



A report for the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) on innovative programmes for the recruitment and training of investigators, currently in operation in police forces in England & Wales

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Date of preparation – 31st July 2019

Executive summary

Context

This research was commissioned to evaluate innovative programmes for investigator selection, recruitment, and training, introduced by Forces A, B, C, and D.

Launched in response to a decline in investigator numbers, Scheme D is an augmented version of a traditional, PC to DC pathway. For the purposes of this report, we refer to traditional schemes like this as Category 1 programmes. The force hoped the programme would encourage individuals already employed by the force into investigative work. With just a few restrictions, the scheme is open to all Force D staff.

Plans for fast-track programmes such as the three operated by Forces A, B, and C first were announced in 2017. They were presented in response to what NPCC considered a national crisis in detective numbers. They were not welcomed universally. On social media, they attracted adverse comment from the beginning. The Police Federation argued that they were unnecessary; that existing PC to DC pathways were ‘much more likely to create high-quality investigators’ (cited in Kirby, 2018). While, in an intervention that shows how much heat the debate has generated, Yardley *et al* argued that the plans, risked the employment of ‘the wrong kind of investigator; the consumer capitalist detective with a sense of entitlement and a narcissistic streak’ (2018 p.1).

The Force A, B, and C schemes (which we have bracketed together as Category 2 programmes) are not strictly comparable but they share many characteristics. Recruits complete the Initial Police Learning & Development Programme (IPLDP) then spend a truncated period of time in uniform in a

response role before sitting the National Investigator's Exam (NIE) and enrolling on the Initial Crime Investigators Programme (ICIDP). That leads to PIP2 accreditation and finally to graduation from the programme. The Force A trainees are further along in their programme than trainees in the other forces but none have yet been awarded accreditation. Forces anticipate that trainees will complete their training around 2 years from their date of appointment. Therefore, the first of the programmes' graduates should emerge by November 2019 in Forces A and B; and by April 2020 in Force C.

Research question and aim

This report answers the research question, 'In light of the significant shortfall in investigator numbers across the police service, what actions have police forces in England and Wales taken to develop systems that may aid in improving investigator resilience and capacity'? Our aim was to better understand those actions and to assess the extent to which they provide models for the selection, recruitment, and training of investigators across England and Wales.

Methodology

Our research was qualitative; we interviewed respondents in all of the forces named above (n = 42) and supplemented our interview data with a survey of Force D staff (n = 20). We collected further data by interviewing respondents in a national detective agency to assess the extent to which elements of its training programme could be adapted for the benefit of police forces (n = 9: N = 71).

Findings

Marketing & recruitment

We found positives in all of the programmes. In terms of the fast-track schemes, they were marketed innovatively and attracted high-quality candidates. We found a significant degree of consistency in their marketing. None were open to serving officers; though members of police staff could apply and many did. The data we collected, required some interpretation - different forces collected different data - but we saw that each programme attracted great interest from prospective applicants and that was converted into high numbers of applications. In each case, the force achieved the targets it set itself.

The programmes attracted applicants with new (in some cases, complementary) skills. Trainees had professional experience (variously) in engineering; midwifery; legal practice; probation; teaching, and the natural sciences. Forces found that they were successful in attracting more diverse groups of applicants than they would expect from standard recruitment campaigns. However, in at least one case they could have had even greater success if their selection process was more finely attuned to the programme's aims.

Training

In each case, recruits were trained to be omniscient and not limited to the investigator role. Respondents (trainees and representatives of the forces themselves) felt this was an important consideration for any force outside of the larger metropolitan areas.

Across the board, we were impressed with the commitment of supervisors, of training staff, and of the trainees themselves, to their programmes. Peers were supportive of the efforts their forces were making to enhance both investigative work and the status of the detective. Several respondents (serving detectives and PSIs) told us that their initial scepticism about the programme had given way to admiration for the trainees and the latter's efforts to achieve accreditation as investigators. The cynicism that seems to pervade so much of the commentary on this subject (we already have referred to the heated debate it has generated), was completely absent from our interactions with research respondents.

Most of the training delivered, met trainees' needs most of the time. A significant theme that emerged in this context, was that respondents wanted greater CID involvement in training delivery and design. They felt that would better prepare them for their new roles. Some respondents saw the need for greater differentiation between trainees with no policing background and those who joined from the wider police family (with experience as a member of civilian staff, as a PCSO and so on). We recognise the logistical challenges these issues raise.

The concept of socialising new recruits into military or police life through processes of role-modelling and conditioning is well understood. It has long been a feature of police training in the UK. Though, it also has been recognised that new recruits can face socialisation problems; including problems that are caused by their shock at the gap between pre-entry expectation and reality (Sato, 2003). That was a factor in two of the cases where, no doubt well-intentioned, encouragement to trainees to submerge aspects of their individuality for the benefit of the force seems to have been counterproductive.

Trainees' welfare

Unsurprisingly, some trainees on the fast-track programmes have struggled and a number of welfare-related issues have emerged; clearly, the programmes make huge demands of them.

Trainees need the consistent support of mentors because many do not have sufficient police or life experience to fall back upon. We learned that the programmes make new demands on forces because support systems may be less mature than they are for trainees on the traditional pathway (this, is a hidden expense that needs to be more obviously factored both into programme planning and estimates of overall costs). The role of the mentor is absolutely critical to trainees' success but with the notable exception of the national case, few trainees consistently received the support they needed. Mentors themselves, received only limited training in coaching, mentoring and assessment. We feel that needs to change if these kinds of programmes are to achieve long-term success but we recognise that, for the very reason that the service has turned to these kinds of programmes, forces might struggle to meet that demand. Simply, there may not be enough knowledge, skills, and experience to go around. We found that for all their positives, a significant negative of the Category 2 schemes is that without careful management, inevitably they will add to the burden of those already carrying the heaviest workloads.

