



CONSULTATION PAPER

Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS): *Strategic Consultation*

Deadline for responses: Friday 29 February 2008

Police and Crime Standards Directorate
December 2007

FOREWORD

The police service and its community safety partners have much to be proud of in recent years. Crime has fallen sharply. The public are less likely to fall victim to crime than at any time in the last 25 years. There is good evidence of more efficient and effective working - learning from success and making the most of the record numbers of officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and other staff. The rising confidence in our policing shown by individuals and communities is well deserved.

Much of this is due to the commitment and professionalism of the police service at all levels; close work with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and many others; and continuing, substantial investment by government. Effective performance management has also played an essential part, and will continue to do so.

All public services need clear signals about priorities - national and local - if they are to focus their creativity and resources on the things that make the most difference. All leaders and managers need fair and consistent assessment of their performance, including comparisons with the performance of their peers, to strengthen accountability for results and identify good practice. Measures of ambition and success help the Home Office and partners celebrate progress, agree mutual benefits and ensure that timely support and intervention deal with underperformance. Accessible information - underpinned by the work to publish crime data at local level by July next year - strengthens public confidence that local priorities are being recognised and met, and that taxpayers' money is being used well.

The time is right to agree the next phase of performance management. Sir Ronnie Flanagan's independent review has already confirmed that the challenges facing the police and their partners grow ever more complex; and resources will always be finite. The vision for tackling crime I published last July and the government's new Public Service Agreements concentrate on cutting serious crime further and responding to the very specific needs of individual communities.

There is much to build on. As work to challenge and support CDRPs is already demonstrating, successful partnerships can play a key role in delivering community safety outcomes. Many of the levers, from early intervention with those at risk of offending to designing out crime by changing the physical environment of our streets, lie with local partners. Further success will demand even closer links at local level, and a more mature relationship between government and its delivery partners.

The new framework set out in this consultation document and the accompanying technical document - the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) - provides a key piece of this jigsaw. I am committed to ensuring that APACS is well aligned with the new local performance framework, bringing together a range of partners who are working to make communities safer; and that it provides a valuable basis for feeding outcomes back to local communities, as well as reflecting national concerns.

The development of APACS has benefited from close work over the last year with senior representatives of the police service, police authorities and a wide range of national stakeholders; and discussions with practitioners across the country. We have tried to learn the lessons from what has worked well and less well so far. I recognise the appetite for a fresh approach. I want to align more closely the efforts of all those tackling crime and

strengthening community safety; remove perverse incentives; value intelligence and analysis, not paperwork; and support the proper exercise of professional discretion and a collaborative approach to improvement - while retaining a sharp focus on standards and outcomes. APACS is key to these ambitions.

I look forward to the views of practitioners and stakeholders on the strategic approach and practical questions explored in these documents. My priority for APACS is that we develop together a robust performance framework which sustains our focus on improving community safety outcomes. We need to work together to solve problems and communicate the key messages to front line staff and the public. That is the best way to help everyone involved plan well for the introduction of the new framework from next April, and use APACS effectively to meet the needs of those we serve.

JACQUI SMITH
HOME SECRETARY

Disclosure

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1. APACS OVERVIEW

This section describes APACS in terms of what it will do, why it has changed from its predecessor, and when it will be introduced.

1.1. WHAT IS APACS?

1.1.1. APACS is the new performance assessment framework for the police, working alone and in partnership. The Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) was introduced in 2004 and APACS has been developed as its successor. The main changes are:

- To cover policing and community safety issues in a balanced way which reflects relative seriousness. (For example, the previous framework did not give enough weight to important issues such as terrorism, violence, and protective services, and many people felt that set a perverse incentive and failed to give credit to improvement in these important areas.)
- To recognise that agencies other than the police service are crucial to success on the Government's crime and community safety goals; and to promote joint working through a single measurement framework agreed with those partners; and aligned with other performance frameworks.
- To reflect the priorities set out in the Government's new Crime Strategy and the Public Service Agreements, published in October.
- To support a balanced regime of accountability, building on the roles of partners locally, regionally and nationally, and within the framework to allow a realistic balance between nationally and locally identified priorities.
- To align with the performance frameworks for other public services.
- To make the best use of performance data, diagnostic data, local data and professional judgements in producing analysis and assessments which:
 - show whether services are effective, equitable and provide value-for-money and whether they are perceived as such;
 - reflect relevant PSAs¹ and other strategic priorities and standards, priorities for improvement agreed between local partnerships and Government for inclusion in the Local Area Agreement, as well as performance against priorities for improvement selected locally;
 - use data focused on results (outcomes) but with the capability to use data on inputs, processes or outputs; and,

¹ All PSA measures which relate to the police working alone or in partnership will be included in APACS, as Delivery Agreements for the PSAs make clear. The default position is that they will be Statutory Performance Indicators in APACS, but some may be included as Key Diagnostic Indicators (see section 4) where there is a strong case to do so.

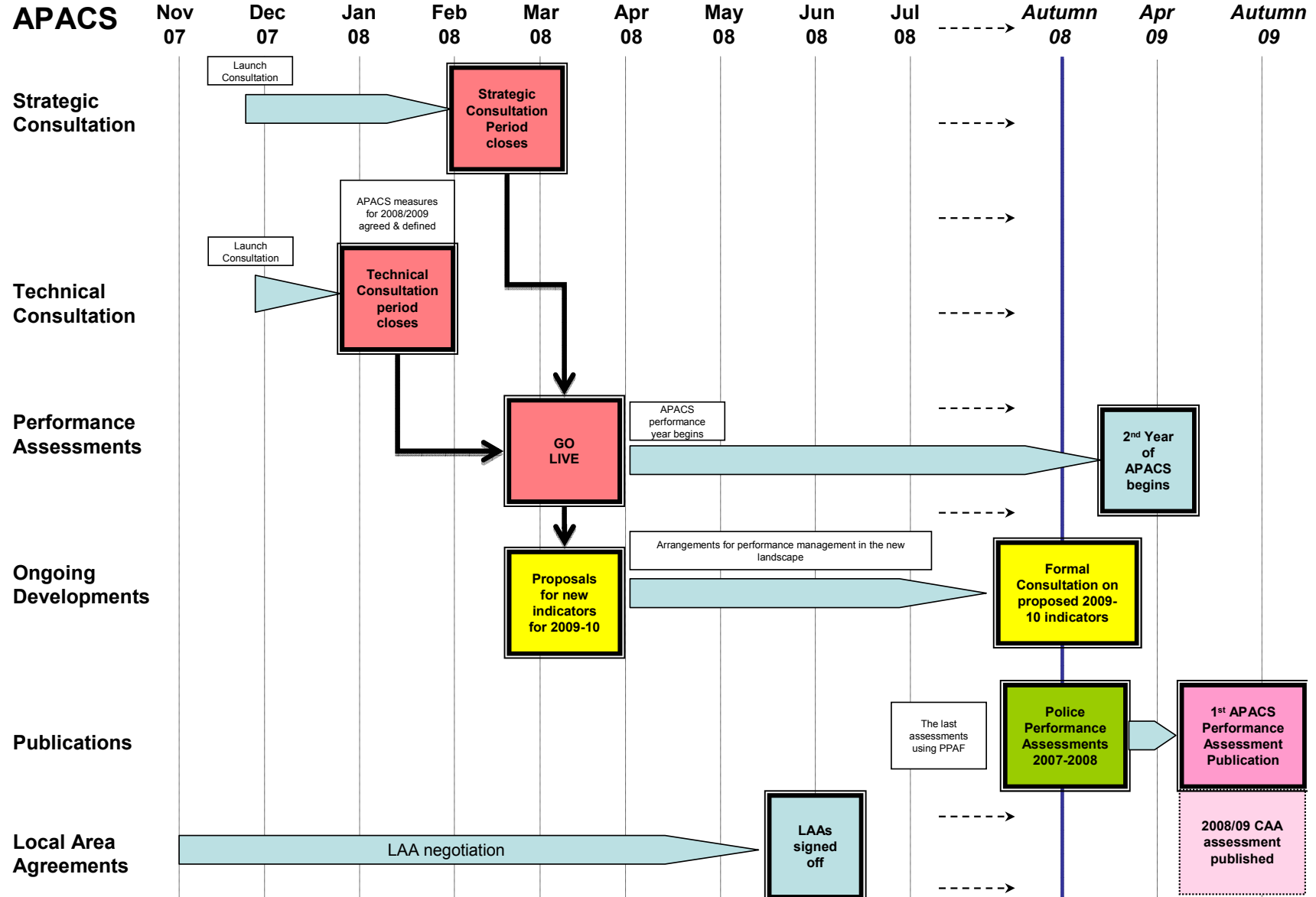
- can monitor implementation of key operational strategies such as neighbourhood policing, alcohol misuse and drug enforcement.
- 1.1.2. From April 2008, APACS will provide the set of indicators that the Home Office will use to monitor and track performance in local areas. Police and crime performance assessments for 2008-09 will be published in Autumn 2009 using the APACS framework. APACS includes all the relevant indicators from the National Indicator Set that apply to local authorities working alone or in partnership on crime and community safety. Performance against the whole of the National Indicator Set will form one element of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) that will be introduced from April 2009, with first reports in Autumn that year. This performance will also be reflected in other elements of the CAA, including the annual risk assessments. The APACS and CAA regimes will be designed so that the areas where they intersect (particularly on outcomes secured through partnerships like Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) and Drug Action Teams (DAT)) are common to both.
- 1.1.3. It is envisaged that APACS will comprise five headline areas or *domains* – confidence and satisfaction; promoting safety; tackling crime; serious crime and protection; and organisational management. Within each of these domains are a set of indicators developed to capture the relevant performance management information for outcomes delivered locally. Some of these are directly related to the Public Service Agreements published as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2007. Others are carried forward from PPAF and will use the same data. The draft definitions of the proposed indicators for APACS are set out in full in the technical consultation document published in parallel with this one. There are around 55 headline APACS indicators proposed in total, of which 24 are in the National Indicator Set (NIS).
- 1.1.4. It is also intended that APACS will better reflect priorities identified locally in each area, and views are sought on how best to achieve this. This issue is explored further in sections 4 and 5 of this document.

