SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY
ÙGHDARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

Agenda Item 2.3

Meeting	Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee
Date	14 August 2025
Location	Online
Title of Paper	SPA Audit and Improvement Recommendations Update
Presented By	John McNellis, Head of Finance, Audit and Risk
Recommendation to Members	**For consultation**
Appendix Attached	Appendix A – SPA Corporate Strategy Progress Appendix B - SPA audit and inspection recommendations

PURPOSE

To provide the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) with an update on:

- progress against the SPA Corporate Strategy for SPA Corporate Strategy 2023- 2026 - Q1 2025

- open recommendations from all SPA corporate audit and inspection activity.

The paper is presented in line with the corporate governance framework of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) terms of reference and is submitted for consultation.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The SPA Corporate Strategy 2023-26 and supporting Implementation Plan was approved by the Board in March 2023. The 2025-26 Delivery Plan underpins the Strategy with 17 activities and 44 actions tracked to support performance reporting.

1.2 Progress against completion of the corporate strategy is reported to ARAC on a quarterly basis.

1.3 Progress against audit and inspection recommendations are routinely reported to ARAC, these are tracked through an action tracking software tool called 4Action.

1.4 In addition, other committees may also consider specific updates on progress where relevant to their terms of reference.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

Corporate strategy progress (Appendix A)

2.1 A total of 229 milestones have been identified throughout 2025/26 that enable tracking towards delivery of the 17 activities and 44 actions.

2.2 In Q1 2025/26, 24 corporate strategy milestones were due to be achieved; 17 of these milestones were achieved (71%). Re-profiled work and a forward look are summarised in Appendix A.

Audit & inspections recommendations progress (Appendix B)

2.3 Below is a summary of changes since the last report to ARAC: -

- In total 2 HMICS recommendations have been successfully closed

  o Recommendation 7 arising from the Assurance Review of Police Scotland Strategic Workforce Planning, and

  o Recommendation 3 arising from the Assurance Review of Police Scotland Contact Assessment Model

- No new recommendations have been identified.

2.4 An additional slide has been included to demonstrate the progress being made by SPA Corporate with addressing the 17 areas for development identified by HMICS through the Strategic review of the Scottish Police Authority completed in 2024.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
3.1 There are no specific financial implications from this report, however, the implementation of some actions are likely to require financial resources.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS
4.1 There are no specific personnel implications associated with this paper.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
5.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this paper.

6 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS
6.1 There are no reputational implications associated with this paper, however there are potential reputational implications associated with the pace and effectiveness with which the recommendations are addressed.

7 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

8 COMMUNITY IMPACT
8.1 There are no community impact implications associated with this paper.

9 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS
9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.
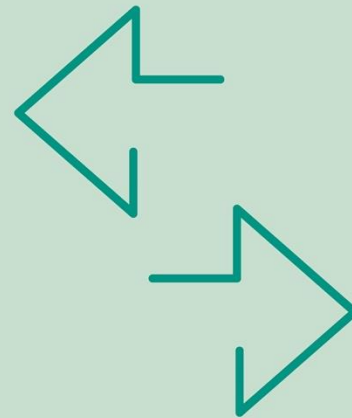
10 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS
10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Members are requested to note the updates provided.

SPA Corporate Strategy – Q1 progress summary

Background

The Corporate Strategy for 2023-26 sets out the role and responsibilities of the Scottish Police Authority, the outcomes we seek to achieve, and high-level activities designed to achieve them.

An Annual Delivery Plan underpins the strategy, with activity tracked to support performance reporting. Specific milestones and measures are developed and monitored by the corporate team.

The Delivery Plan for 2025-26 sets out key priorities for the Authority as well as critical areas of business.

This update reflects delivery during the quarter one reporting period. The underlying detail is monitored by the Chief Executive and Extended Leadership Team (ELT).

The actions also include areas for development aligned to the 2024 HMICS inspection of the Authority.

