Training is a key element in shaping the style and quality of any organisation and its ability to respond to new developments. Training is especially important in the police service because it operates in a constantly changing environment. The service is exemplary in its recognition of this and devotes around eight per cent of its resources to training (Exhibit 1).

The Commission has been impressed by the commitment shown by individual officers engaged in training and there are many examples of good practice in individual forces. But nationally there is scope for improving the responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency of training.

There are several areas where improvements may be made. Firstly, force training schools traditionally have been masters of their own destiny and in many forces still are. They have taken responsibility not only for running courses but also, in many cases, for deciding what courses to provide, how long they should be and, in some cases, which officers should attend them. This is a confusion of the roles of client and contractor which has been recognised increasingly in the public sector as a bar to efficiency and effectiveness.

Secondly, much of the accommodation for training is not ideal and many schools have surplus capacity while neighbouring forces have plans to expand their facilities. If the forces...
visited during the study are representative, there is excess capacity of at least 20 per cent nationally.

Thirdly, there is scope for some schools to provide better value for money. Some courses are not focused sufficiently on clearly defined client group; they attempt to cover a wide range of material to meet the needs of a broad spectrum of trainees. Course sizes and trainers' teaching loads vary considerably. The use of civilians and the rank mix of training staff display similar variations.

Finally, there are a number of bodies involved in the management of police training nationally which leads to confusion.

The Commission makes a number of recommendations to overcome these problems.

Forces should strengthen the role of the client and sharpen the distinction between the roles of client and contractor. Force training schools should see their function as that of contractor providing training courses specified and selected by the client - the personnel department in conjunction with line managers.

There are a number of ways individual forces may obtain better value from their investment in training.

On the client side this can be achieved by identifying officers' training needs more clearly and ensuring courses are designed to meet them.

On the contractor side it can be achieved by:
— increasing utilisation and eliminating surplus capacity in training schools, mainly through rationalising facilities but also, in the short term, by making them available to new customers such as other forces;
— using shorter courses targeted to meet more precisely the identified training needs;
— reviewing course sizes and trainers' teaching loads to ensure they are appropriate for the subject matter and teaching methods;
— reducing the unit cost of training staff by making greater use of civilians and reviewing the rank mix of staff employed in schools.

Co-ordination of force training at a national level needs to be strengthened. The Commission suggests that a national director of police training with a small permanent staff would achieve this.

INTRODUCTION

1 The police operate in an ever changing environment. Officers have to keep abreast of new legislation and developments such as tape recording of interviews and the use of new technology. They are also expected to respond to public concerns over matters such as the need for sensitive interviewing of victims of personal crimes. This generates a significant training need.

2 The training the police receive is organised at several different levels:
— probationer training is provided mainly at six regional centres (called District Training Centres). These are paid for through Common Police Services by a charge to all forces in proportion to their establishments;
— management training is provided at the Police Staff College at Bramshill. This is paid for in the same way as probationer training;
— all other training is organised by forces and paid for directly by them. This encompasses a wide range of courses on specialist subjects, management development and local procedures. The training may take place within the force either at its own training school, in an operational department or at...

Exhibit 2

PROPORTION OF TIME SPENT ON VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

The police devote around eight per cent of their resources to training....
Exhibit 3

AMOUNT OF TRAINING PROVIDED

There is a marked variation between forces in the amount and type of training provided ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training days per officer*</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Inter – quartile range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.6 – 3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.8 – 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probationer†</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.7 – 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver and traffic</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.6 – 2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime related</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.1 – 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6 – 0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>8.9 – 12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Audit Commission analysis of ACPO Training Strategy Group Questionnaire to all forces, 1989.

* Excludes all training at the Police Staff College
† Force level only i.e. excludes training at District Training Centres

3 In total, training costs provincial police forces in England and Wales around £235m a year of which some £180m relates to the third of the above levels. Approximately 70 per cent of the cost relates to lost operational time - the equivalent of around 7,500 officers overall. There is also a substantial amount of capital tied up in force training establishments - perhaps around £200m.

4 Training is, therefore, not only a key element in shaping the quality and style of the police service, it also represents around eight per cent of the total police budget (Exhibit 2). There is, however, a marked variation between forces in the amount and type of training provided (Exhibit 3).

5 The high degree of commitment to training itself creates difficulties. It removes officers from operational duties, which disrupts manning and complicates rostering, particularly in small section stations and on rural beats.

6 It is essential, therefore, that police training is well managed. Not only must it be of the highest quality, it must also be provided efficiently so that disruption to operational duties is minimised. And it must be able to respond rapidly to changing demands.

7 The service is well aware of these challenges. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is undertaking a strategic review of training. The Police Training Council (PTC) is developing a standard formula for forces so that they can cost their training on a common basis.

8 Recognising the importance of training to the police service, the Audit Commission has undertaken a review as part of its overall study of police management. This Police Paper presents the results of that review. It is based on in-depth work at six forces and shorter visits to three others. It also draws on data provided by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and ACPO. In order to gain a broader perspective and identify best practice elsewhere, short visits were made to the Police Staff College, the Scottish Police College, the Fire Service College, the Further Education Staff College and the Cranfield Institute of Technology (Royal Military College of Science). The Commission’s remit does not extend to the Metropolitan Police and so this paper does not address directly the situation there.

9 In recent years, the police service has raised the profile of good management practices in the provision of training services. Valuable initiatives, both at national level and in individual forces, have emerged as a result. Nevertheless, in a number of forces, there are barriers to be overcome if forces are to achieve improvements.

10 Firstly, in many forces, training schools traditionally have taken complete responsibility for post-probationer training - not only for running courses but also, in many cases, for deciding what courses to provide, how long they should be and, in some cases, which officers should attend them. In effect, they have taken on the dual roles of client and contractor. Partly because of this, although a number of forces have made significant improvements in recent years, forces generally have not defined the basic training requirements of individual ranks and specialist posts. Also they do not have the information systems necessary to summarise the training given across the force as a whole, or for sub-groups of officers.
within it. Because they do not have either of these, they cannot calculate their total training needs.

11 Secondly, there is a wide variation in some of the key performance indicators for schools, which suggests that some could provide better value for money (Exhibit 4).