1.2. WHEN WILL APACS BE INTRODUCED?

- 1.2.1. The new APACS indicator set will be in use from April 2008 and will be used to monitor and assess performance during 2008-09. The performance management information made available by the Home Office to practitioners will gradually migrate from the indicator sets used under previous separate performance frameworks (for example, PPAF and those for Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPO), the Drug Intervention Programme (DIP), young offenders and offences brought to justice) to the single integrated indicator set in the APACS framework. The timeline on page 8 seeks to summarise the key stages of APACS introduction through to Autumn 2009.
- 1.2.2. For the police service, performance assessments for 2007-08 will use the existing PPAF indicator set and be the basis for the annual publication of police performance assessments in Autumn 2008. This will be the last such publication using PPAF. The performance assessments for 2008-09 will use the new APACS indicator set.

The 2009 performance assessment publication will be based on data collected and analysed under APACS and will consider the performance of the police service working alone and with others, primarily with community safety partnerships, CDRPs and DATs.

- 1.2.3. There are a number of key milestones to ensure the successful implementation of APACS. The delivery timeline overleaf starts with the launch of the APACS consultation process and ends with the first annual published APACS assessment in Autumn 2009.
- 1.2.4. APACS has been developed under with the guidance and support of the APACS Steering Group, which comprises the Home Office and 14 partner organisations. We are now interested in getting your views on the indicators proposed (through the separate technical consultation document) and on how we propose to use APACS to communicate with practitioners and the public about performance and support performance improvement (set out in this document).



2. THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

This section sets out other recent and ongoing policy developments that are relevant to the development of APACS.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

2.1.1. The way APACS is designed, and the way it is used, need to reflect some very significant policy developments over the last 12-18 months:

- The Local Government White Paper;
- The new crime strategy;
- The new Public Service Agreements;
- The new national standards for CDRPs;
- Programmes of work to develop protective services;
- Efficiency and productivity strategies;
- Developments in the approach of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary; and
- The development of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

This chapter sets out these new policy directions briefly as context to what follows.

2.1.2. The development of the new APACS performance framework reflects the changing environment in which policing and community safety outcomes must be delivered. APACS itself will need to adapt and evolve over time, to reflect further developments at the national and local level and new challenges in our communities. Along with continued dialogue with service providers and the public, specific developments in policing that will continue to shape APACS after launch include:

- The independent review of policing, led by Sir Ronnie Flanagan; and
- The Government's Policing Green Paper, planned for Spring 2008.

2.2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER: Strong and Prosperous Communities

2.2.1. The 2006 Local Government White Paper promoted changes to bring about better partnership working and better outcomes at local level in England. One of its key commitments was to reduce the number of indicators against which local government is required to report, avoiding multiple requests for the same information and making better use of information that is already available.

2.2.2. It was identified that 1,200 existing indicators were being reported to Government by Local Authorities and these have now been reduced to a National Indicator Set (NIS)

of 198, covering the full range of national priorities delivered by Local Authorities working alone or in partnership (in England). This list is currently being consulted on, and all the indicators relevant to crime and community safety are included in APACS.² Local Authorities and partners in England will be expected to continue to deliver across all of the national priorities monitored through the NIS. However, from April 2008 new Local Area Agreements (LAAs) will set a maximum of 35 improvement targets from the NIS.

- 2.2.3. A new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)³ will be introduced from April 2009 as part of the new framework for Local Authorities working alone or in partnership with others. It will replace existing regimes like Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and Childrens Services Joint Area Reviews (JARs). It will have four elements: an assessment of risks to outcomes being delivered locally (including LAA targets); a scored use of resources judgement for local authorities, police authorities, PCTs and fire and rescue authorities; a scored direction of travel judgement for local authorities; and publication of performance against the NIS.
- 2.2.4. Furthermore, there will be a co-ordinated approach to intervention and support in England, which aims to tackle under-performance by local authorities and partners and support the development and delivery of excellent LAAs. This includes the establishment of Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs)⁴ as a first line of support for local partners, and will help develop their own capacity to take responsibility for and deal with an increasing range of performance challenges, giving them the opportunity to improve before any central Government support becomes necessary.
- 2.2.5. APACS and the new performance arrangements for local government and its partners will be developed alongside one another to ensure alignment of the two frameworks. The next chapter of this document says more about how that will be done. The White Paper made clear that the new arrangements will need to recognize the different accountabilities of police forces, and said that “separate performance frameworks will continue to operate for partners for example Primary Care Trusts, the police and Job Centre Plus. [...] However these separate arrangements will, where necessary, be reformed to ensure that they align with the performance framework for partnership-working with local authorities.”

² Communities and Local Government are consulting on the technical details underpinning the NIS. Indicators in the NIS measuring services co-delivered by Local Authorities working in partnership with the police (and others) are shared with APACS, and therefore consultation is through the APACS Technical Consultation process which complements this paper. The NIS consultation is available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/indicatorsdefinitions>

³ A joint consultation by the 7 inspectorates tasked with developing and delivering CAA (including Audit Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons) was published on 19 November 2007 (www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caaconsultation).

⁴ Local Area Agreements and Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships do not apply in Wales, where arrangements differ due to devolution and the role of the Welsh Assembly Government. There is a similar move towards greater local determination, however, and six Local Service Boards have been established to facilitate this. Each of these boards will have a Local Service Agreement by April 2008, encapsulating a limited number of priorities for delivery across service boundaries and which reconcile national and local priorities. The intention is for Local Service Boards and Local Service Agreements to be in place in every area in Wales by 2010.

2.3. CRIME STRATEGY

- 2.3.1. The publication of the crime strategy, *Cutting crime: a new partnership 2008-11* in July 2007 recognised the need to support police forces and other partners differently so that they can respond effectively to the full spectrum of crime, from the everyday to the extraordinary, from graffiti at the bus stop to terrorism. The Strategy puts particular emphasis on giving local partners more flexibility to respond to the crime and anti-social behaviour that matters to the public in their areas, with fewer types of crime being mandated as priorities from the centre. The new Make Communities Safer PSA therefore includes an indicator around volume crime but this is more limited in scope than the indicator used for the preceding PSA, as it covers serious acquisitive crime only. It also focuses on seeking negotiated improvement targets only in areas with demonstrably higher crime than in similar areas elsewhere, rather than specifying stretch targets for every area. This will leave the majority of areas free to set locally-determined stretch targets that are in line with local priorities and ambition.
- 2.3.2. At the heart of this stronger local response is the requirement for local partners to engage consistently and meaningfully with the public about what will improve people's sense of safety and their quality of life. In order to emphasise the importance of responding to local concerns, the new PSA also includes an indicator to improve public confidence in the response of local agencies to crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.
- 2.3.3. The crime strategy recognises that there are some types of crime, particularly serious violence, organised crime and terrorism, that national partners need to join forces locally to tackle. This is either because the crime itself crosses several local areas (including international links) or because there are particularly difficult challenges in tackling, for example, gun and gang related violence or reducing the supply of drugs, that require new responses to be developed and tested. The new Make Communities Safer PSA therefore also includes an indicator of serious violence and sexual offending to ensure that there is sufficient focus on reducing these most serious crimes; and there is a Counter Terrorism PSA for the first time.
- 2.3.4. There are a number of issues that cut across the whole of crime namely drug and alcohol misuse, re-offending and young people. The new PSAs contain indicators on all these issues, and the Government has either already published or is currently consulting on new plans to respond to these challenges.