Pay & rewards

Many respondents raised the subject of pay and rewards. NPCC accepts the case for improvements and is making substantial efforts both in its own right and with other stakeholders to support individual forces in rewarding investigators and increasing the attraction of careers in investigation. Beyond adding an element of empiricism to the argument, we do not believe our evaluation adds to the pay debate. Amongst the trainees we interviewed, it was not currently a matter of concern. Indeed, several had taken a substantial pay cut to join the police. We are pleased to include that item of good news in our report but we feel bound to add a cautionary note. Some trainees told us they relished the challenges their work presented but during our interactions, we found sufficient clues (as they revealed nascent plans for promotion or specialization, or discussed their workloads and their family lives) that we feel that forces need to be alert to the fact that, going forward, pay is likely to be a critical factor in retaining these individuals in their current roles.

PEQF and degree entry

The elephant in the room (if we can be forgiven for using the term, which has become something of a cliché - but its use in this context is completely apposite) is the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF). We cannot say much more about PEQF without straying into a debate that extends far beyond the parameters of this research but particularly relevant to this evaluation is that its introduction will reduce the speed at which the shortfall in detective numbers can be addressed. That seems to us to run counter to the service's needs.

Some respondents advanced the proposition that PEQF offers advantage for investigator recruitment because one of its three strands, the DHEP, can be adapted to include an investigator pathway. Thus, the need for bespoke fast-track programmes is obviated. We certainly see merit in that argument but we are concerned that such a programme, self-evidently, will exclude non-degree holders and that otherwise excellent candidates may be lost to the service. Certainly, we interviewed a number of very impressive trainees who would not have been employed if the mandatory degree condition already was in force.

A potential solution to this conundrum is the addition of a detective entry pathway to the HLA, so that non-degree holders enter the service via the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA). Though, we wonder whether apprenticeships for new investigators will be available in sufficient numbers (experience in other sectors - such as the health and prison services - suggests that is by no means a given) and also whether non-degree holders will be willing and able to expend the additional energy required to undertake Level 6 study over three years, at the same time embarking on a new career (we speculate that this requirement may put off more mature candidates or those with family commitments). We explored with non-degree holding trainees whether they would consider taking the PSI option if appointment as a sworn officer was no longer an option. The consensus was that pathway was less attractive because of the limited opportunities for development in that role (as compared to the detective role).

We found no support whatsoever amongst our respondents for the argument that police officers need a degree. Though it may be wise to take a longer view of these programmes - it will be interesting to see what messages come back to forces from stakeholders and others (not least prosecuting bodies and the judiciary) as trainees begin to complete their own case files and steer

those cases through the courts system. On the evidence of this evaluation, the programmes - as they currently are configured - promise to be able to deliver what the service wants. It seems counter-intuitive to suggest anything other than that the service should seek to capitalise upon them.

Discussion and conclusions

It may be unfair to single out one of the fast-track programmes. We recognise that we have evaluated three experiments (a point reinforced by several trainees who self-mockingly, referred to themselves as 'guinea pigs') and forces may already have identified areas for development but have not had the opportunity to address them. Nevertheless, we feel we should report that the Force A programme impressed us the most. It demonstrated the value of strong local leadership and clarity of vision; it seemed to select trainees with the maturity and professional experience that suggested they have the life skills to withstand the rigours of the programme; and with trainees posted into roles where they were able to begin honing their investigative skills at only 29 weeks, it certainly is deserving of the epithet 'fast-track'. We emphasise that we have not compared like-with-like in this evaluation. While the Force A programme clearly worked for Force A, others will need to make their own assessment based on their own needs. Fears that the pace of the programme is too fast; that the force does not have enough time to prepare its trainees well enough for the investigative world, have not yet been borne out but, as we have acknowledged above, we recognise that it may be some time before a final judgement can be made in that regard.

The Force D scheme provides a focus for developing investigative recruitment and training, and investigators' skills, across the force. Respondents said that the programme's strengths are its consistency with historical and cultural norms; its low costs - because it utilises established selection, recruitment, training and support mechanisms and resources; and its transparency and accessibility. In the words of one respondent, the scheme is 'user-friendly'. The majority of respondents broadly were supportive of the programme.

Respondents said it represents a positive brand that has credibility throughout the force; one that, as a result, confers credibility on its graduates. Some felt that it could be improved in some areas. For example, they suggested a need for fine tuning of the assessment centre process; better internal marketing of the programme; and a greater commitment to developing the scheme's mentoring processes. The programme seems to work well for Force D and we feel that its tenets and processes merit consideration by other forces.

We believe our evaluation demonstrates the continuing value of traditional pathways for investigator recruitment. It also highlights that fast-track programmes show promise and should be investigated further. We believe that, operating at the margins of investigator recruitment and training, fast-track programmes can contribute significantly to delivering a more diverse and capable workforce.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

1. In this context, forces continue to focus the bulk of their energies on the recruitment and training of investigators from within their own ranks. Force D's scheme provides an example of better practice in this regard.
2. As long as the option is open to them, forces continue to explore the use of fast-track programmes as a way of diversifying their workforces and attracting recruits with new skills (we recognise that if forces accept PEQF then the subject is moot). The Force A programme provides an example of better practice in this regard.
3. In advance of the introduction of the PEQF, NPCC works with the College of Policing to explore the addition of detective pathways to the DHEP and to the HLA.
4. Trainees' welfare continues to attract the priority we have seen it given in the programmes we evaluated.
5. NPCC and forces explore all avenues to increase the pool of mentors upon whose skills and experiences, novice investigators may draw.
6. As far as practicable, investigative training is designed and delivered by those with a significant degree of insight into the work.

A typology of fast-track investigator schemes

We reflect on what, in our view, amounts to a perfect fast-track scheme. We present two options. The primary distinction between the two is that one takes no account of the PEQF, while the other is PEQF compliant. We stress that we are firmly of the view that neither should be seen as a replacement for recruitment from the existing workforce via the traditional route.