12 There are four main issues which need to be addressed:

— much training accommodation is not ideal. Many force schools have surplus capacity while neighbouring forces plan to expand their schools;

— the content of courses is not always tailored precisely to the needs of individual trainees;

— course sizes and trainers' teaching loads vary considerably, indicating scope for greater efficiency;

— the use made of civilians and the rank mix of staff vary between schools, suggesting opportunities for reducing unit costs.

13 Finally, there are a number of bodies involved in the management of police training nationally, leading to a confusion of roles. Better co-ordination would help to rationalise facilities and improve the preparation of course materials.

14 The primary incentive for forces to review how they manage their training should not be to seek economies - although some forces may be able to benefit from these. Rather it should be to ensure they have an efficient and effective training service. The main steps required are to:

— clarify responsibilities in order to distinguish clearly between the client and contractor roles;

— plan the training programme to ensure that it reflects accurately the force's training needs;

— manage the training school to maximise value for money;

— continue to strengthen the moves towards regional and national co-ordination, already in evidence in some areas of the country.

The rest of the paper examines these opportunities in turn.

**CLARIFYING RESPONSIBILITIES**

15 Over the last few years, the public sector has paid increasing attention to the importance of distinguishing between the two key management aspects of any service - the 'client' and
the ‘contractor’ roles. Clients specify what is required, contractors provide the specified service. This distinction has been given added impetus in local government and the health service by legislation which stipulates that certain work should be put out to competitive tender. The distinction is still valid, however, where there is no intention or requirement to put work out to tender. The underlying philosophy is simply that services should be provided for the benefit of the consumer rather than the supplier.

16 In the police service, the level of training provided in some forces seems to be determined as much by the needs of the training school (the supplier) as by those of the force (the consumer). The type and length of courses may be influenced by the desire to suit the capacity and strengths of the training school. Often not enough consideration has been given to using suppliers other than the force school, or to delivering material in different ways such as through the use of distance learning programmes.

17 Another reason for separating the roles of client and contractor is the different nature of the jobs. The client should be concerned with service standards and obtaining value for money. Contractors have to perform to standards and price. The styles of operation and demands on management skills are quite different.

18 The client side in police training should specify the training needs of staff, identify the most suitable courses and monitor the impact of training. The contractor should provide courses which meet the client’s needs (Exhibit 5). This does not mean that there is no need for interaction between the client and the contractor. The contractor side might, for example, give the client expert advice on training methods and approaches - clearly this would be beneficial to both parties. But the ultimate responsibility should reside with the client. None of the forces visited made a clear client/contractor distinction - the director of the force training school generally assumes responsibility for all training related matters.

19 It is equally important that the division of responsibilities for the key client side tasks is defined clearly. Theoretically they could reside at one of four levels - national, regional, force or with line management. One possible division is suggested in Exhibit 6.

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**Exhibit 5**

**THE KEY TASKS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING**

Forces need to sharpen the distinction between the roles of the client and the contractor....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE CLIENT SHOULD DEFINE THE NEED</th>
<th>THE CONTRACTOR SHOULD PROVIDE THE TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define job descriptions, core skills and training profiles</td>
<td>Interpret client’s needs and develop appropriate courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify individual officers’ development and training needs</td>
<td>Assess abilities of trainee at beginning of course and tailor content accordingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine training budget and priorities</td>
<td>Deliver training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select courses (after evaluation and monitoring)</td>
<td>Monitor trainees’ progress and assess competence at end of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage resources to maximise utilisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Exhibit 6**

**DISTRIBUTION OF CLIENT-SIDE FUNCTIONS**

It is essential that responsibilities are defined clearly....
The need for greater co-ordination at national level is addressed in the final section of the paper; but, in the meantime, there is much that can be done by individual forces.

20 The mam question over the division of responsibilities within forces concerns the budget. Giving line managers control of client side training budgets would be one way of giving them more say over what training is provided and when their officers attend courses. Training is, however, an item of expenditure over which there is a stronger case for retaining central control than most. There will always be a tension between, on the one hand, the manager's task of getting the job done and, on the other, the longer term interests of individual officers and the organisation as a whole. So even if the force has devolved management responsibility to a large degree, it may still want to retain central control over the training budget.

21 Whether or not central budgetary control is retained, the roles of the client and contractor still need to be separated. In particular, the client side tasks should not be the responsibility of the training school. Forces may find it helpful to designate an officer as training needs co-ordinator. Because of the close links with career development and manpower planning, there is a strong case for that person being based within the personnel department. The detailed arrangements of the client side role within forces are the subject of the next section of this Police Paper.

22 On the contractor side, the job of running a police training school calls for specialist education and business management skills. It is similar to that of the director of a college of further education - a job for which few police officers would consider themselves qualified. This is not to say that police officers have no role in running training schools. Police training takes place within the structure of a disciplined service and for this reason it is necessary to have a police officer in a senior position to discharge line management responsibility in relation to police trainers and to provide an input to course design. But this should be supplemented by specialist expertise drawn from the wider educational field. Such experts should not only act as trainers on courses where they have specialist knowledge, but should also provide forces with direct access to skills such as curriculum design, trainee appraisal and timetable management.

23 To date no force has used a civilian in a senior executive capacity in its training school. By strengthening the client's role, forces would retain control over the quality and cost of training but be free to recruit a professional training manager with the appropriate skills. This is the approach adopted at the Royal Military College of Science (RMCS) where courses are provided under contract by civilian experts from the Cranfield Institute.

24 Specifying training needs and arranging for training to be provided is the job of the client. It involves the following steps:

- defining job descriptions, core skills and training profiles;
- identifying individual officers' development and training needs;
- determining the training budget and priorities;
- selecting courses.

These are discussed in turn.

DEFINING JOB DESCRIPTIONS, CORE SKILLS AND TRAINING PROFILES

25 The starting point is to identify the requirements of each post in the force. Forces should:

- define job descriptions for officers of each rank and specialist post;
- identify the core skills needed to discharge these duties effectively;
- specify training courses to remedy deficiencies in these skills.

At the moment, these prerequisites are not given adequate attention.

26 The Central Planning and Training Unit (CPU) has analysed in detail the key skills and abilities of constables (Exhibit 7), sergeants and inspectors. This research was central to the design of the new training programmes for these ranks. Independently, the Police Staff College has produced a list of eight core competencies for officers of chief inspector rank.

