

Meeting	Scottish Police Authority Board Meeting
Date	07 June 2022
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Update On Progress Towards HMICS Recommendations in respect of Policing Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
Presented By	Detective Chief Superintendent Samantha Faulds, Head of Public Protection
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	Yes Appendix A OCSAE Progress Update

PURPOSE

To provide members with an overview of progress made by Police Scotland in response to the Recommendations made by HMICS in its Strategic Review of Police Scotland's Response to Online Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation published in February 2020 and its subsequent progress review, HMICS' Review of Online Child Sexual Abuse, published in August 2021.

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 In February 2020 HMICS published its [Strategic Review of Police Scotland's Response to Online Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation](#) (OCSAE). This Review produced 10 recommendations.

Strategic and Tactical Tackling Online Child Sexual Abuse (TOCSA) governance structures within Police Scotland were used to manage and coordinate the response to the recommendations. Significant work was undertaken however it commenced in early 2020, against the backdrop of the Global Pandemic which impacted upon all agencies.

Work towards the recommendations continues and the swift return of HMICS in mid-2021 for its Progress Review ensured focus. The [Progress Review](#) was published in August 2021, discharging 3 of the original recommendations, declaring 7 of the recommendations partially met and introduced a further, 11th Recommendation.

Further evidence has since been submitted to HMICS in April 2022 and Police Scotland awaits feedback from HMICS as to whether or not a number of the remaining recommendations might be fully discharged.

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

2.1 Recommendations Progress

The February 2020 HMICS Strategic Review of Police Scotland's Response to Online Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation contained 10 recommendations, with an 11th recommendation added by the 2021 Progress Review. A detailed progress report against each recommendation is appended to this report. Further evidence submissions were provided to HMICS in April 2022. Significant work has been progressed through the TOCSA structures and a professional assessment by the business area in conjunction with Governance, Audit and Assurance of the evidence submitted was:

- 3 Recommendations (3, 7 & 10) already discharged in 2021
- 4 Recommendations (1, 2, 4 & 9) submitted for consideration of discharge.
- 2 Recommendations (6 & 8) submitted for further direction / or discharge.
- 2 Recommendations (5 & 11) assessed as Work Ongoing.

Further details regarding the Recommendations can be found in **Appendix A**

2.3 Governance

ACC Major Crime, Public Protection & Local Crime retains overall strategic leadership for the work to meet the HMICS recommendations. This has been, and continues to be, managed through the pre-existing Police Scotland TOCSA strategic and tactical structures, meeting quarterly and bi-monthly respectively. TOCSA tactical is chaired by the DCS – Head of Public Protection.

2.4 Timescales & Interdependencies

The impact of the pandemic on timescales for progress was not insignificant. Many of the recommendations required collaboration across multiple Police Scotland business areas, as well as ICT work and HR processes where recruitment has been required. These complex and cross cutting interdependencies have at times pushed out timescales for certain recommendations.

2.5 Next Steps

Police Scotland continues to progress towards finalising outstanding pieces of work for the undischarged recommendations and also the work to bring to a conclusion and submit further evidence for Recommendations 5 and 11.

Police Scotland awaits feedback from HMICS as to whether Recommendations 1, 2, 4 & 9 might be discharged or further evidence is required.

Police Scotland awaits further direction and clarity from HMICS on Recommendations 6 & 8.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Whilst there are cost implications associated with the work underway as a consequence of some of the recommendations, finances have been identified and allocated and there remain no identified financial risks connected to the delivery of the recommendations.

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4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are resourcing and wellbeing aspects to some of the recommendations, but there are no strategic personnel issues identified.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to discuss the contents of this report.

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Recommendation	Status at 2021 Progress Review	HMICS narrative in 2021	2022 evidence submission	Current status
R01. Police Scotland should improve the means by which recorded data can accurately inform assessment of the scale and nature of online child sexual abuse.	Partially Met	HMICS welcomes the introduction of a single corporate name for online child sexual abuse and exploitation and of its use as a standard flag or marker on common computer applications and databases. We also recognise the imminent introduction of a new national crime recording system and future procurement of a new data management system for managing intelligence packages. The recommendation is partially met.	Further evidence submitted, markers now in place on all legacy crime systems, SID, VPD and COS	Submitted for Discharge
R02. Police Scotland should review the level of analytical support provided to the Public Protection business area and consider the appointment of a dedicated analytical resource.	Partially Met	HMICS welcomes the introduction of two dedicated Public Protection analysts appointed on an interim basis. We recognise the commitment shown by Police Scotland in appointing one of these analysts to the threat posed by online child sexual abuse and exploitation. HMICS does have concerns surrounding the current interim	Further evidence submitted, Public Protection analysts are permanently embedded in SCD PP. OCSAE and CSE areas also further embedded in wider work-streams including Serious and Organised Crime Board and Multi Agency Tasking & Delivery Board. The analysts are supported by the newly incepted CSE Threat Desk within Intelligence Support	Submitted for Discharge