2.4. COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW 2007 and PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS

- 2.4.1. At the national level, a number of priority outcomes for the Crime Strategy were agreed, in the Comprehensive Spending Review for the three year period from April 2008. These were set out in Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and built on consultation with the public and partners. Each PSA is underpinned by a Delivery Agreement which sets out the key outcomes expected, the high level strategy to deliver those outcomes, who will contribute, and how progress will be measured.

2.4.2. The key PSAs relating to crime reduction and community safety are⁵:

- PSA 14: Young People;
- PSA 16: Social Exclusion;
- PSA 17: Poverty and Wellbeing;
- PSA 21: Cohesive, Empowered Communities;
- PSA 23: Make Communities Safer;
- PSA 24: Criminal Justice;
- PSA 25: Alcohol and Drugs; and
- PSA 26: Counter Terrorism.

2.4.3. The new Make Communities Safer PSA sets out Government objectives for crime reduction and community safety that move away from a single national volume crime reduction target cascaded to all local areas (as in the SR04 PSAs) and towards a set of national objectives that reflect the direction of the new crime strategy. PSA 23 includes objectives to reduce the prevalence of the most harmful crimes - serious violent crime (including sexual offences and domestic violence) and serious acquisitive crime - in line with local demands, and beyond that it calls for local agencies and partnerships to concentrate on tackling other local priorities and therefore improve public confidence in local service delivery.

2.4.4. Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) will be responsible for delivering the commitments in the Criminal Justice PSA (PSA 24) for a more effective, transparent and responsive criminal justice system. Clearly the police will make a crucial contribution to achieving these objectives, and key supporting indicators are proposed for inclusion in APACS. The framework for managing criminal justice performance from April 2008 complements the approach outlined in the Crime Strategy and the Make Communities Safer PSA by reducing the number of centrally-prescribed targets and creating more flexibility for partners to address community priorities. The Strategic Plan for Criminal Justice 2008-11⁶ sets out the Government's vision for the criminal justice system and the programme of reform which will deliver this, and directly supports the Crime Strategy and the forthcoming Reducing Re-offending Strategy.

⁵ Full details of these and all other PSAs can be found at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/psa/pbr_csr07_psaindex.cfm

⁶ The Criminal Justice System strategic plan for 2008-2011 was published on 15 November 2007, and is available at: http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/the_cjs/whats_new/news-3623.html

2.5. NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CDRPs

2.5.1. The new standards for CDRPs will help partnerships improve the way that they operate. The Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships⁷ are intended to summarise the core elements of effective partnership working. They provide a way for partnerships to check if they are delivering effectively or if there are areas where they should target improvements. Each Hallmark comprises two elements:

- New statutory requirements for partnership working in the form of minimum standards; and
- Suggested practice to achieve more effective partnership, using the statutory requirements as a foundation.

2.5.2. Guidance to support partnerships in their work to deliver the Hallmarks - 'Delivering Safer Communities: A Guide to effective partnership working' - is available in hard copy from Government Offices and the Welsh Assembly Government, or at: <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/regions/regions00.htm>

2.6. SERIOUS CRIME AND PROTECTION: IMPROVING PROTECTIVE SERVICES

2.6.1. HMIC's 2005 report *Closing the Gap* concluded that, faced with a more sophisticated and enterprising organised criminality, the police service had gaps in the provision of services to tackle these complex threats to individuals and communities. The report highlighted that a lack of focus on 'protective services'⁸ in the performance regime had contributed to this gap in service delivery. The national commitment to improve outcomes in this area is reflected through the new PSAs. Changing the way that we monitor, assess, review and support performance overall in relation to policing and community safety provides a further opportunity to address this gap, and to use performance arrangements to draw attention to areas where improvement is most needed, as well as to support and demonstrate improvements.

2.6.2. Forces acting alone will not be in a position to ensure that they are as well placed as possible to improve performance in these critical services. The challenges faced on protective services will stretch the individual capacity and capability of forces and all forces and authorities will be expected to collaborate to overcome this. This approach

⁷ The six 'Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships' are: Empowered and Effective Leadership; Visible and Constructive Accountability; Intelligence-led Business Processes; Effective and Responsive Delivery Structures; Engaged Communities; and Appropriate Skills and Knowledge.

⁸ The term 'Protective Services' covers those crimes and incidents that are widely recognised as impacting significantly on public protection: counter-terrorism and domestic extremism, serious and organised crime, civil contingencies and emergency management, critical incident management, major crime, public order, protection of vulnerable people and strategic roads policing.

is already beginning to work for many forces; and the Home Office announced in July 2007 that it will be funding collaboration demonstration sites to help draw out best practice and lessons learnt on how to overcome key barriers to successful collaboration and the merits of different models of joint-working. We will be exploring the possibility of introducing into APACS at a later date one or more performance indicators focussed on collaboration and shared services.

2.7. EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY

- 2.7.1. The development of a new performance framework for the police service presents a good opportunity to develop a better understanding of how forces and authorities are using their resources to achieve their objectives. Across the public sector there is an increasing awareness of the need to demonstrate that the public is getting the best possible value for money from public services. To reflect the importance of this, the Comprehensive Spending Review included a target of at least 3 per cent value for money savings per year over the next three financial years across central and local government. It will be important that APACS not only reports the performance of forces and their partners in tackling community safety issues, but also helps individual police authorities and forces focus more sharply on areas where there is most scope for further efficiencies. This will help individual forces to understand better where there is scope for efficiencies, with an overall aim of improving productivity to help drive performance improvement. APACS will also allow the public and Government to gain a clear understanding of where resource is being allocated.
- 2.7.2. The Home Office and partners are currently engaged in a process of identifying how we might usefully capture information relating to efficiency and productivity. Some of the indicators will not be available for the first year of APACS, but this is an important and developing area and, through the technical consultation, we would welcome views on what it would be helpful and feasible to measure. The Home Office, ACPO and the APA are already working together to develop an Efficiency and Productivity Strategy for the CSR years, and it is the intention that indicators in APACS will underpin this.

2.8. REGULATION OF POLICING

- 2.8.1. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been adjusting its approach to prioritisation in the last year. In future, this will be heavily risk-based, with a programme of targeted inspections conducted in areas of service delivery which carry the highest risk, notably on protective services. This will mean re-inspection in forces where underperformance is identified and closer scrutiny where quantitative data and analysis indicate significant cause for concern due to sustained underperformance. HMIC will also participate with other criminal justice inspectorates in inspecting key aspects of the criminal justice system, working to determine priority issues for joint inspection, and be a key player in the community safety element of the CAA.

2.9. MANAGEMENT OF STATISTICS

2.9.1. A number of other changes to statistics are important context to the development of APACS and performance arrangements:

- The Home Office responded to the Smith and Statistics Commission reviews of crime statistics in July 2007. As part of this response assurances were given that Home Office statisticians will continue to develop with ACPO and the Force Crime Registrars the existing framework for data recording standards and recording practices via the National Crime Recording Steering Group (NCRSG).
- For 2007-08, the Audit Commission's Appointed Auditors will include a review of the corporate arrangements for data quality as part of their statutory responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice. The Audit Commission will continue to review data quality arrangements in future years, and work will focus on ensuring that improvements in NCRS compliance are sustained across the Police Service.
- It is also planned that a central National Management Information System (NMIS) data hub will become operational during 2008/09. This will directly consolidate data from individual force systems, yielding cost savings to forces in the supply of data and offering a speedier data supply to the Home Office, including systems supporting iQuanta and APACS.
- It is recognised that there is a need to improve the way information on offences that could be seen to involve violence is recorded. As a first step Home Office statisticians have sought to clarify the distinction in annual crime statistics between the more serious and less serious violent and sexual crimes and explain the allocation of these two categories. Consideration is being given to the recommendation of the Smith Report to devise a 'basket of serious crime' that will include only the most serious violent and property crimes. The Home Office will continue to publish the annual Crime in England and Wales volume, and will keep its content under review. This has already introduced some minor presentational changes in July 2007, for example, moving bigamy from the sexual offences category.
- The Home Office is also working with ACPO and APA to make crime data available on a monthly and consistent basis to people throughout the country, at a level that makes sense to them locally and as part of the availability of wider local data about neighbourhood issues.

2.10. REVIEW OF POLICING

2.10.1. The final report of Sir Ronnie Flanagan's independent review of policing will be produced in the New Year. It will be important that APACS incorporates sufficient flexibility to reflect reforms identified either by Sir Ronnie or by the Policing Green Paper (see section 2.11). The Review of Policing's work relates to a number of relevant areas – such as the importance of driving efficient business processes, the need to reflect the value of good neighbourhood policing and management outcomes and the ability to ensure that local priorities are effectively communicated and delivered. The final report will be making recommendations on these issues. In considering responses to the APACS consultation, we will also be mindful of how we might incorporate these ideas and how to make the framework adaptable to future changes.