27 These developments need to be taken further nationally - there is a wide range of specialist posts within ranks, each requiring a different mix of skills and personal qualities. In the meantime, however, they should be the basis on which forces prepare job descriptions and lists of core skills for each post within their force.

28 Job analysis should be supplemented by monitoring trends in
KEY SKILLS AND ABILITIES OF CONSTABLES

The CPU has identified the key skills and abilities for constables. Indicators of officers’ performance which may highlight a training need. Appropriate indicators might, for example, include complaints against officers or road traffic accidents in which officers are found blameworthy:

— One force visited identified through its complaints and discipline procedures that there was a recurring problem with officers holding the acting ranks of sergeant and inspector. The force training school developed introductory courses for officers who may have to fill these roles in the forthcoming year. Although it is premature to assess the impact of these courses, initial indications are that the problem has been reduced.

— The ACPO working party on driver training which reported earlier this year recommended that refresher training for drivers (which it describes as an ‘unnecessary and wasteful use of resources’) should be discontinued and replaced by corrective training, provided as and when performance monitoring indicates the driver needs it. West Yorkshire Police Driving School is notified of all accidents involving officers from the force. Any officer with a poor record is tested by the school and given appropriate remedial training.

IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUAL OFFICER’S NEEDS

29 Identifying an individual officer’s training needs should begin with the performance appraisal system. This should assess strengths, weaknesses and ambitions and compare these with the core skills required for current and probable future posts. In this way, individual training and development
needs can be identified. The process is linked closely, therefore, with the wider issues of career development and manpower planning.

30 There will always be unforeseen circumstances, but forces should make every effort to co-ordinate training and career development. In particular they must:
— try to plan officers’ careers so they follow as progressive and coherent a path as possible;
— use civilians in specialist roles wherever possible;
— specify minimum expected periods of duty for specialist posts;
— ensure officers attend initial training courses for specialist posts shortly before or after taking up a new role.

31 Ideally, an officer’s future career would be sketched out after the first few years of service. In practice, of course, this is not feasible. Nevertheless, the sooner particular aptitudes, strengths and weaknesses are identified, the better. It will allow a coherent career path to evolve. It is too easy in a disciplined service to overlook the need to plan. Most vacancies arise because of predictable or controllable events such as retirement, promotion, secondment or the creation of a new post. It should be possible, therefore, to prepare for a vacancy by selecting the most suitable replacement in advance and arranging any preliminary training necessary.

32 This is particularly important in the police service because there are so many jobs requiring quite different specialist skills including criminal investigations, traffic control, maintaining public order, dog handling and community liaison. People in most walks of life would regard changing between any two of these as a radical career move; in the police service such movements are commonplace. Traditionally police officers, and especially those reaching senior management positions, have worked in a number of these areas during their careers.

33 Increasingly, supporting functions such as vehicle management, operating computer and communications systems, scenes of crime and fingerprint work, financial and resource management are undertaken by civilians. Recruiting civilian personnel with some or all of the necessary skills has two main advantages. Firstly it reduces the need for initial training. And secondly it avoids the trade-off which has to be made with police officers between achieving an adequate return on the training investment and allowing their careers to develop.

34 For specialist roles which have to be filled by police officers, forces should specify target minimum periods of attachment. These should give an adequate return on the training investment but should not be so long as to deter able people. Inevitably, unforeseen circumstances will mean the targets are not always achieved, but they should act as a goal to aim for. In general they should be at least three years. Only officers prepared to stay in post for that minimum time should be recruited. Thames Valley Constabulary has set target periods of tenure for all specialist roles. But very few forces have made such rules.

35 Officers should attend initial training courses for specialist posts shortly before or after taking up their new role to maximise the benefit derived from the course. In many cases, successful completion of the course could be made a precondition of accepting the officer for the post. The CPU recently carried out a survey of how officers who had attended its police trainers courses during 1987 were used subsequently by their forces. Some 79% of those trained responded to the survey. Of these respondents, 22% had not been used as trainers within 12 months of completing the course and 10% had still not applied their specialist training by the end of 1988. If the respondents were representative, the cost of the 22% of officers not using their training (including the opportunity cost of lost operational time) is over £500,000.

DETERMINING TRAINING PRIORITIES

36 Once the training needs of individual officers have been identified, they should be summarised for all officers in the force and priorities decided. Although the Commission does not take a view on how much training forces should provide or the balance between subject areas (this is a matter which involves a large element of professional judgement), it has already been noted that the amount of training forces give officers in different skills varies considerably (Exhibit 3). Clearly, training should only be provided once a need has been identified. The process for making these decisions is summarised in Exhibit 8.

37 Forces generally do not know what training is being delivered or the total cost involved. Accumulating such in-
Training should only be provided once a need has been identified. Information for this study was a major exercise in most forces. One force visited undertook a major internal review of training recently. It discovered that some operational departments were organising a large number of courses of which the training department had not been aware. But even then the force still did not know how many trainees had attended many of the courses, who they were or the total cost of training to the force.

Recent national surveys by ACPO and the Police Training Council have focused attention on the problem and forces need to improve their management information systems.

Information technology has made it feasible and affordable to analyse these kinds of data. Very few forces in the country have such systems. Even though three forces visited had all relevant data on every officer in the force stored on computer files, the interrogation capabilities of the systems were too limited to produce any useful analysis. Thames Valley Police, however, has a system which can summarise the development and training needs of all its officers. It can also identify all officers qualified to fill a particular vacancy. This makes the job of shortlisting suitable candidates far more efficient and effective without removing professional judgement from the selection process.

Local managers should be provided with summaries of the skill bases of all their staff. This would enable them to decide whether they need additional officers to be given specialist training. Divisional commanders in one force nominated 149 officers to be trained as HGV drivers last year; on the basis of information it had available about the number of officers in each division who were trained HGV drivers, the force driving school judged this excessive and trained only 28. The force recognises that it should not be the job of the training school to second guess line managers’ operational requirements in this way - it intends to improve the information provided to them as soon as possible.

In addition to a detailed picture of training needs, the client also needs to be aware of the total expenditure on training whether it is provided via an
operational department, the training school or external agencies. It should include the opportunity cost of the lost time of trainees. It should analyse total costs between the main subject areas, identify the number of training days and the unit cost per day. No force visited had such an analysis readily available.