Outcomes and activity

Outcome	Activities	Actions
1. Communities	4	9
2. Collaboration	3	10
3. Resourcing	4	8
4. Workforce	3	8
5. Learning	3	9

The Corporate Strategy sets out the outcomes we seek to achieve under the five high-level headings above.

The 2025-26 Delivery Plan underpins the Strategy with **17 activities and 44 actions** tracked to support performance reporting.

Delivery in Quarter 1 (actual vs planned)

- 29%
- 71%

- Delivered = 17
- Re-profiled = 7
- Closed = 0
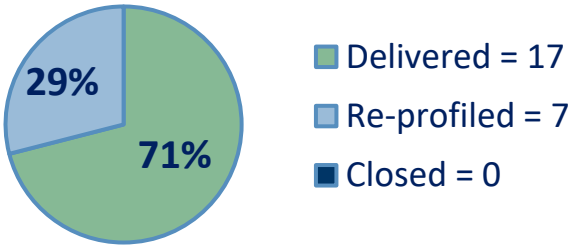
- **71 per cent** of quarter one milestones were delivered as planned. Re-profiled milestones are expected to be delivered in year.

- Highlights and re-profiled work are summarised by outcome on pages 3-4.

- Re-profiled work refers to milestones which have been revised, such as updating the expected delivery date or expected output.

- A number of milestones describing business as usual activity are scheduled for delivery over the full year. Highlights or risks to delivery will be reported quarterly where applicable. At the end of Q1 no risks have been identified related to these milestones.

Our Vision: Policing in the Public Interest   **Our Values:** Respect, Integrity, Public Service

SPA Corporate Strategy – Q1 progress summary

Outcome 1 - Communities

Highlights

The ICVS Annual Review 2024-25 was presented for discussion at the Policing Performance Committee in June. The report provides a summary of the work undertaken by and the achievements of the ICVS team and the Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs).

Successful procurement exercise for public polling with Diffley Partnership contract signed allowing next round of polling to be delivered on time in Q2.

Re-profiled

Nothing to note

Forward look

No issues identified

Outcome 2 - Collaboration

Highlights

The Authority, Scottish Biometrics Commissioner and Police Scotland hosted an event as part of the National Conversation on the use of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) technology in policing.

Provided training to Police Scotland PSD on pension forfeiture and provided a style report for use when reporting potential forfeiture cases to the SPA.

Responded to consultation on draft regulations and liaised with SG about additional queries to ensure smooth transition of Police Appeals Tribunals to the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service.

Re-profiled

Communication and Engagement Plan in development – now due Q2. To be presented to a Members Seminar in August.

Engagement with Forensic Services and Police Scotland to map data sharing services from/to Home Office and ensure agreements are in place requires further information from parties - now due Q3. Short life working group stood up in June to address.

Feedback on the Digital Use & Access Bill through the Lords and Parliament - now due Q2. The Bill has received royal assent, and changes must now be incorporated into Data Protection Legislation.

Forward look
No issues identified

Outcome 3 - Resourcing

Highlights

New joint Equality Outcomes for policing and EDI Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Progress reporting for 2023-25 were approved and published.

Best Value inspection progressing well.

Work with Police Scotland almost complete for roll out of Microsoft 365, with advice received from ICO and DPIA updated. Pilot to commence in July.

Re-profiled

Nothing to note

Forward look

No issues identified

SPA Corporate Strategy – Q1 progress summary

Outcome 4 - Workforce

☐ Highlight

Review of the Leads Forum format to ensure Leads are empowered to take ownership for performance management was completed.

☐ Re-profiled

Support development of clear processes, roles and responsibilities for officer & staff pay negotiations – now due Q2. Pay discussions are underway. Due to changes in team responsibilities within Police Scotland, roles, responsibilities and process will be articulated as part of the ongoing negotiations.