	Option 1	Option 2
Force lead	An officer/staff member with significant investigative experience at senior level	
Mentoring	Forces recognise the burden on mentors. It provides opportunities for their development and supports them in obtaining qualifications in coaching and mentoring.	
Programme marketing	Reflects organisational needs.	
	Applicants hold a Level 3 qualification.	Applicants holding a Level 3 qualification join the HLA pathway. Those holding a Level 6 qualification join the DHEP

		pathway.
Selection	Detective entry <u>only</u> . Standard selection criteria (as utilised in the Category 2 schemes evaluated in this document) are applied. Any sifting of candidates is balanced against the force's needs.	
Trainee support	Detective mentors are identified to each trainee from the date of their appointment and they maintain a professional relationship with trainees throughout the programme. Trainees provided with study leave and study aids at force's expense.	
Training	Initial training geared to include a substantial proportion of inputs from investigators. Ideally, recruits on this pathway are trained separately from those on the standard pathway.	
	12 weeks of classroom-based initial training 20 weeks tutoring in the workplace (including attachments to custody, volume crime investigation, etc.). At end of week 32, trainees should be 'safe & lawful' and fit for confirmation in the office of Constable.	Trainees on HLA scheme accredited as investigators at the end of Year 3; trainees on the DHEP scheme at the end of Year 2.
Posting	At 34/35 weeks (allowing for leave), trainees are posted to their new roles (in main CID, etc.), to work under the tutelage of their mentors.	Trainees move into investigative roles (as trainee investigators) at the force's discretion
Workload	Trainees take responsibility for their own workload when they have passed the NIE <u>and</u> been assessed as competent by their assessors	

Acknowledgements

The researchers are indebted to Suzanne Hughes; Jeff Yaxley; Karen Richardson; Oli Lage; Nick John; Rachel Ward; Mike Price; Sara Barrett; Anthony Tagg; and Jeff Clifford and, of course, all the interviewees who volunteered their time and intellectual energy in support of the project.

Structure of the report

The first section describes the scope of the review. Next is an explanation of the research methodology. That is followed by a section that seeks to explain the context of the research, which takes the reader to the substance of the report; a summary of the research cases (including findings and recommendations).

These analyses answer the specific questions set by National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) in its project specification document. Readers should note that the reports headings and sub-headings in themselves provide a brief synopsis of the evaluation.

Introduction - scope of the review

NPCC recognises that there is a significant shortfall in investigator numbers across the service and seeks to assess what impact that has had on investigator resilience and capacity. It has commissioned this independent evaluation of innovative actions and interventions undertaken, separately, by forces in England and Wales, to better understand the impact of those interventions and to assess the extent to which those actions and interventions may provide models for the selection, recruitment and training of investigators across England and Wales.

Researchers assessed four cases: fast-track investigator programmes operated by Forces A, B, and C and an investigator recruitment programme operated by Force D. The research team also assessed a training programme used by a national detective agency in an effort to identify strengths in the context of investigator resilience and capacity that, if emulated, may benefit police forces.

Methodology

Qualitative and interpretive in nature, the research aimed to answer the question, 'In light of the significant shortfall in investigator numbers across the police service, what actions have police forces in England and Wales taken to develop systems that may aid in improving investigator resilience and capacity'. We reviewed internal evaluations completed by all the force. Fieldwork was conducted between January and July 2019 (data collection ended on 18th July 2019). We interviewed officers and staff in Forces A, B, C, and D (n=51); and surveyed officers and staff in Force D (n=20). We gathered a range of views on the utility of the programmes, and on investigator resilience and capacity more generally, from research respondents who could be expected to have deep understanding of those subjects. We consider our research sample was large enough to meet the objectives of the research.

Our findings represent a snapshot of the research environment that may be vulnerable to a host of influences and to human error, but we have endeavoured to account for as many situational and temporal conditions as practicable and to represent respondents' views as faithfully and as objectively as possible. Whenever possible, we allowed respondents to speak for themselves (their testimony forms a significant proportion of the in-depth case analyses). In some passages of this report, we had to mediate their voices in this report so that their accounts are expressed, clearly and coherently, and so that they address the aims of the research but we have taken care to represent respondents' views as accurately and clearly as possible.

The fast-track entry cases we examined are not strictly comparable. In Force A, trainees have been working in investigative roles since June 2018. In Forces B and C, trainees only now are moving into

those roles. That limited what respondents outside of Force A could say about trainees' performance and, naturally, that limited our ability to compare and contrast across the cases. We collected rich data on recruitment, selection, and training processes in each of the forces. In terms of the national organization and Force D, we collected data that explained more traditional recruitment methods for investigators, which provided useful context for our evaluation of the other programmes.

In each case, we collected data on other issues that emerged as germane to investigator resilience and capacity such as: mandatory degree entry for policing; pay and rewards; and retention; and diversity and those too, helped us explain:

- **Senior officers and supervisors' perceptions of:** -
 - programme implementation;
 - the trainees;
 - the programme's ability to produce effective investigators;
 - its impact on the existing team/unit.
- **Trainees' perceptions of:** -
 - the programme;
 - the recruitment process;
 - their training;
 - their confidence in the role;
 - the support available to them;
 - their reception from peers.
- **Peers' perceptions of:** -
 - the programme;
 - the training of the successful candidates;
 - how they worked with the successful candidates;
 - the impact on them and their team.
- **Mentors' perceptions of:** -
 - the support they were expected to provide
 - the support they provided;
 - the training they received for the role;
 - their mentees.

Note that the instruction in the project specification document to identify 'what worked and what could have been done better' in each category, is addressed holistically. We were unable to collect data in some categories (for example, we did not gain access to any mentors in this force and - relative to the other data we collected - the information we were able to glean on the recruitment of PSIs was limited).