41 Forces also need to compare the content and balance of their training programmes with those of other forces. There are wide variations and forces need to satisfy themselves that there are valid reasons for such differences. Possible explanations include:
— some forces may have a backlog of training from previous years;
— forces’ local requirements and operational priorities are different;
— some forces may provide certain training either to a wider catchment population of officers or to a higher level than other forces.

SELECTING COURSES
42 Having established the total training needs of the force, the training budget and priorities, the next stage is to evaluate available courses. This requires sound information on quality and cost. In particular, the client should ask the following questions:

Quality
— Does the proposed course meet identified needs?
— Are course materials, facilities, equipment and trainers of satisfactory quality?
— Are the training methods and group sizes suitable for the subject matter?
— What impact has the same course had on any officers who attended it in the past?

Cost
— How long will the officer be unavailable for duty because of course attendance, including travel time?
— What is the cost of the course including travel and subsistence expenses?

QUALITY
43 Evaluating the quality of training is not easy. If the client has not used a course before, it must be assessed by analysing the extent to which it meets the training need; the quality of materials, facilities and staff; and the suitability of teaching methods and class sizes. Once a course has been used, however, this information must be supplemented by monitoring its impact on the officers attending it. Asking all trainees to complete course evaluation sheets is a first step which is already used widely, but it is not sufficient.

Exhibit 9
POSSIBLE METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
Most subjects covered by police training courses are amenable to some form of assessment.

44 Ideally, monitoring should measure how much better officers perform the relevant part of their job after the training than they did before it. In practice, this can be very difficult. For skills-based courses in particular, but also for many other areas of training, the impact can be measured most directly by assessing trainees at the beginning and end of the course to measure their improvement. In general, formal testing is used for driving and firearms courses but rarely for other subjects.

45 Trainees on most police courses could be assessed in some way. Testing can also help to increase the motivation of the trainees. Exhibit 9 offers some suggestions for methods of assessment for different types of course.

Assessments of individuals can be...
POSSIBLE LOCATIONS AND PROVIDERS OF COURSES

It is important to recognise that choosing where a course is held is a separate decision from selecting who supplies it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>PROVIDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional trainer with guest</td>
<td>Professional trainer and distance learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experts where appropriate</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police trainer with guest</td>
<td>Coaching by civilian expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experts where appropriate</td>
<td>Coaching by police officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divisions/departments</td>
<td>Secondments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog handling</td>
<td>Dog handling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian</td>
<td>Equestrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers Communications</td>
<td>Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force/region depending on site</td>
<td>Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>General patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms Management Law</td>
<td>Dog handling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional/national centres of</td>
<td>Equestrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellence</td>
<td>Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
<td>Career development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any course requiring highly</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialised expertise or equipment</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local colleges of FE</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers Communications</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other external organisations</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog handling</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The length of a course is the</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary determinant of its total cost.</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimising length is also the</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>key to limiting disruption to</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operational units. It is one</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>issue which involves both client and contractor. But the more precisely the client specifies the need, the better value he will obtain from the contractor.</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditionally, some police training courses have adopted a &quot;shotgun&quot; approach, providing a wide range of material to a broad spectrum of trainees. Consequently, they have lasted several weeks. Breaking down long, general courses into shorter, more specific modules can be a more cost-effective way of using training time. Course length is discussed further in the next section of this Police Paper where it is viewed from the contractor's perspective.</td>
<td>Regional centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cost of the course will also depend upon where it is held. It is important to recognise that this is a separate decision from selecting who supplies the course. For example, the force training school or an external agency could supply a course in a subdivisional headquarters. Alternatively, operational officers from, say, the drug squad could go to a regional centre to teach officers from several forces. Exhibit 10 offers further suggestions.
POSSIBLE SUBJECTS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

Kent Constabulary has made a wide range of video productions on training topics for use in the workplace...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Subjects</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autocore</td>
<td>Local force computer (nominal application)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of the Peace</td>
<td>Major incident – Initial action – Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Development Dept</td>
<td>National Association Of Victim Support Schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child sexual abuse</td>
<td>Occupational health unit – Operations room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>Pelican pedestrian crossings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime prevention</td>
<td>Police and Criminal Evidence Act – Stop and search – Powers to search premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime on wheels</td>
<td>Solicitors – Road checks – Mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice Act</td>
<td>Police driver training – Police driving standards – Police National Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc provisions</td>
<td>Police radio frequency – Press and information service – Dealing with the media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous substances</td>
<td>Probationer training – The way forward – Public Order Act – Sections 4&amp;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data protection – subject access</td>
<td>Massage and relaxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devolved budgeting</td>
<td>Networks and communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>Health and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>Drugs and poisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Trafficking Offences Act</td>
<td>Drugs and poisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federation pension scheme</td>
<td>First aid – Clearing the airway – Recovery position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>Serious bleeding – Crash helmets – Force direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Amnest (safe handling)</td>
<td>Relay – Road traffic accidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Initial action</td>
<td>— Signing and consigning – Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First aid</td>
<td>Scenes of crime – initial action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Clearing the airway</td>
<td>Searching vehicles – Special Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Recovery position</td>
<td>Street offences – Suspicious death – initial action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Serious bleeding</td>
<td>Litter – Litter cleaning scheme – Amendments – Vehicle excise licence 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Crash helmets</td>
<td>Knives – Knives and cutting edges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force direction</td>
<td>Identification (R v Turnbull) – HGV law – Tachographs – Basic requirements – Common offences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distance learning has considerable potential to allow more training to be delivered locally. It can be supported by a variety of media including workbooks, study guides, audio and video tapes, computer packages and interactive video (which combines computers together with the use of video). The development costs of computer-based training and interactive video packages are considerable and it is not viable for individual forces to undertake this work on their own behalf. This issue is discussed further in the final section of the paper.

There is considerable scope, however, for some modest productions locally. Kent Constabulary, for example, has been producing an in-force video with accompanying notes every two months since 1987. A copy is sent to every police station where officers are encouraged to watch it in their uncommitted time. Each edition lasts about 20 minutes and includes items of force news and several training topics (Exhibit 11). They cost about £3,000 each to make, the equivalent of just £1 per officer. Each video is accompanied by notes which contain details of legislation and procedure.