Lead on development and delivery of updated Code of Conduct – now due Q3. Awaiting feedback on impact of Police (Ethics, Conduct and Scrutiny) (Scotland) Act 2025.

☐ Forward Look

Develop and deliver SPA corporate approach to EDI training – re-profiled from Q2 to Q3. Due to movement of SPA staff, alternative support for delivery of training has been sought but may delay delivery.

Review and, where appropriate, update PNB Circular on IHR/IoD – re-profiled to Q3. Push for engagement from Police Scotland continues as required to progress this work.

Outcome 5 - Learning

☐ Highlights

Required public body duty annual reporting on both gender representation on public boards and community asset transfer were submitted to Scottish Government and published.

Successful relocation of Corporate team, including revision of all How To guides for staff to reflect new location and arrangements.

☐ Re-profiled

Lessons learned review of the coordination of the modern apprentice role – now due Q2. A survey and workshop were undertaken in Q1. However, the report from these activities is yet to be finalised.

☐ Forward look

No issues identified.

Summary

- **71 per cent** of milestones were delivered as planned.

- **29 per cent** (7 milestones) were re-profiled, reflecting revised timescales and / or output for these areas of work.

  Four of seven re-profiled milestones are only slightly delayed and now due to be completed in Q2, and the remainder are currently planned for delivery in-year.

- No milestones were closed, i.e. no longer required, superseded or not business critical.

- The Annual Delivery Plan for 2025-26 and underlying team plans have been updated to reflect re-profiled work and revised timescales. This will be monitored through team plans and reporting to ELT.