Context of the review

Actions taken by police forces in England and Wales to improve investigator resilience and capacity, broadly fall into four categories. In the first, which we have termed 'the 'traditional route' - detectives are recruited internally from existing staff. In the second, candidates are directly recruited for a detective programme but as a precursor to a career in investigation, they are required to serve such a period in uniform as is required to achieve 'safe and lawful' status and to be considered fit for confirmation in the rank of Police Constable. In the third, candidates are directly recruited by a force into a detective role; and in the fourth (and final) category, candidates

are directly recruited by a consortium of forces via the 'Police Now' national graduate programme.

Note that the programmes in Category 2 have attracted what is potentially a confusing range of titles such as: 'fast-track'; 'specialist entry'; and 'direct entry'. For consistency and the avoidance of confusion, we settled on the epithet 'fast-track' for all the Category 2 programmes we evaluated in this study.

Our analysis confirms NPCC's assessment (NPCC, 2017) that the processes introduced by early adopters of Category 2 programmes reflect some differences in need but that the essential elements of each programme, are the same. These are not the only significant developments in police recruitment. For example, the service plans shortly to standardise practice (in terms of the implementation, assessment, and accreditation of initial police training) by introducing the Police Education Qualification Framework, which includes a Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) and a Higher-Level Apprenticeship (HLA). It also will introduce a Licence to Practice (LTP) to improve the status of officers carrying out particularly challenging roles (such as major crime investigation). All will have immediate and far-reaching implications for Category 2 programmes; severely limiting a force's ability to continue to operate an existing programme or to introduce a new one of similar kind.

That requires the following caveat. We have tried to cover as many bases as possible in this evaluation. We have attempted to take account of the impact of PEQF and LTP on bespoke programmes such as these but beyond the simplest of facts - self-evidently, the DHEP pathway will not be open to those who do not hold a degree (an issue we discuss in our findings below - we found the many 'unknowns' or 'not yet knowns' that PEQF introduces to this dynamic to be significant barriers both to constructing meaning from the data we collected and to making recommendations for future action. The picture is confused even more by the decision of the Chief Constable of Lincolnshire to seek a judicial review of decisions surrounding its introduction.

We should add here that programmes in Categories 2, 3 and 4 have no precedent in England and Wales. They may even be termed revolutionary and they certainly have stimulated debate. Kirby (2018 p.1) has argued that the programmes may be viewed as a reasonable response to a national crisis in detective numbers; that as society evolves and new types of criminality emerge, they can deliver a more diverse, flexible police force better equipped to take on these new challenges' but they have not been welcomed universally.

Summary of cases: findings and recommendations

Introduction

In this section, we summarise the central themes that emerged from our evaluation of the selected Category 1 and 2 cases and make some recommendations for future action.

Celebrate success

At the margins of investigator recruitment

We believe that our evaluation shows that the development of fast-track programmes at the margins of investigator recruitment and training, shows promise. We were particularly impressed by the Force A programme, which we feel demonstrates the value of strong local leadership and clarity of vision in both selection and delivery. It certainly is deserving of the epithet 'fast-track'. Of the three Category 2 programmes we reviewed, Force A's seemed to deliver more of what its architects wanted and more in terms of what the service seems to want; a fast and efficient way of making up a worrying shortfall in investigator numbers.

We emphasise that we have not compared like-with-like in this evaluation. While the Force A programme clearly worked for Force A, others will need to make their own assessment based on their own needs. Fears that the pace of programme is too fast; that the force does not have enough time to prepare its trainees well enough for the investigative world, have not been borne out; it may be some time yet before a final judgement can be made in that regard. We argue that the programme's low attrition rate should, at least in part, be attributed to the maturity of the trainees selected and to the fact that trainees spend only a relatively short period in uniform. That may be too subjective an assessment for some readers but we can say these were two features that distinguished the Force A programme from the others in Category 2 that we have evaluated.

At the traditional centre of investigator recruitment

We found the Force D scheme to be an interesting augmentation of the standard pathway into investigation from PC to DC; one that provides a focus for developing high standards of investigative training and skills across its CID, encourages interest in investigation amongst serving officers and staff of all ranks/grades and provides a process by which those with a professional interest in investigation can express it. We felt that a particularly positive feature was the programme's inclusivity; anyone may apply for it at almost any stage of their police career. That opens up the scheme to the whole force. In removing a level of bureaucracy at the application stage, it tilts the selection balance so that the first filter in that process is applied by managers/supervisors in investigations.

Labels - brands - are important. In our interviews with trainees, we spent time discussing how they identified themselves during their training. A range of options are open to them: PC, DC, TDC, and TI. We reflected with them, upon the significance of labels in defining identity and the impact that identity may have on self, how others perceive one and consequently, on one's own behaviour and the behaviour of others. We see a similar dynamic in play here. The Force D scheme's brand is strong, positive, and linked with success; people seemed to want to be associated with it and seemed to be more accepting of its shortcomings. In a period when there are so many negatives associated with detective recruitment and training, the service should be doing all that it can to highlight positives like this.

Staff seem disposed to give the programmes a chance to succeed

Across the board, we were impressed with the commitment of supervisors, of training staff, and of the trainees themselves, to their programmes. Despite the criticisms of the Category 2, 3 and 4 programmes that have appeared in the popular press and in social media, peers were very supportive of the efforts that forces are making to enhance both investigative work and the status of the detective through the introduction of Category 1 and 2 programmes. Though there was some scepticism amongst peers in one of the Category 2 cases, those who worked closely with the trainees seemed to be impressed by the trainees themselves and by the trainees' efforts to achieve accreditation as investigators. The cynicism that seems to pervade so much commentary on this subject, was absent from our interactions with research respondents.

Forces consider programme costs to be within acceptable bounds

The police asked to assess the cost of the programme in each force. We found that forces have not calculated, or have not been able to calculate, the additional costs incurred in marketing their Category 2 programmes or in operating their selection processes. In each case, the bulk of the programme deviates little from the normal training delivered. Therefore, forces broadly assess the cost of the fast-track programmes to be comparable to the cost of recruitment via traditional routes. We are concerned that there may be other, less visible, costs need to be factored into programme planning and estimates of overall costs.