Basing training at the workplace does not necessarily require expensive new technology and it offers several important advantages. For example, officers remain available for operational duties in an emergency and there are savings on travel time and costs. Alternative approaches include:

— less sophisticated distance learning packages;
— on-the-job coaching;
— attachment to a department or unit to gain specialist expertise;
— participation in an off-duty activity;
— personal study.

These approaches have their limitations, however, and for some purposes will need to be supplemented by, for example, seminars and assessment sessions.

Some forces have shown considerable ingenuity in developing innovative methods of training. Kent Constabulary, for example, has replaced a ten day course on use of the force computer with written material and audio tapes supplemented by a two day course. The force also uses a wide range of mainly commercial distance...
learning products on management skills in conjunction with tutorial and workshop support. Northamptonshire Police recently published a distance learning guide on policing objectives which has been distributed to every force in the country.

** The action forces need to take in reviewing the management of their training programmes is summarised in Exhibit 12.

** MANAGING THE TRAINING SCHOOL **

Nearly all forces have their own training school. A typical school might employ about 35 trainers and cost around £2m a year to run - although many are much smaller and a few have over 70 trainers (Exhibit 13). They are on a par with small to average sized secondary schools in teaching terms, with a hotel business attached. The capital value of the premises might be anything from around £500,000 in a small rural force to several millions for a larger one.

Many forces have considerable excess capacity in their training schools. Utilisation levels of around 75 per cent for residential accommodation and 30 per cent for classrooms are typical*. Clearly utilisation levels of 100 per cent are not feasible but 80 per cent for bed spaces and 60 per cent for classrooms should be achievable. Indeed force schools often achieve them for some parts of the year.

Exhibit 12  
** DETERMINING TRAINING NEEDS – AN ACTION PLAN **

Forces need to identify their training needs more clearly and encourage training schools to provide best value for money....

If the forces visited in the study are representative there is probably excess capacity of at least 20 per cent nationally.

Meanwhile a number of forces are building new schools, and others are drawing up plans. In the six forces in one region, for example:

- all have their own training facilities;
- four already have residential accommodation and a fifth will shortly;
- extensions, enhancements and new developments are planned in four of the forces' schools.

Forces need better management information so they can determine the viability of their schools. For this reason the training school should be a separate cost centre with its own trading account. The account should be charged the cost of all resources used including an asset rental for the school. Costs which relate to specific courses (such as staff, cars, motor-

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* Capacities have been calculated on the basis of a 50 week year and 5 days and 4 nights per week. Some schools are open 51 weeks and are in use at weekends also. This method of calculating capacity could be said, therefore, to understate the level of surplus capacity in the schools.
cycles, computers, dog kennels, stables and firing ranges) should be charged directly to them. All other costs should be apportioned.

60 All income should be credited to the account. Some schools are not allowed to retain enough of the income generated from external sources to cover the cost of additional catering and laundry incurred. Such disincentives should be avoided.

61 The starting point for capturing the necessary data should be the timetable. This records which trainers, rooms, vehicles, and so on are deployed to what courses at any given time. A simple computer system could summarise this information for management and accounting purposes. The information should be used as a basis for distinguishing between:

— the fixed costs of the premises which can only be reduced in the longer term;
— costs which can be varied in the medium term (mainly staff) depending on the overall balance of the training programme;
— costs which will be incurred only if a trainee takes a place on a course (mainly catering and laundry).

62 The school should then develop a charging strategy for its courses. It might choose, for instance, to quote different rates to different customers or at different times of the year. This market led approach will encourage schools to provide quality courses at an acceptable price. The school's financial objective should be to provide a portfolio of courses which at least covers its costs. In the light of the quality of the service the school provides and its success in meeting its financial objective, the force will be able to judge its viability.

63 In practice, few schools have sufficient information to analyse costs in the way outlined in paragraph 61 or to identify how much they vary between courses. One force that has undertaken analysis in this area, Kent Constabulary, found a wide variation: a classroom based course costs £44 per trainee day whilst public order training for forward commanders costs £144 a day. Forces need to be aware of such differences and satisfy themselves that they exist for valid reasons.

64 There are four main areas where opportunities exist to obtain better value from training schools:
— ensuring courses are the appropriate length;
— making better use of the premises;
— increasing the productivity of trainers;
— reducing unit costs of training staff.

65 Exhibit 14 summarises the key performance indicators together with averages and ranges for the forces visited during the study. They are extracted from a more comprehensive diagnostic model which auditors will be using in conjunction with their for-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review area</th>
<th>Sample performance indicators</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall performance of school</td>
<td>Net cost per trainee day</td>
<td>£56</td>
<td>£37 - 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilisation of training school</td>
<td>Classroom utilisation rate</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15 - 51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential utilisation rate</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>48 - 93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Incoming trainee days as proportion of total trainee days</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0 - 43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income per incoming trainee day</td>
<td>£65</td>
<td>£42 - 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suitability of accommodation</td>
<td>Teaching area per classroom (sq m)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>72 - 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential area per bedspace (sq m)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 - 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other area per trainee day (sq m)</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.01 - 0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity of training staff</td>
<td>Student staff ratio</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.5 - 3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average course size</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.7 - 9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact ratio</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36 - 54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management days as proportion of trainer days</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5 - 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support days as proportion of trainer days</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>15 - 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit cost of training staff</td>
<td>Proportion of trainers who are:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- inspectors</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3 - 23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- sergeants</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>22 - 71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- constables</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>9 - 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- civilians</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7 - 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost per working day of:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- management</td>
<td>£155</td>
<td>£135 - 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- trainers</td>
<td>£106</td>
<td>£93 - 114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- support staff</td>
<td>£42</td>
<td>£30 - 54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Audit Commission analysis of study forces
ces to help identify opportunities for improvement.

COURSE LENGTH

66 The first important issue which the school needs to consider is the appropriate length of its courses. In specifying the training requirement, the client should have aimed to target a population with a common need. The contractor will, however, have to identify any residual differences between trainees and take account of them when fine tuning the course content.