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Recommendation	Status at 2021 Progress Review	HMICS narrative in 2021	2022 evidence submission	Current status
		approach however have been reassured that there is a commitment at ACC level to ensure Public Protection retain the posts on a permanent basis. The recommendation is partially met at this time.		
R03. Police Scotland should ensure a strategic governance framework is in place, which provides support, direction, scrutiny and quality assurance to the force's response to online child sexual abuse	Discharged			
R04. Police Scotland should undertake an Online Child Sexual Abuse	Partially Met	HMICS acknowledges the efforts from Police Scotland in the progress against this recommendation in producing an OCSAE STA however	Further evidence submitted, refreshed STA complete and subject of 6-monthly refresh	Submitted for Discharge

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Recommendation	Status at 2021 Progress Review	HMICS narrative in 2021	2022 evidence submission	Current status
Strategic Threat Assessment to accurately identify the scale, nature and threat to children from online child sexual abuse.		<p>our report also outlines the purpose being to accurately identify the scale, nature and threat to children from online child sexual abuse and exploitation.</p> <p>HMICS are satisfied the quality of the OCSAE STA will continue to evolve through an action management framework with timescales for key deliverables. Our discussions with senior leaders provides assurance activity is ongoing and offers a platform for improvement. The recommendation is partially met at this time.</p>		
R05. Police Scotland should review the current arrangements for allocation of specialist support in relation to online child sexual abuse	Partially Met	HMICS acknowledges the progress that has been made by Police Scotland for the allocation of specialist support in relation to online child sexual abuse and exploitation. This is particularly clear in respect of enforcement activity across the whole of the country. We learned that	Further evidence submitted, additional resource uplift within Cyber Digital Forensics approved and recruitment process partially complete, with a further recruitment process planned for summer 2022	Work Ongoing

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to ensure the allocation is fair, equitable and meet the needs across the country.		digital forensics is in need of an urgent review to ensure that it can meet current and future demands. Following our fieldwork we were made aware of a business justification case containing a proposal to provide an additional ten Digital Forensic staff and a team leader on temporary 24 month contracts. We are also encouraged to learn that the Cybercrime Strategy Implementation will ensure demand information is central to decisions relating to capacity and capability. The recommendation has been partially met.		
R06. Police Scotland should review the resources and structure of the Internet Investigation Unit and	Partially Met	HMICS recognise that Police Scotland did conduct an internal review of resources and structure of the Internet Investigation Unit and Communications Investigations Unit. Involving other specialist support functions would have been beneficial, and may have assisted in	Further evidence submitted and request to HMICS for feedback on what further evidence might be required to discharge this recommendation if not already able to be discharged.	Submitted for discharge

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Telecommunications Investigation Unit to ensure that the force is able to meet current and future demand in relation to initial risk assessment, triage and intelligence development.		managing demand and improving the end-to-end processes. The recommendation has been partially met given some of the gaps that still remain.		
R07. Police Scotland and National Crime Agency should work together to ensure that all capabilities are being exploited to their full potential and intelligence is shared effectively.	Discharged			

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R08. Police Scotland should work with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to establish a pragmatic and realistic approach to digital forensic examination requests.	Partially Met	HMICS acknowledge that progress towards this recommendation has been slower than anticipated. We also recognise that Police Scotland's response to digital forensics is in need of an urgent review to ensure that Police Scotland can meet current and future demands. We await the evaluation and any next steps of the current pilot. The recommendation remains partially met.	Further evidence submitted and request to HMICS for feedback on what further evidence might be required to discharge this recommendation if not already able to be discharged.	Submitted for discharge
R09. Police Scotland should review its capacity and capability to conduct undercover online covert operations in support of its policing priorities and ensure that undercover online operatives are	Partially Met	HMICS acknowledges the efforts from Police Scotland in progress against this recommendation and recognise the improvement made. We encourage Police Scotland to use demand analysis information alongside benchmarking other undercover online operating models across the UK to ensure there is sufficient resource to meet demand and manage risk moving forward. The recommendation has been	Further evidence submitted. Progress has been made in developing Police Scotland's capacity and capability to conduct UCOL operations and an Operational Lead Team has been established, with Peer Review sought from National UCOL coordinator	Submitted for discharge

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sufficiently equipped and supported to identify and equitably assess the risk to children as a result of online offending.		partially met until the impact of any recent changes can be considered.		
R10. Police Scotland should ensure that arrangements for deploying undercover online specialist resources are directed by formal tasking arrangements aligned to risk, priority and demand.	Discharged			
R11. Police Scotland should review the current	New recommendation		Work is ongoing to develop an overarching wellbeing strategy with	Work Ongoing

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arrangements around staff welfare and develop a wellbeing policy that involves appropriate support and monitoring for police officers and staff who have a dedicated role in the response to OCSAE.			individual appendices for each specific business area.	

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