Huge interest in the programmes amongst jobseekers

Forces marketed all Category 2 programmes innovatively and attracted high-quality candidates. In addition to investigator training, recruits underwent initial police training so that they were omnicompetent - and not limited to the investigator role - respondents considered that to be an important factor for forces outside of the large metropolitan areas.

We found a significant degree of consistency in their marketing. None were open to serving officers though members of police staff could apply. The data requires some interpretation - different forces collected different data - but they suggest that each programme attracted great interest from prospective applicants and that was converted into high numbers of applications. In each case, the force achieved the targets it set itself. Inconsistencies in the attrition rates across the Category 2 programmes prior to appointment were explained by respondents as reflecting differences in the level of vacancies in each force and in assessment centre capacity, during different recruitment periods.

Pay is not a factor for trainees now but...

Interviewees raised the subject of payment and reward of investigators. We recognise that NPCC accepts the case for improvements in that regard. It has made substantial efforts in its own right and with other stakeholders to support individual forces in rewarding investigators and to increase the attractiveness of investigative work. We agree with Yardley *et al* (2018) that 'making detective work seem more attractive... [is] about recognising the value of this work and the difference it makes to society...acknowledging the incredible people who are already doing the job in the most difficult of circumstance' but perhaps we are rather more convinced than they, that the service is endeavouring to do just that.

Beyond adding an element of empiricism to the argument, we do not believe that our evaluation adds to the pay debate. Amongst the trainees we interviewed, pay was not currently a matter of concern. Indeed, some people had taken substantial cuts in pay to become investigators. We are pleased to include that item of good news in our report but we feel bound to add a cautionary note. Our respondents told us that they relished the challenges their work presented but during our interactions with them, we found sufficient clues (as trainees revealed nascent plans for promotion or specialisation or discussed their workloads and their family lives) that we feel the need to alert forces to the fact that, going forward, pay is likely to be a critical factor in retaining these individuals in their current roles.

The programmes can add to the diversity of the workforce

In their marketing materials for their programmes, all three forces articulated a desire to attract applicants with the skills to tackle new and emerging threats to the state, individuals, and communities; applicants from ethnic minorities, traditionally under-represented in the police service; and those who may not previously have considered joining the police. Each force attracted great interest from those groups and converted that into high numbers of applications.

We found that forces attracted applicants with new (or at least complementary) skills; we interviewed trainees with professional experience (variously) in engineering; midwifery; legal practice; probation; teaching, and the natural sciences. We found evidence that forces using these programmes attracted more diverse groups of applicants than standard recruitment programmes.

We learned that some applications submitted by candidates from ethnic minority communities to one Category 2 programme, met the required standard but were lost at the 'paper sift' stage where the applicants were outscored by other candidates. There was no impropriety whatsoever in that process but we feel it worthy of comment here because respondents in the other Category 2 cases we evaluated, told us that they were concerned that standard selection processes may be incompatible with innovative recruitment schemes such as these. Respondents argued that those processes could in themselves be a barrier to achieving a more diverse workforce. We suggest that the example we have provided may be evidence of that incompatibility.

PEQF potentially will exclude some excellent candidates from investigative work

Some, respondents advanced the proposition that PEQF offers advantage in the context of investigator recruitment because one of its three strands, the DHEP, can be adapted to include an investigator pathway. Therefore, the need for a bespoke fast-track programme is obviated. We certainly see merit in that argument but we are concerned that, self-evidently, non-degree holders will be excluded from consideration - no matter what their other qualities - and that potential recruits who do not hold a Level 6 qualification, may be lost to the service. Certainly, we interviewed a number of very impressive trainees who would not have been employed if the degree requirement was already in force.

A potential solution to this conundrum is the addition of a detective entry pathway to the HLA, so that non-degree holders enter the service via the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA).

Though, we wonder whether apprenticeships for new investigators will be available in sufficient numbers (experience in other sectors - such as the health and prison services - suggests that is by no means a given) and also whether non-degree holders will be willing and able to expend the additional energy required to undertake Level 6 study over three years, while embarking on a new career (we speculate that this requirement may put off more mature candidates or those with family commitments). We explored with non-degree holding trainees, whether they would consider taking the PSI option, if appointment as a sworn officer was no longer an option. The consensus was that pathway was less attractive because of the limited opportunities for development in that role (as compared to the detective role).

We cannot say much more about PEQF without straying into a much bigger debate that goes far beyond this evaluation. We will make two points here. First, the introduction of PEQF will reduce the speed at which the shortfall in detective numbers can be addressed. Second, we found no support whatsoever amongst our respondents for the argument that police officers need a degree. As Table 1 shows, Category 2 programmes hold huge appeal for jobseekers in our communities. This evaluation suggests that they can deliver what the service wants - it seems counter-intuitive to suggest that the service should not capitalise on that. To quote one of our respondents, we think that to do otherwise is 'a luxury the police cannot afford'.

Trainees believe that the training they were delivered was good - but could be better

We were told that the ICIDP is being overhauled and that its replacement is anticipated in 2020 but beyond that we have received no further information so we cannot comment upon it here. Respondents described some excellent training, delivered in thoughtful and supportive ways. In the case of the Force D scheme, many lauded training quality, but modular delivery of ICIDP was problematic. Some trainees experienced difficulty in booking onto courses. Researchers were particularly impressed with the national programme, which they considered to be finely attuned to individual needs.

Most of the training delivered in the cases we examined, met trainees' needs most of the time but some trainees considered some aspects of their training to be of a lesser quality than they expected or needed. Issues seemed to arise when fast-track entry and standard entry trainees were mixed together and where trainers tried to meet the needs of two different groups in the same teaching and learning environment. We recognise that forces may consider the logistical challenge of separating the groups to be too great. This evaluation has shown that to do otherwise risks delivering training that does not meet all trainees needs. In some cases, trainees' views on the quality of the training they received were linked to the background and experience of their trainers. Broadly, trainees' satisfaction levels increased when there was a higher degree of detective input into the training.