67 Some schools are beginning to draw great advantage from using pre-testing of trainees for this purpose. For example, forces traditionally have required officers to pass a standard police driving course before allowing them to drive police cars. These courses vary in duration between forces from 15 to 30 days. Many forces now use pre-testing to identify officers’ driver training needs. In West Yorkshire Police, for example, approximately 30 per cent of candidates pass the pre-test first time and automatically become accredited general purpose drivers. For those who do not pass, the examiner identifies their specific weaknesses and a course of lessons, of the appropriate length, is tailored to rectify them. If at any time during the course the instructor considers the trainee capable of passing the test, he will be referred to the examiner for a re-test. The course of lessons normally lasts about 17 or 18 hours. A similar approach is adopted by the Police Staff College on the Junior Command Course where each trainee is assessed before his or her study programme is finalised.

68 On knowledge-based courses, initial differences may be reduced by issuing trainees with pre-course reading material to bring them up to a common standard at the beginning of the course. If the target population is still likely to have a wide ability range then the school should consider dividing the more and less experienced trainees into separate groups. There are, however, a limited number of subjects such as interpersonal skills and stress management in which it can be important for the group to have a diversity of experience so members can learn from each other.

69 In some cases there is a trade-off between course length and the maximum number of trainees it is appropriate to accommodate. This mainly applies to practical subjects such as driving, firearms and computer courses. For most classroom based courses it should not be a problem. Where there is a trade-off, the deciding factor should be the total cost of the course. The most obvious example again concerns training for general purpose drivers:

— West Mercia Constabulary has reduced the number of trainees per car on its standard driving course from three to two (i.e. only one rides as a passenger rather than two). This has allowed course length to be reduced from 25 days to 15. The amount of time available for each trainee to drive, rather than observe, is almost the same and the trainee still has to pass the same test. The change has reduced the total cost per trainee from about £3,250 to £2,100 (including the cost of lost time, the instructor and the car), saving the force over £120,000 a year.

70 By reducing the number of trainees per car and tailoring its driving courses accurately to the needs of its trainees, West Yorkshire Police is saving about £500,000 a year. Whilst West Yorkshire’s approach may not appeal to all forces, they should all review the length of their courses and the number of trainees per car. The same principles should be applied more widely and forces should review all courses in this way.

UTILISATION OF THE SCHOOL

71 If rooms are allocated to specific uses or departments then utilisation will suffer. The key to maximising use of the school’s resources is to manage the timetable centrally. This requires more careful management than the traditional approach of assigning a trainer and a classroom to a course. Such a system is in use at the national Fire Service College which has been timetabling resources centrally for the last few years.

72 The school should monitor the proportion of time teaching rooms and bedrooms are in use. At a more detailed level it should also monitor
the extent to which teaching space is occupied fully - if a classroom is designed to seat 24 then the aim should be to use it for classes of 24 as often as possible. The Department of Education and Science suggests in Design Note 37, 1984 that colleges of further education should aim for 64 per cent utilisation of teaching rooms overall, that is the room should be in use 80 per cent of the time with the room filled to 80 per cent of its capacity during that time. None of the forces visited during the study was monitoring utilisation in detail. One school recorded any classroom which had been used on one day as having achieved 100 per cent utilisation for the entire week.

73 There is a variety of ways in which surplus capacity in schools could be reduced including:

— within their legal powers, making courses available to new customers such as other forces. This should, however, be regarded as a short term measure; in the longer term this would be an inappropriate use of police managers' time;
— using part of the school for other police purposes;
— selling or leasing part of the school to other agencies;
— moving to smaller premises;
— disposing of the school and sharing facilities with, say, the local fire brigade.

74 Lancashire Constabulary identified surplus capacity in its school several years ago. It has succeeded in attracting trainees from other forces, other agencies and overseas. More than half the total running costs of the school are now met by income from outside sources; external trainees account for 43 per cent of trainee days compared with less than 10 per cent in most other forces. Another initiative has been adopted by Durham Constabulary which has leased part of its school to the Home Office for use as a district training centre for probationers.

75 Although some schools are open 51 weeks of the year, others close down for two weeks preceding Christmas, for the second half of July and for the whole of August. Polytechnics and universities have shown that there is strong demand for use of their facilities as centres for conferences, summer schools, etc at these times. Many police training schools have not sought to exploit such opportunities. Security clearance need not be a problem - many courses at the Royal Military College of Science (RMCS) at Shrivenham are open to trainees from overseas and non-military organisations in the UK.

Exhibit 15

STUDENT : STAFF RATIOS

The student : staff ratio gives a broad indication of the productivity of teaching staff.

\[
\text{Student: staff ratio (SSR)} = \frac{\text{Number of trainee days}}{\text{Number of working days of trainers}}
\]

\[
\text{Average course size (ACS)} = \frac{\text{Number of trainee days}}{\text{Number of teaching days}}
\]

\[
\text{Contact ratio (CR)} = \frac{\text{Number of teaching days}}{\text{Number of working days of trainers}}
\]

So that \( \text{SSR} = \text{ACS} \times \text{CR} \)

PRODUCTIVITY OF TRAINING STAFF

76 Managing training staff should involve the same principles as managing the school buildings. There are two basic factors which influence trainers' productivity (in input terms):

— the number of trainees on the course;
— the proportion of the trainer's total working time spent teaching.

77 There are three performance indicators which can be used to compare training staff productivity. For the purposes of this Police Paper, they have been defined as shown above.

78 The SSR gives a broad indication of teaching staff productivity in input terms. Inevitably, it varies considerably between types of course. Driving and firearms courses involve a high level of individual tuition and have low SSRs. Classroom based courses have higher ratios. Exhibit 15 shows the variation in student : staff ratios.
in SSRs for a sample of forces which have an overall average of 3.1 to 1. This compares with an average for polytechnics and colleges of further education of 6 to 1 after allowance has been made for the difference in the lengths of the working year. The reasons for the difference between SSRs are complex but the comparison reinforces the need for police training schools to take a critical look at their staffing practices. The SSR can be increased by increasing either average course sizes or contact ratios.

79 Average course size (ACS) is a measure of the number of trainees on each course. Exhibit 16 shows ACSs for the broad categories of course in a sample of forces. The variation between categories is to be expected because different subject areas require different teaching methods. The reasons for variations within categories merit closer examination. There are three main reasons why they may occur:

— school policy on maximum class sizes;
— physical constraints;
— the size of the catchment population.