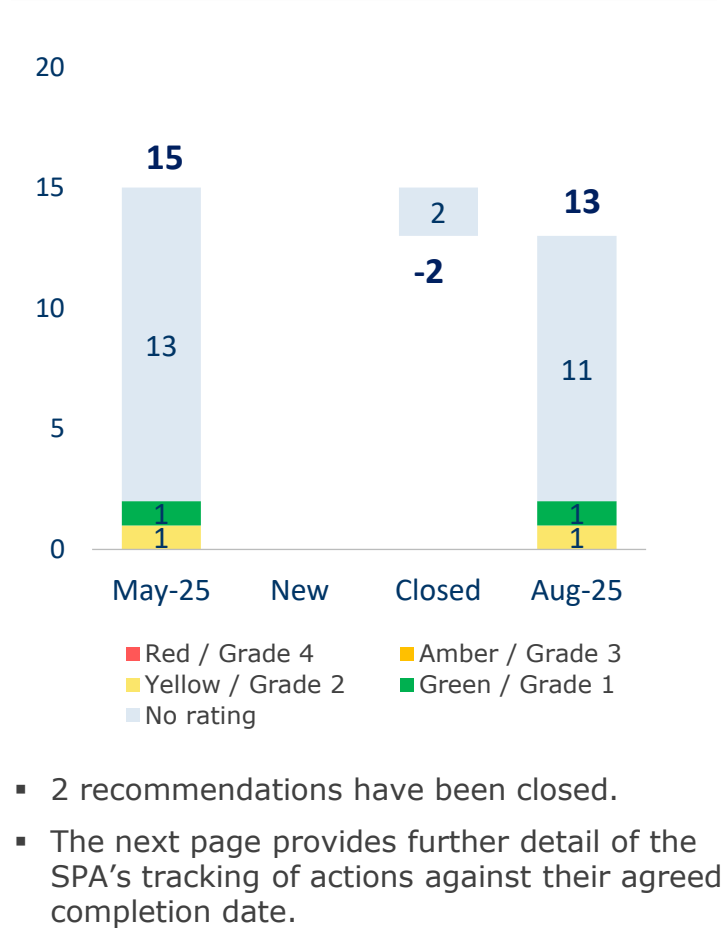# Appendix B
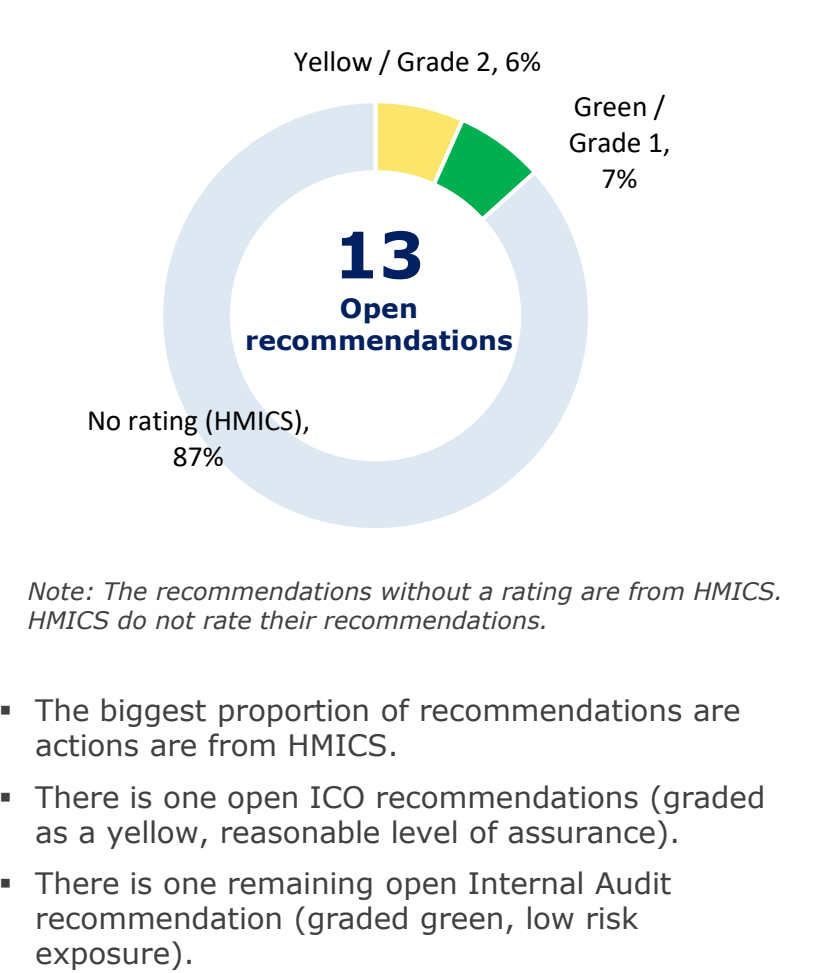# SPA audit and inspection recommendations update
August 2025
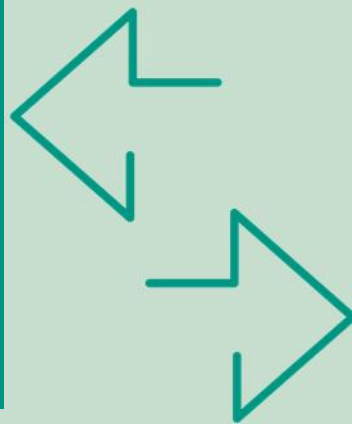
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SPA audit and inspection dashboard

Progress update (no of recommendations)

- 2 recommendations have been closed.
- The next page provides further detail of the SPA's tracking of actions against their agreed completion date.

RAG analysis

Note: The recommendations without a rating are from HMICS. HMICS do not rate their recommendations.

- The biggest proportion of recommendations are actions are from HMICS.
- There is one open ICO recommendations (graded as a yellow, reasonable level of assurance).
- There is one remaining open Internal Audit recommendation (graded green, low risk exposure).

Identified theme

- All audit and inspection recommendations are recorded on 4Action.
- This allows SPA to review and identify themes across reports and inspection bodies which may help our analysis and continuous improvement.

