

HMICFRS: JASC Update Report November 2022

22.11.22 – Inspector 1169 Pilkington

About HMICFRS:

The principle role of HMICFRS is to promote improvements in policing and fire & rescue services to ensure the public are protected from harm. This is achieved through inspecting, monitoring and reporting on the efficiency and effectiveness of the police and FRSs with the aim of encouraging improvement.

In devising its policing inspection programme for the Home Secretary's approval, HMICFRS considers the risks to the public, service quality, public concerns, the operating environment, the effect which inspection may have on a force, and the benefits to the public of improvements which may follow inspection.

It is for chief constables (who have operational independence and autonomy within their respective forces), police and crime commissioners (with powers to set local priorities and budgets) and, in extreme cases, the Home Secretary (who has ultimate democratic responsibility for policing) to take action as a result of HMICFRS's recommendations contained within reports produced following inspection activity.

These reports may be force specific as a result of individual inspection activity such as the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) programme and National Child Protection Inspections; or they can be national "thematic" inspections whereby inspection activity in a selection of forces will be used to address a theme in policing, but then with all forces subject of any subsequent recommendations. The latest thematic report receiving widespread media attention is the "Vetting, Misconduct and Misogyny" report which resulted in 43 recommendations being given to all forces.

Where HMICFRS identify significant issues this can result in the publication of a cause for concern with associated recommendations to address this. All causes for concern, recommendations and areas for improvement (AFIs) identified within reports are published on a National Monitoring Portal. Each force has access to this electronic database through which updates on progress can be

submitted to HMICFRS for assessment with a view to demonstrating sufficient evidence to achieve completion and closure of these records.

The current West Mercia position in relation to open Causes of Concern, Recommendations and AFIs is as follows (correct 22.11.22):

Causes of Concern	9
Recommendations	99
AFIs	39

This can be compared to the national position and our most similar group (MSG) position. (MSGs are groups of police force areas that have been found to be the most similar to each other based on an analysis of demographic, social and economic characteristics which relate to crime – West Mercia is one of 8 forces in its MSG as below).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
		D&C	Glouc	Norfolk	North York	Suffolk	Warks	West Mer	Wilts	Average
CoCs		4	14	7	2	6	9	9	8	7.375
Recs		86	103	95	74	101	122	99	130	101.25
AFIs		23	46	30	29	19	69	39	38	36.625

National averages:		MSG averages:	
Causes of Concern	5.65	Causes of Concern	7.4
Recommendations	94	Recommendations	101.2
AFIs	30.93	AFIs	36.6

- As can be seen from the current figures West Mercia have a higher number of open causes of concern than both the National and MSG average, the same applies to AFIs with only recommendations being below the respective comparable figures. (It should be noted that the "Vetting, Misogyny and Misconduct" report drastically increased recommendations (43 of which 34 apply to police) for all forces as of November 2022).
- West Mercia has been in a stronger position previously with figures below the averages across the board. Our current force specific PEEL and custody reports contain the majority of our AFIs. The PEEL report contained 1 Cause of Concern, 2 recommendations and 16 AFIs. The Custody report contained 5 Causes of Concern, 5 recommendations and 11 AFIs; hence the change in position. (West Mercia are one of only 19 forces to have had PEEL 2021/22 inspections completed and reports published; there have also only been 16 Custody inspection reports published in the last three years of which we are one).
- A piece of work has commenced to analyse all recommendations and AFIs across the HMIC portal for West Mercia (not just those that receive focus in Service Improvement Board) with a view to providing a drastic reduction in the amount of open areas, consolidating duplicate recommendations or those that have been superseded by more recent reports. This should result in focus and activity being driven towards meeting the most relevant and time critical areas - investigation management, misconduct and outcomes, for example.

In addition to inspection activity HMICFRS also collect data from all forces to build an understanding of statistical analysis and forces who may be outliers at either end of the scale indicating potential failings or good practice. Access to the data collected and various analytical products is provided to forces via PEEL Digital Analysis Packs within Microsoft PowerBI.

We are in the process of collating data for the Autumn data return (due 16th December).

West Mercia Response:

The West Mercia structure for responding to HMICFRS reports and recommendations remains as outlined in the previous updates to JASC with internal tracker documents produced for each report and "steps to green" populated by the strategic leads.

These are reviewed by the FLO as and when updates are provided to assess the efficacy of the measures introduced or changes made in light of the recommendations.

When deemed appropriate and with the advice of the HMIC force lead liaison officer, the updates are then added to the national portal for HMIC scrutiny and sign off. We are trialling a more streamlined approach to cut down the amount of time strategic leads spend producing internal updates, with a focus on providing evidence towards sign off rather than internal monitoring.

It has been confirmed that HMIC wish to delegate the authority for some recommendations to Chief Constables, however the process remains to be seen in practice and we await further communication on this matter. *(In the meantime we will try and get ahead of the curve by reducing the number of open areas on the portal with HMIC assistance as per above explanation).*

Current Activity:

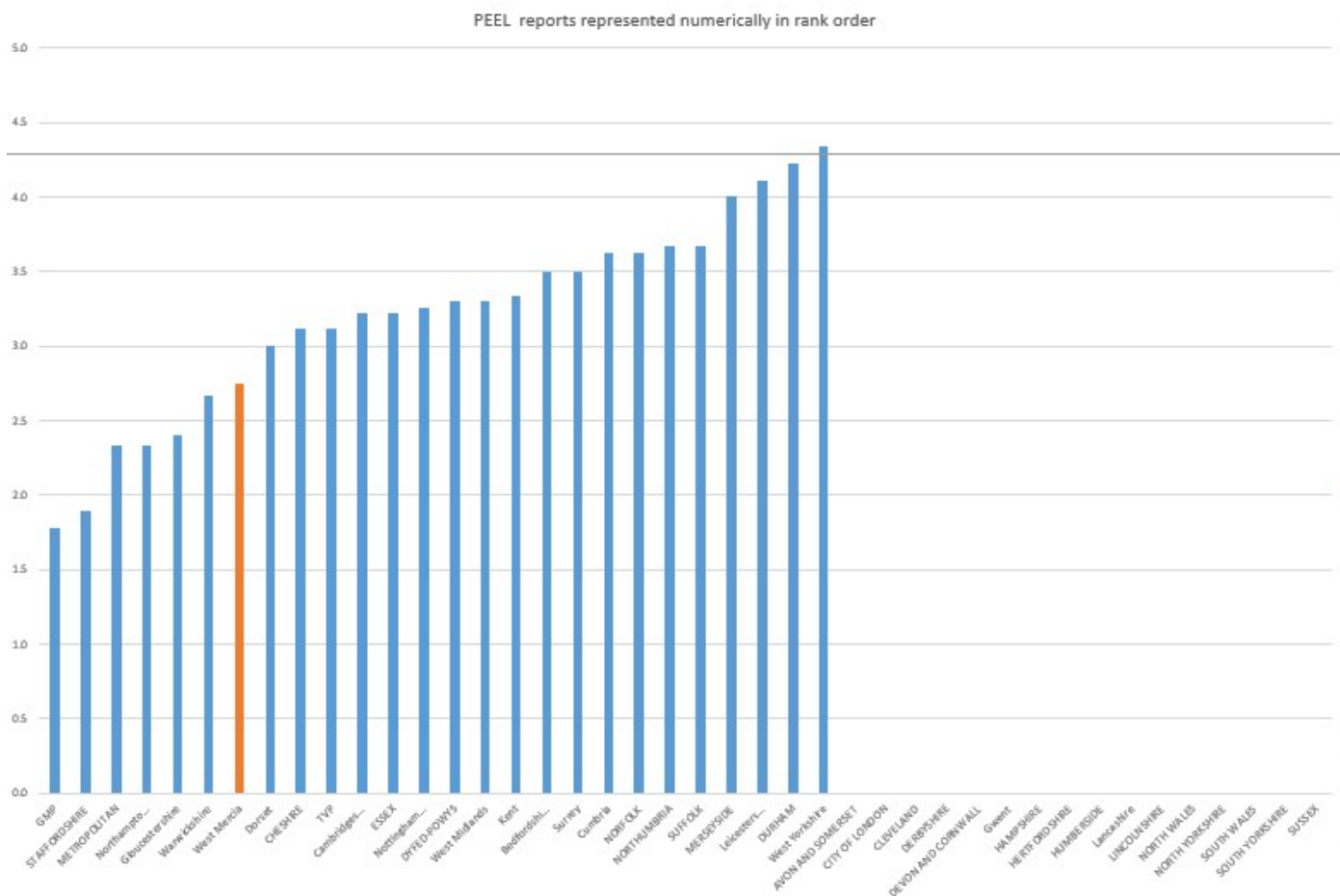
West Mercia is in the process of collating the Autumn data return to HMIC at the time of writing.

PEEL 2021/22 – The force response to this report is well underway with progress being monitored via the Service Improvement Board. The report's only cause of concern regarding investigations is receiving specific focus through Op Reset led by Ch Supt Crowther. We believe we are in a position to sign off 3 AFI's.

Custody – There was an immediate force response to this report within force led by Supt Webster. We assess we are close to sign off in 68% of areas highlighted with an expectation that there will be a re visit to monitor progress and offer advice in January 2023 (TBC at time of writing)

Vetting, Misconduct and Misogyny thematic – Given the amount of recommendations contained within (34), we have worked through to RAG assess each area in conjunction with PSD with a view to providing an update to DCC Murray by the end of November. Early indications suggest we are already compliant with a large proportion of the recommendations.

PEEL report force ranking- An internal piece of work where each element of the respective forces PEEL report is assigned a numerical value (Inadequate=1- Outstanding=5) which allows a ranking or comparison across the country. This allows forces rated as outstanding in a particular area to be easily identified such that good practice can be identified and shared. This only applies to forces with a recent report graded under the new assessment outcomes.



Forthcoming Activity:

West Mercia are not currently subject of any formal notifications of inspection activity, albeit the custody re-visit dates are awaited imminently. We have received notification that our current HMIC FLL Sarah Lewis will be replaced by FLL Simon Eatwell in December 2022. It is hoped collaborative work to reduce the overall number of open recommendations can continue at pace.

The PEEL assessment framework for inspections 23/24 has been released with a heavy focus on outcomes and workforce legitimacy.

News/Publications:

Since the last update to JASC there have been a number of further reports published by HMICFRS. Whilst many of these are specific to forces other than West Mercia there have been national reports and West Mercia specific reports as follows:

[A report into the effectiveness of vetting and counter-corruption arrangements in West Mercia Police](#) (inspection 2021- now heavily superseded by below)

[An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#)

[Technical appendix: Staff survey on inappropriate and prejudicial behaviours](#)

[Terms of reference: Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system](#)

Super Complaints:

West Mercia sent their in depth response to the NPCC regarding the Police perpetrated domestic abuse super complaint. We have received confirmation of acceptance and the full collated response will be published via the NPCC on the 23rd of November. (Letter from NPCC below).



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We are aware at this time that a super complaint in relation to Section 60 stop and search authorisations is in the evidence gathering phase and is likely to be published early in the New Year.