These are considered in turn.

80 The school should determine target group sizes for each course according to its objectives and the teaching methods to be used. This is a matter for educational judgement. Factors which need to be considered include the subject matter, the diversity of skills and experience of trainees, the level of participation expected and guidelines issued by the CPU. It is difficult to offer rules of thumb because experts often disagree. Two points on which they concur, however, are:

— for those courses which aim to develop trainees’ skills at working in groups or which require high levels of participation, 15 trainees and two trainers is probably ideal. It is small enough to allow a high level of participation but large enough to split into two, three or four syndicates to allow trainees to build confidence in smaller groups;
— lectures for 40, or even more, do not have to be one-way discourses. With syndicate work for case studies, this approach can be effective for many subjects and should not be discarded lightly. Some university business schools organise courses in this way. The Police Staff College has courses of up to 60 people who are syndicated into groups of 12. For traditional, more instructional teaching methods, these are perfectly feasible group sizes. Very few courses at force schools use such large groups at present.

81 Having set target group sizes for all courses, the next step is to identify suitable accommodation. In general, room sizes should not be allowed to restrict group sizes. A few courses, however, are subject to physical constraints which can be difficult to overcome. On firing ranges, for example, safety requirements demand at least two trainers to be present irrespective of the number of trainees. Ranges normally have two or four positions, either of which could be covered by two trainers. The use of regional centres or army facilities seems to offer opportunities for increasing course sizes. Another alternative, which is currently being evaluated by Kent Constabulary, is the use of simulators, possibly in conjunction with a mobile range, and in the longer term this may be even more cost-effective.

82 If there is insufficient demand from officers within the force to achieve target group sizes then there are two possible solutions. The course could be held less often if this is acceptable to the client. Alternatively, the school will have to offer it more widely to attract trainees from elsewhere.

83 Contact ratio (CR) is a measure of the proportion of trainers’ time spent teaching as opposed to developing course material, assessing trainees and other administration. Schools generally do not consider how much non-teaching time a trainer requires. This needs to be assessed when compiling trainers’ timetables and monitored subsequently. There is a

---

**Exhibit 16**

**AVERAGE COURSE SIZES**

There is a wide variation in average course sizes both between course categories and between forces within categories...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainees per course</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver and traffic</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.0 – 5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.4 – 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other training</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>6.7 – 14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall (including management)</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.7 – 9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Audit Commission analysis of study forces*
wide variation in CRs between the forces visited (Exhibit 17).

84 The main factors which influence CRs are:

— new trainers need to spend a greater proportion of their time on preparatory work;
— new courses require more development time. For example, a new ten day course in interviewing skills took an officer in one force almost six months to prepare;
— trainers in schools with limited clerical and technical support staff have to spend more time on administration.

There are a number of ways contact ratios can be increased. These are discussed below.

85 Trainers are less productive in their first year or so in post as they familiarise themselves with their new role. Extending the length of officers’ placements gives a better return on the initial investment. It may conflict, however, with career development pressures. Such pressure does not exist when civilian trainers are employed. If civilian trainers are trained and motivated properly then they can be expected to remain in post longer than career police officers.

86 The transition when new trainers take up posts can be smoothed by establishing a central library of course notes, visual aids and case studies and, if possible, by having an overlap between trainers leaving and joining. As much material as possible should be prepared centrally so that development effort is not duplicated. In many cases ‘centrally’ means nationally; for courses held at divisions it may mean at force level.

Exhibit 17

CONTACT RATIOS

The contact ratio is the proportion of a trainer’s time spent teaching and varies widely between forces...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver and traffic</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>49 – 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34 – 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other training</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35 – 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall (including management)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36 – 54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Audit Commission analysis of study forces

87 If trainers teach the same or similar material to a number of different groups, they can specialise and will require less time to develop material. Traditionally, police trainers have delivered all or most of the material on one or two courses.

88 The use of visiting speakers on selected topics saves in-house staff having to develop specialist material which could require extensive research. The Police Staff College and the Scottish Police College both use visitors on a wide range of courses to support permanent staff in this way but many force schools make little use of them. Part of the reason may be the more basic nature of many of the courses. Another factor, however, is that schools normally have a separate budget for external speakers which they have to monitor closely; the force’s own police officers are often viewed as a free resource, even though they may cost more. This is an accounting anomaly which arises because schools are not held accountable for all the resources they use. It would be rectified by the establishment of a school trading account.

89 Some schools have increased CRs by removing certain responsibilities from training staff and assigning them to civilian support staff. The Police Staff College has created a central support unit containing six clerical staff. This has removed a wide range of tasks from academic staff and senior police officers.

90 Analysis of current practice in forces indicates that civilian support staff amounting to around one-third of the number of trainers is typical. Some schools, however, have very little such support. Tasks for which civilians could take responsibility include:

— managing residential accommodation and staff;
— corresponding with trainees;
— preparing timetables, statistics, trainee assessment reports, visual aids and course material;
— assisting with invigilating examinations and marking;
— warning and monitoring on firing ranges;
— arranging visiting speakers.

UNIT COST OF TRAINING STAFF

91 The average cost of staff employed in the school will depend upon:

— the rank-mix of trainers;
— the balance between trainers, managers and support staff.

92 The rank-mix of trainers varies considerably between schools (Exhibit 18). In driving schools, for instance,
EXHIBIT 18

RANK – MIX OF TRAINERS

The rank-mix of trainers varies considerably between schools...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspectors</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3 – 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeants</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22 – 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constables</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9 – 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7 – 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Audit Commission analysis of study forces

whilst in a quarter of all forces, at least half the driving instructors are civilians, a fifth of forces use police officers exclusively. Some forces have between five and eight constables as driving instructors under the supervision of a sergeant; other forces use sergeants exclusively. Little use is made of civilian trainers for any training other than driving, even for subjects in which civilians have specialist expertise such as computing, management and law.

93 More important than the difference in cost between sergeants and constables is the pressing need for operational sergeants, particularly arising from the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 which specifies that a sergeant must be responsible for the custody of all prisoners. Nationally, 4.7 per cent of sergeants are employed in training schools, with a range between forces of 2.4 per cent to 7.9 per cent. One force has recently redeployed 15 sergeants from its school to operational duties by replacing them with constables. There is scope for similar initiatives in many force schools.