2.11. POLICING GREEN PAPER

2.11.1. The Government intends to publish a Policing Green Paper in Spring 2008, which will provide the means for wider consultation on a range of new ideas and suggestions for improvements in the Police Service. The Green Paper will offer an opportunity to examine progress on police reform, and also seek to address any further issues that have come to light. In addition it will look at options for how a step-change in performance might best be realised. The Green Paper will also set out the Government's response to Sir Ronnie Flanagan's final report from his independent review of policing. Again, it will be important for future APACS arrangements to adapt to reflect these developments.

3. ROLE OF THE HOME OFFICE IN SUPPORTING PERFORMANCE

This section sets out how the Home Office has developed its approach to performance management in recent years, and how future arrangements are envisaged.

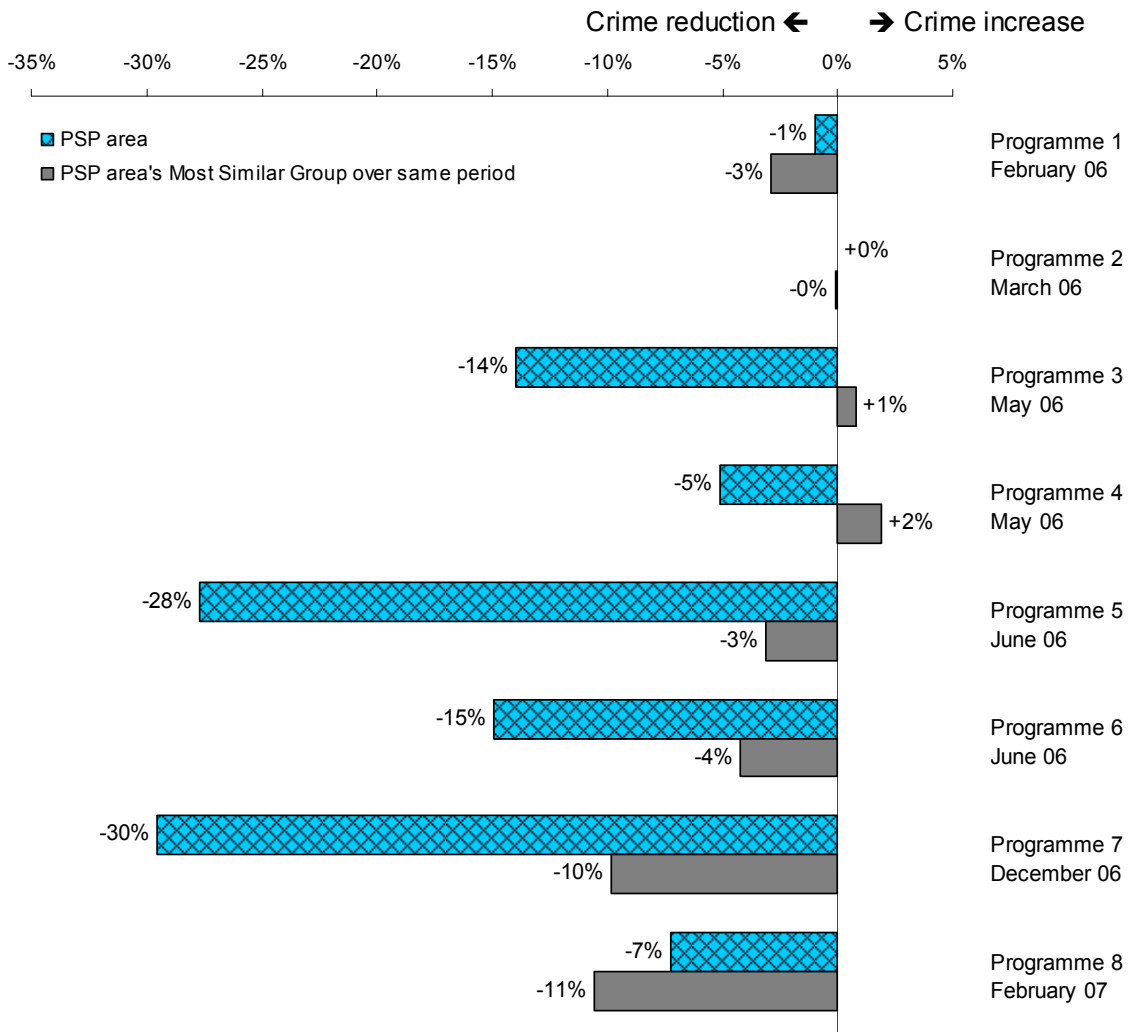
3.1. BUILDING ON PAST EXPERIENCE

- 3.1.1. Over recent years there have been significant advancements in the development of performance management in policing, supporting striking improvements in performance. Between 2001-02 and 2006-07 recorded crime was reduced by 29.4% nationally⁹, with reductions in all but two force areas. There have also been improvements in the detection rate and in public confidence.
- 3.1.2. Much of this has been achieved by the police service's own success in introducing robust performance management arrangements within forces and authorities, supported by national arrangements through PPAF and the Home Office Police and Crime Standards Directorate (PCSD). In recent years and months, Ministers have decided to review performance at national level through the National Policing Board and the National Crime Reduction Board, to show the importance they attach to delivery.
- 3.1.3. The approach taken by PCSD has evolved steadily over time. Originally the Directorate (then called the Police Standards Unit) operated mainly through 'engagements', which involved an intensive and publicised process of work with a whole force. There have been no further force engagements since the three remaining engagements were concluded in May 2007. The emphasis now is on interventions at more local level, helping Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to tackle performance problems. Where performance is identified as being of concern (worse than peers and deteriorating / off-trajectory) across a range of key performance indicators, the Home Office, through Government Offices, will open a dialogue with the Partnership to discuss the challenges that they are facing, and review the actions being taken to meet those challenges. This discussion is informed by the national standards for CDRPs and the extent to which a Partnership currently meets those standards. The Home Office has offered assistance where it was felt that external support would help improve performance and only with the clear agreement of the partnership itself.
- 3.1.4. The Home Office and partners have a range of possible support mechanisms and interventions that they could bring to a force, or Basic Command Unit (BCU) / CDRP that is underperforming. These form a 'ladder of interventions' that begin with light-touch support when an issue is first identified, such as peer support, sharing best practice through partners such as the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) and HMIC. Crucial to this process will be a continuing dialogue between the area in question, Home Office and partners to set out what the concerns are, and agree a

⁹ This reduction refers to the recorded crime measures covering domestic burglary, vehicle crime and robbery, as targeted under the PSA from SR2002.

Impact of 8 Partnership Support Programmes

Change in BCS comparator crime level in months 5-7 following each PSP, compared to same period previous year



Note: Based on unpublished provisional figures. Each programme represents a different PSP area, and thus a different Most Similar Group in each case.

plan for improvement. This plan will contain key milestones for improvement, and if these are not met then the Home Office has a range of intervention options available, which it can use to tackle underperformance of the police. Crime reduction and community safety are key issues for any area, and underperformance has a significant and wide-ranging impact on a local community, from quality of life of local people to serious economic impacts for businesses. It is essential that underperformance is tackled swiftly and effectively, and where problems persist in a particular area, Government will intervene.

3.1.5. The consultancy-style / partnership focused approach has helped local areas to achieve some impressive performance improvements. This has been delivered with little additional cost over and above those for partners engaging in a consulting process to identify and plan remedial action to address weaknesses in their process and systems. These Partnership Support Programmes (PSPs) have delivered improved community safety outcomes, and have proved to be a positive experience for all the partnerships involved. The graphs on the following page demonstrate the success that the PSPs have had in delivering crime reductions in individual partnerships, something which the Home Office is keen to build on in the new performance regime.

3.2. HOW PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT WILL WORK IN THE FUTURE

3.2.1. The Government believes that performance management of crime and policing in the future should reflect what has been learnt in the past and the changed context set out in the previous chapter.

3.2.2. The principles underpinning the Home Office's new approach will therefore be to:

- To focus on the priorities set out in the government's PSAs for 2008-11 that will be delivered in whole or in part through the police working alone or in partnership (including priorities set out in PSAs 23 (Make Communities Safer), 24 (Criminal Justice System), 25 (Alcohol and Drugs), 26 (Counter Terrorism), and 14 (Young People on the Path to Success)), and other priorities established beyond the PSA framework (for example on police efficiency).
- To use LAAs as a driver of improved performance, and to establish local policing and community safety priorities for the communities concerned. We will work with police forces, police authorities, local authorities and other local and national partners on delivery of these priorities;
- To work with other Government Departments and other partners to improve delivery for the public by strengthening the way that performance and delivery frameworks fit together. The Local Criminal Justice Boards, Youth Offending Teams, Directors of Children's Services and Primary Care Trusts are just a few of the many partners who need to work together.
- To reflect the particular importance of performance on crime to the public's sense of well being and confidence, and recognise the fact that in a fast moving world, crime trends can change fast and require a real time response.
- To continue to provide high quality and up to date information to the public to enable them to hold services to account.
- To provide flexibility in the setting of local policing and community safety priorities, with areas held to account against their performance against these priorities.