Further detail on progress

Movement since previous ARAC report

	May 25	New	Complete	May 25
Internal Audit	1	-	-	1
Audit Scotland	0	-	-	0
HMICS	13	-	-2	11
ICO	1	-	-	1
Total	**15**	**-**	**-2**	**13**

Actions completed and outstanding

	Actions completed (since May 25)	Actions outstanding (Aug 25)	Actions outstanding:	
			On target	Overdue
Internal Audit	-	1	-	1
Audit Scotland	-	-	-	-
HMICS	2	11	11	-
ICO	-	1	1	-
Total	**2**	**13**	**12**	**1**

New actions
▪ There have been no new recommendations identified since last reporting.

Closed actions
▪ Two HMICS recommendations have been closed since last reporting
  ○ Recommendation 7 arising from the Assurance Review of Police Scotland Strategic Workforce Planning, and
  ○ Recommendation 3 arising from the Assurance Review of Police Scotland Contact Assessment Model

Overdue actions
▪ There is one recommendation reported as overdue, this arose form the Internal Audit of Risk Management and relates to the redevelopment of the committee paper template.

▪ Good progress has been made on a revised committee paper template. The template and guidance has been internally completed and will be shared with Members at the Members Seminar August 22nd with a view to implementing and closing the recommendation thereafter.

HMICS AfD's – Progress Update

- One overarching recommendation from HMICS following the Strategic Review of SPA Corporate;

  "The SPA should put in place measures to monitor progress against the areas for development outlined in this review, ensuring regular public reporting to allow assessment of progress."

- The review resulted in **17 Areas for Development** (AfD's) identified

- To address the recommendation and effectively manage the AfD's a collaborative action plan was generated which aligned and integrated the AfD's into our Annual Delivery Plan, ensuring an appropriate level of scrutiny on progress.

- Ten **(59%)** of the AfD's have been fully completed. Progress towards completing the remaining areas has been made, shown in the table below.

AfD's Progress

41%

59%

■ Complete ■ In Progress
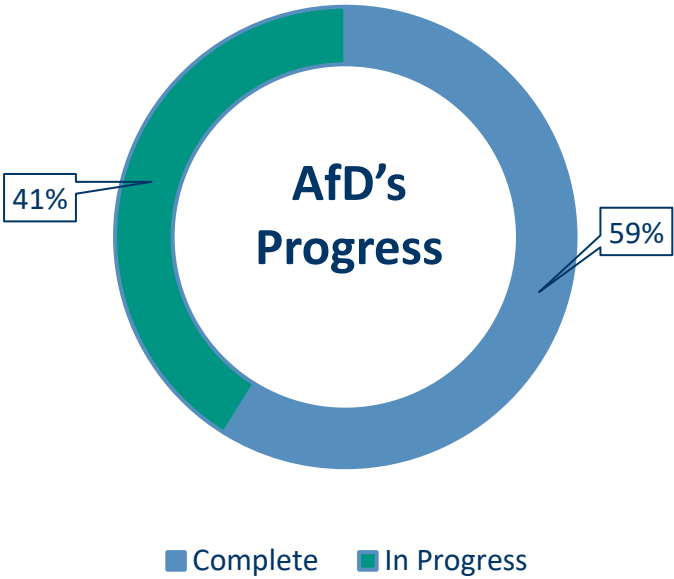
In Progress Areas for Development (AfD's)					
Ref	% Complete	Notes	Ref	% Complete	Notes
1	100%	n/a	10	100%	n/a
2	75%	1 milestone remaining - due by Q4	11	100%	n/a
3	100%	n/a	12	75%	1 milestone remaining - due Q3
4	50%	2 milestones remaining - 1 due Q3 & Q4	13	90%	1 milestone remaining - due Q3
5	100%	n/a	14	60%	2 milestones remaining - due by Q4
6	100%	n/a	15	60%	2 milestones remaining - 1 Q3 & Q4
7	100%	n/a	16	100%	n/a
8	88%	1 milestone remaining - on track by Q4	17	100%	n/a
9	100%	n/a			