94 Organisation structures within schools vary considerably (Exhibit 19). In addition similar sized schools - around 20 to 30 trainers - may be run either by chief superintendents, superintendents or chief inspectors. Similar variations occur at other levels - driving and firearms schools with around seven to ten instructors may be run by chief inspectors, inspectors or sergeants. It appears, therefore, that a more rational level of management could be achieved in some forces - this Police Paper has also proposed recruiting expertise from outside the police service.

95 The use of civilian support staff also varies considerably. Indeed there are 12 police officers employed in administration sections of force training schools nationally including two chief inspectors and two inspectors; most schools do not use police officers in this capacity at all.

96 Managers of force training schools face some stiff challenges. If they are to be equal to them and satisfy their clients’ demands they will need a business plan. Exhibit 20 (overleaf) suggests a sequential timetable for the review which they all need to undertake.

NATIONAL ISSUES

97 This paper makes practical suggestions which can be implemented at force level by individual police authorities and their chief constables. But several issues have emerged which would be tackled best through a national approach. Paramount amongst these are:

— the under utilisation of resources and the potential advantages of establishing centres of excellence;
— the need for research and development into training profiles and course materials.

RATIONALISATION OF RESOURCES

98 If the nine forces visited in this study are representative, as we believe them to be, there is probably around 20 per cent excess capacity in training facilities nationally and scope for increased productivity of training staff in some schools. The full extent of the over capacity seems to be masked in
some places by a tendency to ‘over train’. Certainly the amount of training given to officers varies considerably between forces.

99 The paper proposes that force training schools should operate as discrete cost centres with their own trading accounts. They should be free to set their own course fees and provide courses to other forces. The internal market which this would engender should act as a spur to efficiency and squeeze much of the spare capacity out of the system. But police forces are not in the business of running trading operations for profit, and it would be wrong of them to set out to sustain surplus capacity in their schools in the longer term. There needs to be some planned rationalisation of facilities.

100 Certainly forces have shown themselves to be alert to the challenge. They have begun to appreciate the benefits available from co-operating with nearby forces - particularly the development of more highly skilled trainers and improved use of resources. Forces in the Midlands region, for example, have agreed between themselves that some schools will specialise in certain subject areas rather than all of them trying to do everything.

101 But regionalisation of training is proceeding in a piecemeal fashion at present. For example, the new sergeants development course was designed to be delivered at eight regional centres but is currently being provided at 23 locations. Inevitably, agreeing a voluntary programme leads to deals being struck and compromises being reached. Providing the best possible training as efficiently as possible may not remain the sole criterion for deciding which school does what.

102 If these moves towards regionalisation do not eliminate excess capacity then ultimately a centrally co-ordinated strategy for all police training may be the only way to ensure the optimum number of facilities is located at the most suitable sites. The general thrust of the strategy could be for a number of regional centres providing the full range of police training from probationer level upwards - the model which already exists in Scotland. The regional facilities could also become national centres of excellence for more highly specialised topics.

DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING PROFILES AND COURSE MATERIAL

103 The paper has identified a number of client side responsibilities which need not vary substantially between forces. These include:

— defining job descriptions for all ranks and specialist posts;
— developing profiles of core skills and abilities required of staff to fill these posts;
— identifying the best means of developing individual officers according to their skills, abilities and career ambitions;
— preparing course materials including packages for computer based training, interactive video (CBT/IV) and distance learning.

104 Clearly it would be more efficient and effective if this work was commissioned at a national level so that forces can adapt it for local use. A particularly pressing example of the kind of work which needs to be done is research into the potential of distance learning for police training. Its use for employee training in other industries (including banking, transport and energy) is expanding rapidly, particularly with the emergence of CBT/IV. The advantages of distance learning approaches include:
— material is consistent in both content and quality. It can be adapted to local needs without relying unduly on the ability of individual trainers;
— training time can be reduced by as much as 30% compared with traditional methods, mainly because the material is tightly drawn and edited so less time is wasted, but also because trainees can proceed at their own pace;
— training is available instantly even if only a few officers need it;
— trainees can be dispersed geographically and there is no travelling time or costs;
— computer and video simulations can reduce the need for practical training, reducing both costs and the risk of accidents;
— trainee assessment systems can be built into the packages.

105 All these advantages are relevant to police training. Distance learning is particularly useful for disseminating legislative changes such as the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 or introducing new systems nationwide such as HOLMES (the software package developed by the Home Office to handle major investigations). In these instances a great number of officers throughout the country must receive the same basic training in a short time. The value of reducing the length of such courses even by small amounts is considerable. For example, shortening by ten per cent a five day course to be attended by every officer in the country would save the equivalent of over £5m worth of lost time.

106 The Scottish Police College has already developed a diverse range of CBT/IV packages. Further research and development is required to establish the potential of this medium for the service. This is to be carried out over the next two years by the Police Foundation in conjunction with four forces and with financial support from the Home Office.

THE CO-ORDINATING BODY

107 Given that there is a need for a clearer central focus, the question then arises - who should provide it? At present there are a number of bodies involved in the management of police training nationally:
— the Association of Chief Police Officers issues national guidance on training matters through its training and crime committees. The training committee is currently undertaking a strategic review which addresses a number of the issues raised in this Police Paper;
— Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (Training) has, at the invitation of regional HMICs, assisted in looking at certain aspects of training and career development. The postholder is also the commandant of the Police Staff College at Bramshill;
— the Central Planning and Training Unit is responsible for training police trainers. It also develops study programmes for some courses;
— the Police Training Council is a joint Home Office/police service body with representatives from the police staff associations, local authority associations and the Home Office together with HMIC (Training) and the director of the CPU. It is concerned with the wider strategic issues in police training.

108 Although the membership of these bodies overlaps at many points, there can be no substitute for a single body with an overall perspective. The Police Training Council, as the umbrella organisation embracing all interested parties, seems the most appropriate to decide its constitution. But the key is to give it clear responsibilities and the support of a national director of police training with a small, permanent staff. The danger is that, as experience suggests, the introduction of such a body can lead to inertia and the creation of a bureaucracy. The principle is sound but the reality may be less so and care must be exercised to prevent this.

* * *
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