3.2.3. The approach taken by the Home Office, and led by PCSD, will therefore be:

- Working with police forces and local authorities through Government Offices, to agree which of the national policing and community safety targets are also local priorities in each LAA, and have been identified as important to achieving national PSAs. These negotiations are already underway and LAAs will be signed off by Ministers by June 2008.
- To work with police forces through the national police performance arrangements to support continued improvement;
- To work with Government Offices and RIEPs co-ordinating any improvement support or challenge for local partnerships in their delivery of their LAA targets;
- To provide support for CDRPs which need and want it initially through Government Offices and PCSD consultancy work, and in the longer term through the NPIA, the LGA and IDeA, while at the same time encouraging a sector-led improvement approach, which sets clear objectives and milestones for improvement, and with escalation to stronger interventions if necessary;
- To monitor trends in CDRP performance and, where these threaten to put at risk national PSA delivery, to feed into Government Office reviews of LAAs, and where necessary seek to agree changes to LAA targets at the first possible review point.

3.2.4. The Home Office will not be setting improvement targets for partnerships outside the LAA process but will continue to monitor and support CDRPs as described above.

3.2.5. Specifically for police forces and authorities, the Home Office could seek to identify the best and worst performers, based on assessments drawn from APACS. The best performers could then benefit from whatever freedoms and flexibilities were available. Suggestions for how this might work, and on the kinds of freedoms that could be offered, are sought in section 5 of this consultation paper. The worst could come under more intense scrutiny from the Home Office and be expected to deliver improvements to bring them to a level at least comparable to that of their peers. This might involve some light touch support, perhaps based around those areas within the force the furthest behind comparable areas elsewhere. Alternatively, it might involve force-wide support. The Home Office retains the option of formal engagement with the force and ultimately exercise of the intervention powers in the Police Act 1996 (as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006).

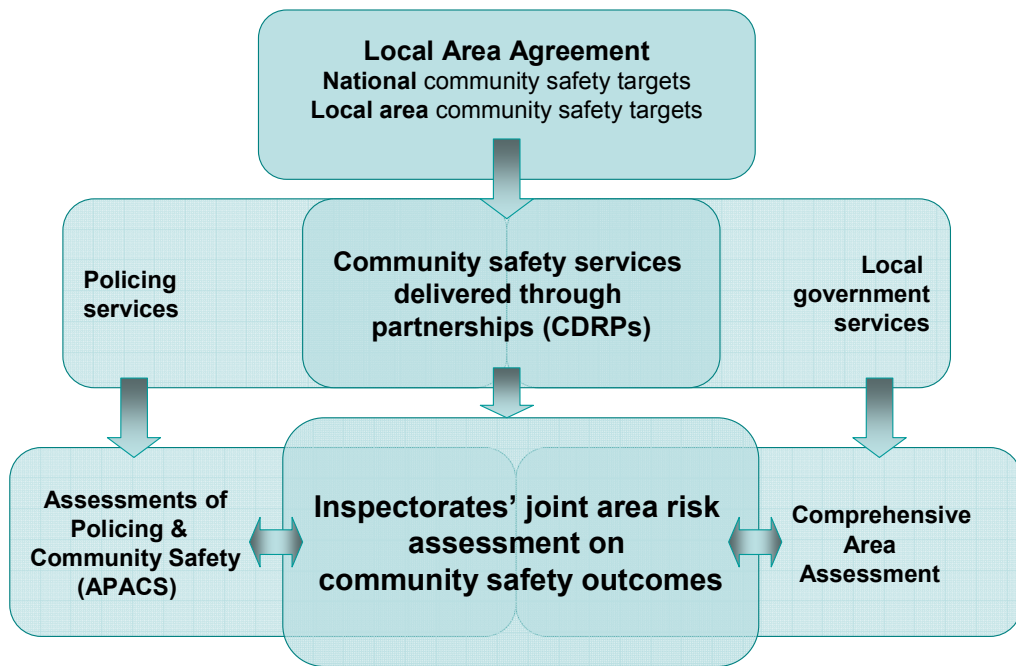
3.2.6. The new Home Office approach will be underpinned by regular publication of information:

- Monthly crime data at local level, as Ministers have promised;
- A successor to the annual *Police Performance Assessments* publication, setting out data and ratings for forces and beneath that for local areas; and
- The CAA assessment described earlier in Section 2.

- 3.2.7. This approach will show where an area is ahead of, or behind, the level of performance expected, and APACS will provide data on performance for police, partnerships and DATs, and against all statutory performance measures, not just against LAA targets and priorities. APACS and CAA will use the same data to arrive at common assessments of crime reduction and community safety for an area.
- 3.2.8. In setting out this framework, the Government hopes to reflect the way that relationships between Government and delivery partners have matured while maintaining options to protect the public interest in situations where, despite best efforts, sustained and real improvement is not delivered. Within those parameters, there are still some questions and options for what this will mean in practice, for example, how often and at what level performance data is collected and when and how often assessments are published. These other questions are dealt with in more detail later in this document and the Home Office wants to know what you think.
- 3.2.9. The wider approach that APACS will be taking to national performance management and support arrangements, aligned with those of the new local performance framework for local authorities working alone or in partnership in England, addresses these issues and will enable us to build on our achievements. As a result, APACS will provide the means through which achievement against the PSAs relating to policing and community safety at the national, regional and local levels will be monitored and demonstrated.
- 3.2.10. The first round of LAA negotiations in 2008 will use assessments based on precursor performance frameworks (e.g. PPAF) that will be carried forward into APACS and start to be collected in that framework from April 2008. From 2009, APACS and CAA assessments will be aligned and Government Offices will base their annual reviews of LAAs on them. APACS will provide consistency and the basis for comparison of local areas to help the areas themselves, Government Offices and the Home Office monitor performance on policing and community safety, both in relation to LAA priorities for improvement and across the broader spectrum of service delivery that APACS covers.
- 3.2.11. APACS will be introduced in April 2008 and this document takes forward a process of consultation. However, it is important that we ensure – as far as is possible - that priorities agreed in (e.g.) local policing plans and CDRP strategic assessments which need to feed through into local Sustainable Communities Strategies and new Local Area Agreements (in England) are established with awareness of the new PSAs and what APACS and CAA assessments might say about delivery in a local area in due course.
- 3.2.12. To support the development of CDRP plans, force plans and LAA negotiations over the remainder of 2007/08 the Home Office will provide, on an ongoing basis, analysis of the performance of each CDRP/force against NIS indicators as might be reflected in the final APACS framework - accepting fully that APACS analytical and assessment methods are still in discussion. In the first instance, this will be akin to much of the analysis that is already available through iQuanta, but will develop thereafter. This is not in any way intended to influence the shape of the 'final' APACS assessment methods; it merely reflects a 'best guess' at how APACS might assess

performance against a given indicator, based on what we know at the moment or have used in the past.

- 3.2.13. Provision of this analysis is intended to support CDRPs, forces, police authorities, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), and central government (including Government Offices) in approaching LAA priority and target negotiations. The data and analysis should be used to inform discussion around appropriate targets, and are not intended as an attempt to mandate the nature or stretch of targets. LAA targets must be agreed on the basis of genuine negotiation. Further information will be available on iQuanta.
- 3.2.14. Further development of data and analysis to support performance management arrangements (including the finalisation of the LAA process), will follow once the performance indicators have been finalised for 2008/09. The accompanying technical consultation will close in January, allowing for finalisation of the first set of APACS SPIs by February 2008. The population of iQuanta and further analysis will then be rolled out throughout 2008/09, starting in April 2008 with indicators for which data is already available. The implementation and roll-out will be discussed with practitioners through the APACS User Group, and support and training (where necessary) will be made available.
- 3.2.15. The importance of the alignment of APACS and CAA is recognised by Government and stakeholders. There should be no duplication, overlap or conflicting judgements in the assessment of local community safety outcomes. CAA and APACS will use the same evidence sources, treated in the same way, with inspectorates co-ordinating their activity so that evidence is only collected once and consistent judgements are delivered. CAA will reflect the joint assessment of the Audit Commission, HMIC, and where appropriate other inspectorates such as HMI Probation.
- 3.2.16. The following diagram shows how, in principle, APACS and CAA will align. The two performance frameworks will complement each other, supporting the delivery of local services in line with national and local priorities as set out in the LAA. There is more work to be done to develop the detail of the interface between APACS and CAA which will be informed by consultation responses.