Trainees need excellent support to achieve accreditation

We wonder whether forces really understand the demands that Category 2 programmes make of the trainees and of the forces themselves. The ICIDP programme follows hard on the heels of the IPLDP. Trainees told us that in some cases, the programmes overlapped. Unsurprisingly, some trainees struggled to combine their work with their studies and failed to meet the forces'

expectations of them.

We would need to carry out further research to confirm our belief empirically but it seemed to us that more mature trainees coped better with the programmes' demands and that meant that their demand on the force's training and support services was commensurately smaller than their less experienced colleagues. That may not be an unexpected finding and in itself it may not be particularly revealing but the trainees' struggles highlight the need for forces to get their selection, training, and mentoring processes absolutely right if they are to keep attrition within acceptable bounds and to avoid substantial additional costs. It seemed to us that any force considering a Category 2 scheme programme, would need to be satisfied that their ancillary processes really can support it. We feel it significant that trainees on the Category 1 scheme (where individuals can rely on their previous police experience and where support systems may be more mature) seemed to manage their operational and study workloads more effectively than those on the Category 2 schemes.

With the exception of the national case, mentors told us that they had received only very limited formal training in coaching, mentoring and assessment. We assess that overall, support for trainees was sub-optimal. The role of the mentor is absolutely critical to the success of trainees. This is particularly true for those on the fast-track programmes who usually have very limited professional experience to draw upon. We found excellent examples of mentoring (for example, where mentors were appointed early in the trainee's programme and where mentors themselves were properly trained and supported). However, that was not the experience in every case.

We should add that our sense is that the reasons that mentors provided so much less support than was hoped for, should be attributed to structural rather than individual failings. The demand for experienced investigators far exceeds supply. For all the positives we saw in the Category 2 schemes, we should highlight the significant negative that without careful management, inevitably they will add to the burden of those already carrying the heaviest workloads.

Case summaries

Introduction

In the following sections, we present summaries of each of the cases we evaluated. Note that we have not analysed the national agency as a case in its own right but have sought to identify positive aspects of its training programme that may inform the development of the other programmes we reviewed. Therefore, we have not summarised our evaluation of the national agency.

Force A

The programme was launched to the public on the 6 July 2017. More than 2000 eligibility forms were completed, resulting in 1687 eligible candidates and 229 applications. 17 applicants were appointed and joined the programme. To enable early appointment of detective mentors, trainees were informed of their posting determination prior to commencing training - we consider that to be an example of excellent practice.

The first intake started training - for the first 28 weeks alongside entrants on the standard pathway - in November 2017. That was made up of 10 weeks of classroom-based training; 10 weeks of tutor- led, uniform response and patrol duties; four weeks in the Custody Investigation Unit; and a four- week attachment to volume crime investigation. In week 29, trainees were posted to Safeguarding or to CID Investigations where, it is envisaged, they will remain until week 104. The force also supported trainees' ICIDP studies with paid study-days and supplied them with Blackstone's guides to help them study for the NIE and the knowledge element of ICIDP. Between weeks 29 and 104, trainees work in plain clothes and are mentored by an experienced detective.

The programme can be considered a success on a number of levels. Principally, it seems to have achieved its objectives. Respondents told us that the force has made up its shortfall in detective numbers. Its marketing of the programme seems to have been both effective and cost- effective (the force assesses its cost to be no more than that of its standard recruitment programme). The programme seems to have delivered without creating additional expense elsewhere in the organization, in the way similar programmes elsewhere seem to have fostered. It succeeded in attracting high quality, mature candidates into the force.

With officers achieving independent patrol status and posted into investigative roles after just 29 weeks, the programme is deserving of the epithet 'fast-track'. We feel that it would benefit from fine-tuning - hence our observations below - but the force should be congratulated for supporting trainees well enough that the programme delivered its expected outcomes and its trainees' performance exceeded the expectations of supervisors and peers.

Attrition has been low. Of the 20 trainees who passed the detective selection assessment; 16 remain on the programme. Those who remain have passed the NIE and completed the classroom element of ICIDP. Currently, they are collecting evidence for their PIP2 portfolio. Two recruits elected to continue on the standard pathway at the interview stage; and one failed the medical assessment. Only one trainee left the fast-track programme; the force permitted them to continue on the standard pathway. It is anticipated that the trainees who remain on the programme will complete PIP2 and qualify as investigators by Week 104. That means that the first investigators

recruited via this programme should qualify as investigators by November 2019. We attribute the low attrition rate to the quality of the force's selection processes and the support it has provided to trainees. We believe that another factor in the force's success in this regard may be the short time that trainees spend in a response role; we observed elsewhere that the orientation to action found in a high percentage of police recruits, drew some away from the detective pathway they had started upon. That was not the case in Force A.

The force does not view the programme as a replacement for its traditional methods of selecting and training investigators. That would be prohibitively costly, exclusive - potentially, a significant barrier to the development of existing staff - and an inefficient use of resources. It can be a useful, cost-effective vehicle for increasing the diversity of the workforce and attracting recruits with new investigative skills. We feel that care should be taken to ensure that investigators recruited in the traditional way, broadly benefit from the same professional development opportunities as their colleagues on these kinds of programmes. We believe that to do otherwise, risks fuelling division and may undermine support for them.

Ultimately, it is for the force to judge: whether the organisational energy and other resources it has expended on the programme have delivered what it wanted; whether the programme will continue to meet expectations; or whether those resources can be used more productively in other ways (for example, to support the development of investigators along the more traditional pathways and/or by developing a detective pathway compatible with the DHEP and/or the PCDA - the introduction of PEQF will have a significant impact on the recruitment of sworn officers into the force). However, we feel that this programme shows real promise. We hope this evaluation can help to inform any review of its use.

