessment Model (CAM).

Background

3. In June 2019, Police Scotland began to implement Phase 1 of CAM in the west of Scotland divisions and following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, full roll out was completed, five months early, in April 2020.
4. The model was intended to be a new means by which the force would manage requests for police assistance from the public and from other agencies. The introduction of CAM followed a recommendation made by HMICS in 2015 that Police Scotland should adopt a more formalised risk and vulnerability assessment model such as THRIVE³, a model used by several police forces in England and Wales.⁴
5. The initial business case described CAM as an 'enhanced assessment and decision making model, using criteria such as risk and vulnerability that enables identification and direction of the most appropriate policing response at first point of contact'.
6. A Review of the early implementation of the Contact Assessment Model⁵ was published by HMICS in October 2019. At the time of this early review CAM was only in place in Dumfries and Galloway and Lanarkshire Divisions.
7. Various stakeholders, including Police Scotland, the SPA and the Scottish Government, have expressed a desire that HMICS carry out further assurance work in relation to CAM. In our Scrutiny Plan 2019-20, we noted that we intended to carry out assurance work, but due to the impact of COVID-19, this work was delayed to allow Police Scotland to focus on the operational response to the pandemic.

³ THRIVE is a mnemonic for the risk assessment process that considers Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative opportunity, Vulnerability and Engagement required to resolve the issue

⁴ HMICS, [Independent Assurance Review Police Scotland - Call Handling Final Report](#), 10 November 2015.

⁵ HMICS, [Review of the early implementation of the Contact Assessment Model](#), 31 October 2019.



Terms of reference Scope

8. This assurance review will be undertaken by HMICS in terms of the Section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and will take account of our previous considerations during the October 2019 review.⁶
9. The intention is to assess the operational impact of the five strategic benefits of CAM that were identified by Police Scotland, namely:
 - **Improved service delivery to the public.** Under CAM, the individual needs of every caller and the circumstances of each incident are assessed to ensure that the policing response is appropriate. The overall service to the public should improve and callers should have a greater opportunity to resolve their issue at the first point of contact, with consistency of the application of the model in different parts of the country.
 - **Significantly improved assessment of threat, harm, risk, investigative opportunity, vulnerability and engagement at first point of contact.** The police response should be based on an assessment of THRIVE, rather than dictated by policy or default prioritisation.
 - **Improved management of demand.** The Resolution Teams should have an impact on the number of calls requiring police attendance.
 - **Improved partnership working.** Unless a police presence is required, CAM should reduce the deployment of police to attend incidents already attended by other agencies. We will examine the impact CAM has had in this area, particularly in relation to the impact of mental health collaboration.
 - **Empowered and enabled workforce.** Service centre staff should be trained and supported to make deployment decisions based on their informed assessment of the circumstances of calls.
10. The assurance review will also consider the extent to which the Scottish Police Authority has exercised proportionate, accountable and transparent governance over the implementation of CAM and how it has held the Chief Constable to account.

⁶ HMICS, [Review of the early implementation of the Contact Assessment Model](#), 31 October 2019.



Exclusions from scope

11. Domestic Abuse is a priority area for Police Scotland and whilst this assurance review will examine the THRIVE assessment of a dip sample of calls made to Police Scotland via the 101 and 999 systems, to avoid potential duplication and demand on Police Scotland, this inspection will not consider the user journey and experience for domestic abuse incidents as HMICS is currently undertaking a separate thematic inspection of this area.
12. Police Scotland launched a Public Contact and Engagement Strategy⁷ in 2020. This strategy aspires to develop multi-channel contact and engagement, establishing the options the public expects and needs, supported by flexible and relevant policing services.
13. The Modernised Contact and Engagement (MCE) Programme was established in June 2021 to deliver the change necessary to achieve the aims of this strategy. The Contact, Engagement and Resolution Project (CERP) sits within the MCE Programme. CERP is designed to build on CAM, to enhance the quality of contact and engagement with the public and streamline the delivery of core services, such as directly recorded crime. HMICS intends to undertake separate assurance work on the MCE Programme.
14. In November 2021, HMICS published an Assurance validation of Police Scotland transformation benefits,⁸ whereby all transformation portfolio projects which delivered gains were reviewed, including CAM. Our forthcoming review will not further consider the CAM project methodology for calculating full time equivalent gains, but will focus instead on the operational effectiveness and implications of CAM.

Objectives and outcomes

15. The HMICS objective for this assurance review is to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of the Contact Assessment Model. The intended outcomes from this inspection and its publication are to:
 - Provide assurance that CAM is being used effectively and consistently across Police Scotland to support policing delivery and improvements to partnership working
 - Provide assurance that the model is delivering the strategic benefits identified by the force
 - Ensure that suitable capacity is in place to support a sustainable CAM.

User Perspective

16. As set out in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, HMICS has a duty to demonstrate continuous improvement in user focus, i.e. involving users in the scrutiny process. We will endeavour to obtain the perspective of key stakeholders groups through self-evaluation and consultation. HMICS will engage directly with Police Scotland, officers and staff, the Scottish Police Authority and partner agencies.

⁷ Police Scotland, [Public Contact and Engagement Strategy 2020](#).

⁸ HMICS, [Assurance validation of Police Scotland transformation benefits 2020-21](#), 19 November 2021.



Methodology

17. We will use the latest HMICS Inspection Framework which is based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model and Best Value characteristics. The Inspection Framework will provide a structure to our review which will be risk based, proportionate and focused on improving the delivery of policing in Scotland. We will structure our review around our objectives and three themes:
 - Outcomes
 - Leadership and Vision
 - Delivery

18. Between January 2022 and April 2022 we will:
 - Liaise regularly with Police Scotland through the identified single point of contact (SPOC) for HMICS and maintain ongoing engagement with other key stakeholders.
 - Issue a self-evaluation template to Police Scotland.
 - Analyse the completed self-evaluation and evidence provided and consider relevant documentation in the public domain. Where possible we will minimise the amount of further documents requested but this will depend on the quality of evidence provided in the self-evaluation. Additional requests may emerge during the course of the review.
 - Assess the application of the THRIVE model and the impact of the resolution teams by auditing calls.
 - Engage directly with relevant officers and staff within C3 and local policing where appropriate.

Publication and reporting timescales

19. We anticipate publishing a report of our findings in May 2022. Our report will be published in terms of Section 79 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. A copy of the report will also be provided to the Chief Constable, the Scottish Police Authority and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and laid before the Scottish Parliament. A copy will also be made publicly available on the HMICS website.

20. For further information about the assurance review of the Contact Assessment Model, please contact Brian McInulty, Lead Inspector brian.mcinulty@gov.scot

Gillian Imery QPM

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland
February 2022