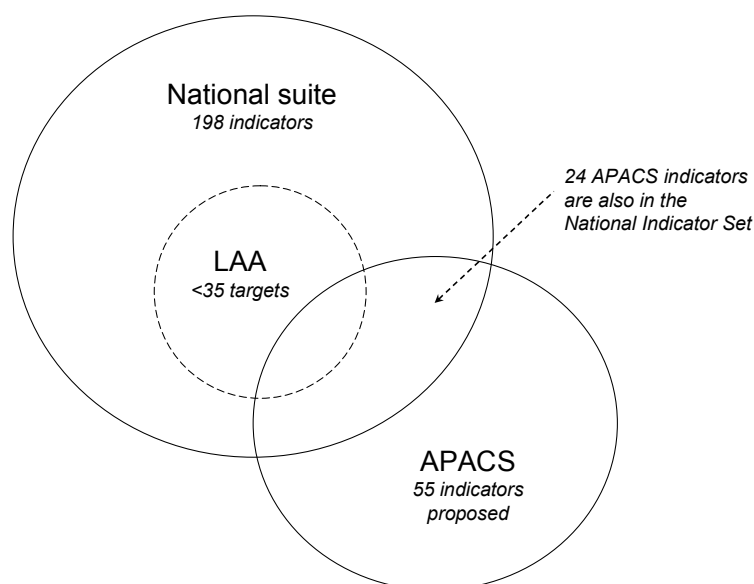
4. FUTURE FRAMEWORK

This section describes how APACS will be constructed, and outlines some of the key aims of the new framework.

4.1. THE COMPONENTS OF APACS

4.1.1. APACS will be populated by four types of **component**. The priority of each and the overall assessment process will be determined jointly by Government and its stakeholders (including the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Association of Police Authorities, the Local Government Association, the HMIC and the Audit Commission) on the basis of the results of this consultation exercise. This will happen during Spring 2008 and will be the subject of further advice and guidance to be published thereafter.

- **Statutory Performance Indicators** decided by Ministers following consultation and set in line with national PSAs plus other key strategic objectives. For outcomes which require partnership working by police and local authorities, the SPIs are also part of the National Indicator Set (see section 2.2). Performance data would be assessed and published, and associated assessment methodology shared with other frameworks (e.g. CAA) to facilitate a common view of performance. The indicators relating to partnerships are found also in the NIS – see the diagram, below;



It is recognised that APACS indicators may not necessarily be included in all LAAs.

- **Key Diagnostic Indicators** decided by Ministers following consultation and set in line with national PSAs plus other key strategic objectives. Diagnostic data

would not be assessed nor necessarily published¹⁰ but would be used to help understand and/or explain performance;

- **Local Indicators** (either performance or diagnostic in nature) selected by police authorities and partners in line with local priorities for improvement. Data and / or grades on these indicators would be available for reporting locally and to government; and,

- **Qualitative Assessments** made either by independent regulators or by self-assessment where quantitative assessment is not desirable or feasible.

4.1.2. Design of the framework to date, and the substance of the technical consultation, focuses on those statutory performance indicators that are mandated nationally. However, we are keen to hear views from partners on how the proposed arrangements under APACS can best be developed to ensure sufficient recognition of priorities that matter most to local people. This includes the development of local indicators, consideration of local priorities within any assessment, and the balance of national and local publication.

4.2. THE DOMAINS OF APACS

4.2.1. The view of the Home Office is that the components should be grouped into **domains**, such that assessments of individual components can be aggregated¹¹ to obtain a summary view, and to communicate that view to non-specialists.

4.2.2. Five domains are proposed and these are explained in detail in the Technical Consultation document. In summary, the domains are:

- Promoting Safety;
- Tackling Crime;
- Serious Crime and Protection;
- Confidence and Satisfaction; and,
- Organisational Management.

¹⁰ Some diagnostic performance data may reflect national statistics and so be published in due course (and all data may be subject to Freedom of Information requests).

¹¹ The process of aggregation has not yet been determined but, in principle, assessments of individual components, (i.e. assessments from SPIs, qualitative assessments and any locally selected performance indicators), within a domain could be aggregated to form an overall domain grade. In addition, assessments of components that relate to a particular theme or policy area, which may sit in more than one domain, could be aggregated to form a bespoke grade, (e.g. on drugs performance where there are SPIs in both the Promoting Safety and Tackling Crime domains). One such bespoke grade could also be based on the aggregation of grades for all those indicators, whether national or local, which relate to a local priority.

4.3. MEETING THE AIMS OF APACS

- 4.3.1. In developing APACS, the Home Office and partners are working towards a number of aims, which include ambitions to align existing frameworks, simplify arrangements and promote a balanced regime of accountability. Much of this draws on the experience of the operation of existing frameworks over recent years. Some specific elements of the development provide particular challenges, for example:
- Ensuring that there is an appropriate balance between national and local priorities, with space within the framework for individual areas to identify priorities that genuinely reflect local concerns;
 - The development of indicators within the framework that bring a focus to serious crime and counter-terrorism; and
 - The need to encourage and promote collaborative arrangements.
- 4.3.2. Issues relating to community safety will be important to many communities. However, performance improvement in areas covered by APACS indicators may only be a genuine local priority in some areas. Nationally set performance indicators will, in some instances, reflect the issues and priorities that matter locally, although it is important that the national indicators do not inhibit the development of measures reflecting local issues. It is also important that APACS assessments reflect the priorities identified locally. Section 5 of this document asks a number of questions relating to the inclusion of locally selected indicators and priorities in APACS, with a view to getting the balance right.
- 4.3.3. Proposals have been brought forward in the accompanying technical consultation paper, which reflect the desire to ensure that the new framework adequately reflects the more serious aspects of policing and community safety. However, it is recognised that previous performance frameworks have not substantively covered these areas of business (including counter-terrorism). This is a gap that therefore needs to be filled, and views are sought on the proposals within the technical consultation, with these objectives in mind.
- 4.3.4. As set out in section 2.6, the ability of Police Authorities to secure effective collaborative arrangements across forces will be increasingly important as a foundation for delivering improvements in serious crime and protection. In addition, arrangements such as shared services will also be important in making the most of available resources. The technical consultation document contains a number of measures in the areas of Serious Crime and Protection and Organisational Management, where collaborative working will be important in driving up performance. Views are sought on these indicators, as well as on other approaches to measuring and assessing collaborative working. We will be exploring the possibility of introducing into APACS (at a later date) one or more performance indicators focussed on collaboration and shared services.

5. CONSULTATION ISSUES

This section is where we seek your views about the immediate future and capability of APACS. The Home Office has made suggestions throughout this section as a starting point for discussion, but – as well as seeking feedback on these suggestions – we would also be interested to hear other ideas.

5.1. INTRODUCTION

5.1.1. Previous chapters have set out the overall vision, aims and benefits we are seeking to achieve from our performance arrangements for policing and community safety. These provide the framework for the development of APACS and wider arrangements for monitoring and supporting performance. This chapter explores the more detailed issues around process and presentation which need to be resolved to ensure that practitioners know what is expected of them and that they and the public can secure the full benefits of this work. We invite stakeholders' views on the issues listed at A to F below. Each section below gives more detail on the issue and options for progress, with an indication, where appropriate, of points to which the Home Office attaches particular importance or which are influenced by settled policy. Some specific questions are posed to help stakeholders structure their response, but we welcome all and any points you wish to make.

5.1.2. We invite views on:

CAPTURE of data and other information for use in the assessment, in particular:

- A. How should data be collected and how should data quality be verified?

CONSIDERATION of performance, in particular:

- B. How should quantitative and qualitative perspectives be aligned in assessment?
- C. How should data related to individual performance indicators be graded?
- D. How should grades related to individual performance indicators be aggregated?

COMMUNICATION of assessments to practitioners and the public, in particular:

- E. How do stakeholders think that performance data and assessments can most effectively serve these purposes? Are there any others worth pursuing? What are the key risks that need to be managed and how can this best be done, to ensure that practitioners and the public can secure the full benefits from performance assessment?
- F. In what ways, and how regularly, should performance assessments be communicated to practitioners and the public?

5.1.3. As stated in the introduction, consultation on these issues is complemented by technical consultation focused on the indicators to be used for 2008-09. The technical consultation can be obtained from: <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/apacs>.

5.2. CAPTURE of data and other information for use in the assessment

(A) How should data be collected and how should data quality be verified?

Background:

Data supplied by Policing:

5.2.1. This is currently collected by the Home Office through the Annual Data Requirement (ADR) process, and verified against a number of logical parameters. The current mechanisms for collecting data appear to work well, but your views are sought on ways of improving them.