We identified potential areas for development of the programme that the force may choose to review, should the force wish to continue with it:

- We believe that greater involvement of detectives or others with an investigative mindset, in the investigative element of the training programme will enhance the currency and the credibility of the programme.
- Programme mentors believe they should benefit from more training in coaching and mentoring; we agree. The force should consider providing more opportunities for staff development in this context, in the form of qualifications in coaching and mentoring (such as that offered by Institute of Leadership and Management) and should explore all avenues to increase the pool of mentors upon whose skills and experiences, novice investigators may draw.
- In the longer term, we believe that the issue of pay and rewards may be problematic in terms of retention and these are matters that should be kept under review.

Force B

The first intake started training in November 2017. Before joining the force, all 32 successful candidates were assigned a detective mentor who acted as a point of contact between them and the world of investigation. Interviewees told us that support mentors provided across the cohort was 'patchy'.

Trainees completed their initial training in one of two cohorts made up solely of fast-track

entry recruits. Otherwise, the first 64 weeks of training was identical to that of any new recruit on the standard pathway. The force expected officers to pass the NIE prior to week 64 of their training. It supported their studies with paid study-days, crammer sessions and Blackstone's guides. At week 65, officers joined CID teams as PIP1 investigators and consolidated their learning with a PIP1 mentor for the next 8 weeks before attending an ICIDP course. It is anticipated that they will complete their learning and achieve PIP2 at 104 weeks.

Of the 32 trainees recruited: one resigned; 21 have passed the exam; seven have failed it twice; three will take it for the second time in November 2019. As of the date of this report, all trainees are employed in uniform. Some (members of the first cohort) have recently taken up trainee investigator roles. It is anticipated that all will complete PIP2 and qualify as investigators around Week 104. That means that the first investigators recruited via this programme should graduate by November 2019.

The programme should be considered a qualified success. It was cost-effective (the force assesses its cost to be no more than that of its standard recruitment programme) and it succeeded in attracting high calibre candidates into the force. Some interviewees told us that they considered the programme to be a useful 'stop-gap', which met a need to make up investigator numbers in advance of more permanent arrangements (that may include a detective pathway on the - planned - DHEP and/or PCDA). Certainly, some in the force see the DHEP as providing some of the answers it needs to the difficult questions that have emerged from its specialist entry experiment; the kinds of questions that inevitably arise when one is considering making significant changes to working practices that remained largely unchanged for decades.

It was only in May 2019, that the first of its trainees took up investigative roles. Therefore, it proved impossible to assess either the trainees' performance or the impact of their employment on investigative work, empirically. For all its positives, we did not see the same consistency of organisational commitment to it as we observed elsewhere. That had a significant impact on the trainees' experiences. However, based on the evidence of our own interactions with the trainees and on the testimony of peers and supervisors, whose commitment to improving investigative practice in the force is in our view beyond doubt, we expect that trainees will meet the force's expectations of them.

Respondents told us that attrition from the programme has been low, which is a positive but the figures need to be unpacked. Interviewees told us that though everyone joined it with the intention of becoming an investigator; several simply changed their minds. For some, the appeal of response and patrol (R&P) work was so great that they wanted to remain in uniform. The force has rejected trainees' efforts to change direction. To date, it seems to have managed their disappointment but it clearly is a source of some tension between the trainees and the force.

Despite its relative success, it is not seen as a replacement for the force's traditional methods of selecting and training investigators. That would be prohibitively costly, exclusive - potentially, a significant barrier to the development of existing staff - and an inefficient use of resources. It can be a useful, cost-effective vehicle for increasing the diversity of the workforce and for attracting recruits with new investigative skills. However, we feel that care should be taken to ensure that investigators recruited in the traditional way, broadly benefit from the same professional development opportunities as their colleagues on these kinds of programmes. We believe that to do otherwise, risks fuelling division and may undermine support for the programmes.

Ultimately, it is for the force to judge: whether the organisational energy and other resources it has expended on this programme have delivered the outcomes it wanted; whether, with some fine tuning and given more time, the programme can meet the force's expectations; or whether those resources can be used more productively in other ways (for example, to support the recruitment and development of investigators along the more traditional pathways or by developing a detective pathway compatible with the DHEP and/or the PCDA - the introduction of PEQF will have a significant impact on recruitment of sworn officers into the force). We hope that this evaluation can help to inform such a review.

We identified potential areas for development of the programme that the force may choose to review, should the force wish to continue with it:

- We believe that greater involvement of detectives or others with an investigative mindset, in the investigative element of the training programme will enhance the currency and the credibility of the programme.
- Supervisors told us that they had been unable to identify sufficient, and sufficiently well-trained, mentors for the programme. We feel that mentoring is critical to the success of a programme like this. The force should consider providing more opportunities for staff development in this context, in the form of qualifications in coaching and mentoring (such as that offered by Institute of Leadership and Management) and should explore all avenues to increase the pool of mentors upon whose skills and experiences, novice investigators may draw.
- Trainees seemed content with their pay. Though the disparity between the payment of trainees and police staff investigators was commented upon consistently. In the longer term, we believe that the issue of pay and rewards may be problematic in terms of retention and these are matters that should be kept under review.

Force C

The first intake entered training in April 2018. Trained alongside their uniformed peers for the first 32 weeks, detective entry officers undertook the same training as entrants on the standard pathway (initial classroom inputs; attachments to neighbourhood policing teams; and tutorship on the work of locally based investigation teams).

In Weeks 35 to 52, trainees were expected to consolidate their learning and study for the NIE. Towards the end of this period, with their tutor and supervisor, they agreed the date at which they would progress to an investigative role. The force supported its trainees' studies with paid study- days and also supplied them with Blackstone's guides. It was expected that between Weeks 53 and 67, the trainees would pass their NIE. At which point they would be appointed as temporary

detective constables (TDCs). Between Weeks 68 and 104, it is expected that trainees will attend the ICIDP course and complete their portfolios for both IPLDP and ICIDP so that by Week 104, they can be confirmed as investigators. That means that in Force C the first investigators recruited via this programme should qualify as investigators by April 2020.