Data supplied by Partners:

5.2.2. Some indicators in APACS may be based on data supplied by organisations other than the police, and arrangements for the collection and analysis of this data is yet to be determined. The technical consultation document provides further details on these indicators.

The Home Office suggested approach:

5.2.3. We envisage that the current arrangements for data collection will continue, but we will align with Communities and Local Government's (CLG) commitment that data is only collected once in central Government.

5.2.4. The Home Office preferred option for data verification for the police is via the development of a self-audit tool, overseen by the police authority. The APACS delivery team will need to work closely with partners to ensure that there is a similar level of confidence for the integrity of partner data.

5.2.5. This could be under a risk based approach (e.g. forces graded poor for previous audits), or could be applied for specific functions across all forces (e.g. on the basis of a rolling programme). Either approach could be supplemented with random "spot checks" of forces and authorities.

5.2.6. Where data needs to be captured for force-wide priorities, and potentially locally set priorities below the force level (e.g. within a particular CDRP), the Home Office invites views on the role of the centre in the moderation, assessment and use of this data.

Questions:

5.2.7. Stakeholders are invited to submit views on the following questions:

- A.1 What would be the best mechanism for reporting on indicators that will feature in APACS? How could we make sure that there is alignment with NIS and other potential frameworks?
- A.2 What contribution needs to be made by central government, data providers and others to ensure that there is full confidence in the quality of the data on which APACS assessments are based, whoever is responsible for providing it?

- A.3 What balance of self-audit and external scrutiny of data quality is most appropriate?
- A.4 Where indicators and targets are locally selected, is there a role for national moderation to ensure locally selected indicators are fit for purpose? If so, what should that be?
- A.5 At what level should “local” priorities be considered within APACS (e.g. force, local authority, CDRP, BCU, neighbourhood, etc)?

5.3. CONSIDERATION of performance

(B) How should quantitative and qualitative perspectives be aligned in assessment?

Background:

- 5.3.1. There is consensus that quantitative data and analysis do not tell the whole story on performance. Data can be extremely valuable, but it needs to be complemented by a more qualitative understanding of performance, particularly on those areas where it is difficult to measure performance using data comparisons alone. Qualitative judgements about performance in respect of policing and community safety are made primarily by HMIC and the Audit Commission, and these will be available for use in APACS performance assessments.
- 5.3.2. There are three main options on how this could be achieved:
- A methodology is developed that allows qualitative judgements to be turned into grades which can be treated in the same way as grades for quantitative SPIs (this means, for example, that grades based on qualitative judgements can be aggregated with grades based on quantitative data);
 - Grades based on quantitative data are presented alongside qualitative judgements so that these two components are communicated together, but are not treated as the same type of information; or
 - Assessments of policing and community safety do not include qualitative judgements at all, but these are communicated separately. This would still need to be fed into any decisions and actions flowing from performance assessments, such as identification of underperformance or the offer of support.
- 5.3.3. In addition – recognising that quantitative assessment can come from either national or local indicators – there is a need to consider how performance against both national and local indicators should be considered within APACS.

The Home Office suggested approach:

- 5.3.4. Either of the first two options set out in 5.3.2 could be used, but we do not think the third option is desirable because we recognise that this leaves some important gaps in the view of performance APACS can provide, and therefore reduces its robustness as a mechanism on which to base decisions and actions flowing from the framework.

Questions:

5.3.5. Stakeholders are invited to submit views on the following questions:

- B.1 What would be the best way to reflect qualitative judgements about performance in the assessments that APACS provides?
- B.2 How could qualitative information feed more generally into wider performance monitoring and support, the identification of good practice and provision of greater freedoms and flexibilities, alongside grades and data from SPIs?
- B.3 How are local priorities best reflected in assessments drawn from APACS? Should this include locally selected indicators identified for the police working alone or in partnership?

(C) How should data related to individual performance indicators be graded?

Background:

5.3.6. Assessments of performance require more than the data and value judgements on which they are based, as without providing analysis of them within a common context, it would be difficult for anyone to draw meaning from them. To aggregate performance across a range of indicators it is necessary to turn data and judgements that are collected in very different formats (e.g. numbers, percentages, qualitative judgements) into a common format, or 'grade'.

5.3.7. There are a number of considerations around grading. These include:

- The yardstick against which delivery is measured, which may be relative (over time, comparative to peers) or absolute (to a standard or target, whether nationally or locally set);
- The degree of differentiation between levels of performance, from a simple distinction between effective and ineffective, to defining many degrees of performance between the best and worst; and
- The way that performance levels are then described, such as a score or star rating, excellent / good / fair / poor or exceeds / meets / fails to meet a standard.

5.3.8. Currently, the yardstick that is used primarily is comparison to peers, with some use of direction of travel over time. Use of comparative performance has been one of the strengths of the current system and the technical basis for comparator groups has been revisited by a recent independent review of benchmarking (including the "most similar groups" methodology). It also fits in with the ambition of enabling local people to judge how well services are being delivered in their area as compared to other areas.

The Home Office suggested approach:

5.3.9. The Home Office sees considerable value in performance descriptors that are accessible to the public without further context or points of reference. It is open to considering alternatives to the current grading system of Excellent/Good/ Fair/Poor, both in terms of the range of differentiation this provides and how performance at different levels is described. But it is not attracted to points or star rating systems, since these require the audience to know what the best and worst available scores are before understanding what any particular score means in performance terms

Questions:

5.3.10. Stakeholders are invited to submit views on the following questions:

- C.1 Are there compelling reasons for reconsidering the existing approach of assessing performance comparative to peers (most similar areas) in respect of the performance of agencies and partnerships? If so, do these apply across the board or in respect of particular indicators or areas of performance?
- C.2 What approach to the scale and descriptors of performance would in your view best meet the needs of the public and practitioners?

(D) How should grades related to individual performance indicators be aggregated?

Background:

5.3.11. It is important to be able to provide a summary view of performance in a meaningful and structured way, rather than simply listing grades against different performance indicators, or simply supplying the data (or qualitative judgements) on which these grades are based.

5.3.12. This year's PPAF assessment aggregated grades based on SPIs within a number of domains to come to an overall domain score, and these domain scores were presented in the final report alongside a small number of summary grades based on qualitative judgements in respect of key areas inspected by HMIC.

5.3.13. Assuming we do not publish a list of assessments against each Performance Indicator, considerations for aggregating the assessment grades in APACS include:

- Sub-domain aggregation, for example aggregating the measures on re-offending or anti-social behaviour to come to one score for these areas which are currently assessed through a number of separate measures;
- Aggregation of SPI (and potentially other) grades within the five core domains to reach a domain grade for each of them;
- Aggregation of grades for SPIs to create a bespoke overall assessment on a particular theme (such as Neighbourhood Policing or drugs), or

- A single assessment grade representing either the direct aggregation of the assessment grades for all of the measures, or the aggregation of grades that have already been aggregated (perhaps at domain level or to create a bespoke overall grade).

The Home Office suggested approach:

5.3.14. Assessments (grades) for individual Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) need to be aggregated in some way into overarching grades. A further advantage to doing this is that where a dip in one area of performance is rationally explained by a rise in another (which might result from a deliberate choice about the best way to achieve an outcome), the aggregation process can “offset” these issues so that they do not indicate performance concerns that do not exist. This can be an important tool in managing the risk of perversities between different measures that could otherwise pull against each other. Aggregation is also important if grades based on qualitative information are being fed into an overall assessment or grade that also comprises quantitative elements.

Questions:

5.3.15. Stakeholders are invited to submit views on the following questions:

- D.1 What would be the most appropriate approach to aggregating grades to come to a summary view of performance?
- D.2 If an SPI is also selected as a local priority, should the aggregation process for that indicator be any different? If so, how?

5.4. COMMUNICATION of assessments to practitioners and the public

(E) How do stakeholders think that performance data and assessments can most effectively serve these purposes? Are there any others worth pursuing? What are the key risks that need to be managed, and how can this best be done, to ensure that practitioners and the public can secure the full benefits from performance assessment?

Background

5.4.1. There are several ways that performance assessments (and indeed the data underpinning them) can be used. These include:

- Communicating performance information to the public;
- Communicating performance information to practitioners and local partners;
- Facilitating oversight of delivery against relevant PSA objectives, nationally, regionally and locally;

- Enabling local and central monitoring and risk assessment of overall performance on policing and community safety;
- Helping forces and police authorities to identify where there is scope for improvements in value for money;
- Facilitating the identification of good practice;
- Highlighting high performers, (allowing this to be recognised, and potentially, providing a basis to offer greater freedom and flexibility), and
- Supporting areas to improve where there is underperformance.

5.4.2. Considerations for the remaining potential future uses of performance assessments are mainly around:

- The respective roles and responsibilities of various partners in undertaking them (who does what);
- The aspects of performance to which these assessment uses relate (for example overall performance, national priorities contained within PSAs, local priorities for improvement within LAAs);
- The partners, agencies or areas to which these potential assessment uses should relate, including applicability in Wales; and
- The links to published assessments.

Home Office suggested approach:

5.4.3. Building on the lessons learned from experience to date, the Home Office proposes an approach in which:

- A two-way process of sharing information is encouraged, to provide the public with visibility on the quality of service provided, and so that partners can see whether they are delivering as well as they could be;
- Local partners have better access to performance data, analysis and assessments and can take the lead in managing and improving (where necessary) their own performance;
- Central review focuses on the balance of overall performance by exception, or performance on PSA objectives, as translated into local priorities through the LAA process;
- Central support is focused on enabling factors (such as effective partnership working) or national priorities for delivery (such as the most serious violence);
- Central review and support relates to police forces and partnerships across England and Wales (but recognises differences in the delivery structures in Wales);
- There should be more freedom for high performers to innovate to deliver further performance improvement;

- Areas where there are performance concerns should own and lead performance improvement, with a clear plan for improvement (including agreed milestones) but with scope for escalation of interventions if performance does not improve;
- Central support resources from the Home Office are available to local partners, and access to them will be prioritised according to greatest risk;
- Support resources will be deployed in a co-ordinated way, with the knowledge and / or involvement of Government Offices, Regional Efficiency and Improvement Partnerships and other regulators (including the Audit Commission CAA lead) as appropriate;
- The Government can meet the commitment given in October to make local information on crime available regularly. Separate work is underway with stakeholders and practitioners to deliver this commitment by July 2008, which will be informed by the results of this consultation; and
- The performance assessments used by practitioners and provided for the public should be based on the same information.

Questions:

5.4.4. Stakeholders are invited to submit views on the following questions:

- E.1 Are there any other ways that performance assessments should be used?
- E.2 Does the Home Office approach represent the right balance of roles and responsibilities in reviewing and supporting performance?
- E.3 Is the scope of performance review and support suggested right?
- E.4 Do police forces and authorities and community safety partnerships represent the right level at which to monitor, assess and support performance? Are there other partnerships or organisations on which we should focus (e.g. Local Strategic Partnerships)?
- E.5 What flexibility can be offered to high performing areas and on what basis should these be made available? (e.g. high performance in the round or other criteria).
- E.6 Is voluntary access to support, prioritised according to risk, the most effective approach to deploying support resources?
- E.7 What will the proposed approach need to focus on to ensure adequate co-ordination of support to local areas?

(F) In what ways, and how regularly, should performance assessments be communicated to practitioners and the public?

Background:

5.4.5. To facilitate a shared understanding of performance, performance assessments need to be communicated between interested parties. Interested parties for policing and community safety include the general public, local delivery partners, Government Offices and other regional stakeholders (such as Regional Efficiency and Improvement Partnerships), central government and regulatory bodies.

5.4.6. Considerations around the communication of APACS assessments include:

- Whose and what performance the communication relates to;
- When and how often it gets communicated;
- Who is responsible for issuing the communication; and,
- The means by which it is communicated.

5.4.7. Currently, PPAF is the only national policing performance framework that produces public facing performance reports¹², and it relates primarily to the single agency performance of the police. It communicates assessments at force level only. It is produced annually, usually within six months of the end of the financial year, in hard copy and on the Home Office web-site. It does generate media interest and commentary and has certainly enabled more debate about policing performance, but it is recognised as having some weaknesses. These include:

- The fact that police force level assessments are not meaningful enough to the general public;
- The view that assessments have been quite technical and therefore not as accessible to the public as inspection assessments in other sectors (e.g. ranking a school as 'good' or 'outstanding', star ratings for local authorities, etc); and,
- That a publication of annual performance six months after the end of the year comes too late.

The Home Office suggested approach:

5.4.8. Building on this, the Home Office proposes that:

- Partnership performance assessments, as well as assessments of police forces, should be communicated to the general public as well as practitioners;

¹² For local managers (in the Police, but also in local partnerships), regular performance data and analysis has been made available through the iQuanta online tool, and many practitioners have found this helpful in monitoring and managing their day to day business. This enables performance analysis at police force, Basic Command Unit and CDRP levels.

- Publication of assessments should be undertaken on a more regular basis; and
- Local partnerships and practitioners should play a more active role in communicating performance assessment information to the local community, rather than achieving this only or mainly through nationally led communications.

Questions:

5.4.9. Stakeholders are invited to submit views on the following questions:

- F.1 How can APACS assessments best be communicated to the public in respect of community safety partnerships and individual police forces to build confidence and responsiveness and support appropriate challenge? Is there a need for differing approaches in England and Wales?
- F.2 Should assessments of other partnerships also be publicly communicated, for example Drug Action Team (DAT) performance?
- F.3 Who is best placed to lead on communicating effectively on performance information with (a) the public (b) practitioners? If there is scope in your view for local partnerships and practitioners to play a more active role on (a), on what issues – presentation, content, frequency, etc – should there be specified minimum standards nationally to secure appropriate consistency and clarity?
- F.4 What aspects of performance should be communicated? Should they be overall (summary) assessments, assessments of particular domains or themes within that overview, and / or more detailed assessments against specific indicators?
- F.5 Should communications include the data (or judgements) on which assessments are based?
- F.6 Should communications contain assessments based on qualitative judgements and quantitative data?
- F.7 Should local priorities / indicators be communicated in the same way as national ones? If not, how and why should they be communicated differently?
- F.8 What is the right balance between “traditional”, hard copy publication of information, and e-mail and other communications opportunities offered by the new media? What are the risks and benefits of these various approaches in strengthening access for all citizens, including hard-to-reach groups? What lessons can be learnt from existing good practice in policing, local government, other public services and the private sector?
- F.9 What needs to be done to increase the flow of useful, real time performance information to the public? What is most useful annually? What is most useful at more frequent intervals?
- F.10 Does iQuanta continue to represent the best platform for sharing assessments, data and analysis with practitioners on their performance?

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This section sets out the timeline for the development of APACS and how we will act on the responses received to this consultation.

6.1. CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1. This consultation provides the broad context within which future performance arrangements will operate, and the agreed high level principles, vision and aims that will guide how they work. It seeks to open a genuine debate about the best systems, processes and methodologies to underpin that high level framework, and of course, if stakeholders have other proposals or wider comments about the best way of achieving our future vision for performance, they are encouraged to submit these.
- 6.1.2. The technical consultation on the Statutory Performance Indicators and the domain structure for the APACS framework in 2008-09 is being launched simultaneously with this consultation, and will run for six rather than twelve weeks. Respondents are encouraged to read and feed in comments on the details within that technical consultation, and also to consider engaging with other related consultations and guidance issued recently, as described in the Introduction.

6.2. NEXT STEPS

- 6.2.1. The technical consultation sets out in more detail the next steps on finalising the APACS indicators and structure ready for its introduction from April 2008. Responses to the technical consultation (due to be submitted by Friday 18 January 2008) will be collated and summarised, and then discussed with the Steering Group overseeing the introduction of APACS. Following this consideration, final recommendations on the indicators for 2008-09 will be submitted to Ministers and consultation responses will feature within this advice. Shortly thereafter, regulations containing the final SPIs will be laid in Parliament and finalised technical notes on the SPIs will be made available to practitioners and stakeholders.
- 6.2.2. In terms of the more strategic issues around how APACS works, aligns with other performance frameworks and is used within our wider performance approach, responses to this consultation (due in by Friday 29 February 2008) will be used to inform proposals for the future of our performance arrangements which will be set out within the forthcoming Green Paper on policing in Spring 2008. We recognise the importance of giving early notice of changes to the way that we manage and support performance in future, and clarity to practitioners and stakeholders about what any such changes would mean for them in practice. We are committed to continuing to work in collaboration with stakeholders as we reflect on and take forward the feedback from the consultation and finalise proposals for the future processes and methodologies for performance.

ANNEX

CONSULTEES

The development of APACS has benefited greatly from discussion with, and input from, a wide ranging steering group of key stakeholders. The group includes representatives of the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Association of Police Authorities (APA), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Local Government Association (LGA), the Audit Commission, the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), HM Treasury, the Ministry of Justice, the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit, the Metropolitan Police Service, the Metropolitan Police Authority, the Welsh Assembly Government and regional Government Offices.

APACS will continue to be developed in close consultation with these Steering Group members.

Building on the current and continuing input of the Steering Group, the consultation aims to get a wider and more comprehensive view from delivery partners, and thus is primarily targeted at the following:

Police Service

(via Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Superintendents Association and Police Federation)

Police Authorities

(via Association of Police Authorities (APA))

Local authorities

Other local partners

(including DATs, LCJBs, etc)

The consultation will be publicly available on the Home Office website, and views from other interested groups and members of the public are welcome.