The programme can be considered a qualified success. It succeeded in attracting high calibre candidates into the force. Though its high attrition rate is an indicator that it may not yet have met the force's expectations of it.

It was only in the summer of 2019, that trainees from the first cohort took up investigative roles. Therefore, it proved difficult to assess either the trainees' performance or the impact of their employment on investigative work, empirically. Some trainees spoke highly of the quality of the training and support they received; they are on track to graduate as accredited investigators according to the timetable set out by the force. Others' experiences were different; we saw - we believe as a result - those trainees left the programme or, in a minority of cases, left the force altogether.

Respondents told us that attrition from the programme has been high (for example 50% of the first cohort - 7 trainees have left the programme). Trainees said that there were a number of reasons for that. They told us - variously - that they preferred response policing; that they had struggled to keep up with the programme because of the demands it made of them; or that they just did not feel ready for the investigator role. We highlight that may suggest the need for further questions about the trainees recruited (their age, background, character, experience and so on) as much as the training and support they were given. We do not have the data to answer those questions but we hope that readers may find clues to those answers in the trainees' responses (included in the in-depth review section of this document).

Readers should note that the attrition rate in this case may be skewed; unlike the other Category 2 cases evaluated, the force allowed trainees to leave the programme without sanction and to continue as response officers. We felt that the result was that an element of uncertainty was added to the environment and organisational energy consequently was expended in disparate ways rather than being focused on the development of the novice groups. Trainees suggested that there was a lack of consistency in the delivery of the programme. Peers were more sceptical of the programme than we found elsewhere.

The programme is not seen as a replacement for the force's traditional methods of selecting and training investigators. That would be prohibitively costly, exclusive - potentially, a significant barrier to the development of existing staff - and an inefficient use of resources. If the force can get it right, it can be a useful, cost-effective vehicle for increasing the diversity of the workforce and for attracting recruits with new investigative skills. However, we feel that care should be taken to

ensure that investigators recruited in the traditional way, broadly benefit from the same professional development opportunities as their colleagues on these kinds of programmes. We believe that to do otherwise, risks fuelling division and may undermine support for the programmes (Interviewees told us that this was a significant concern for them).

Ultimately, it is for the force to judge: whether the organisational energy and other resources it has expended on this programme have delivered the outcomes it wanted: whether, with some fine tuning and given more time, the programme can meet the force's expectations; or whether those resources can be used more productively in other ways (for example, to support the development of investigators along the more traditional pathways or by developing a detective pathway compatible with the DHEP and /or PCDA). We hope that this evaluation can help to inform such a review.

We identified potential areas for development of the programme that the force may choose to review, should the force wish to continue with it:

- There seems to be a need for greater clarity and consistency in its delivery. Some trainees told us they felt there was a lack of institutional commitment to the programme so perhaps that starts with the force better understanding what it wants from the programme.
- Given the level of scepticism we found, there seems to be a need for better marketing of the programme internally.
- Some trainees told us that they did not feel supported through the programme. We feel that mentoring is critical in that context. The force should consider providing more opportunities for staff development in this context, in the form of qualifications in coaching and mentoring (such as that offered by Institute of Leadership and Management) and should explore all avenues to increase the pool of mentors upon whose skills and experiences, novice investigators may draw.
- We believe that greater involvement of detectives or others with an investigative mindset, in the investigative element of the training programme will enhance the currency and the credibility of the programme. Trainees told us that they valued that highly.

Force D

The force launched its scheme in November 2016. The term relates to a set of processes rather than to a physical entity. Entry to the scheme is restricted to serving officers and staff. Qualified officers (those who either have completed or are at the end of their probation - the intention is to attract individuals with a broad range of experience) interested in pursuing a career in investigation in the scheme apply in writing and are invited to an internal, scenario-based, assessment centre, which is run annually.

Those who pass the assessment centre are entered for the NIE. Trainees are provided with support in the form of briefings, study guides and the facility to study in duty time (though some trainees told us that operational demand often meant that less time was available for study than the organisers of the scheme had hoped for). On passing the NIE, trainees complete ICIDP by attending a number of training courses (essentially, the force has broken down the programme into modules) and completing a portfolio of evidence.

Once trainees complete the training programme, they have 12 months to complete their portfolio. When that is signed off, they can apply for a posting in an investigative role. The scheme has proved attractive; so much so that in 2019, 108 officers have applied to join it. Respondents told us that the strengths of the scheme are its transparency and accessibility. The programme is open to all members of staff. There is a heavy emphasis on skills and abilities and much less emphasis on time served. Ordinarily, any sworn officer may apply to the scheme provided they have completed their probation but respondents told us of cases where officers had been allowed to apply, even before they had completed their probation.

We learned that apart from minor hiccoughs at some assessment centres, the scheme works well; very well up to the point at which trainees enrol on the ICIDP but not so well thereafter. Trainees felt improving communications (particularly, designating single points of contact for specific aspects of the programme) and tweaking the system of booking ICIDP modules, would remedy those problems. Mentoring was as much of an issue in this programme as it was in the Category 2 programmes we evaluated. As we found elsewhere, experienced detectives are in short supply and their services are in great demand. It may simply be the case that there is not enough experience to go around.

On balance, peers' views on the programme are positive. Though we collected a range of opinions ranging from enthusiastically supportive via apathetic to mildly critical. Some respondents told us that the force needed to market the scheme more widely, to counter the view held by some that the scheme does not exist primarily to 'con people into joining Public Protection'. We identified potential areas for development of the programme:

- Some fine tuning of the assessment centre process is required.
- There seems to be a need for better marketing of the programme internally.
- Some trainees told us that they did not feel supported through the programme. We feel that mentoring is critical in that context. The force should consider providing more opportunities for staff development in this context, in the form of qualifications in coaching and mentoring (such as that offered by Institute of Leadership and Management) and should explore all avenues to increase the pool of mentors upon whose skills and experiences, novice investigators may draw.