

# Scientific Support Services in the Police Service of Northern Ireland

Second follow-up review of the  
inspection recommendations

May 2008



---



# Scientific Support Services in the Police Service of Northern Ireland

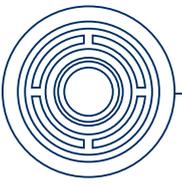
**Second follow-up review of the  
inspection recommendations**

**May 2008**



**Criminal Justice Inspection  
Northern Ireland**  
*a better justice system for all*







# Contents

List of abbreviations	iv
Foreword	v
<b>Section 1: Follow-Up Review</b>	<b>1</b>
Chapter 1 Introduction	3
Chapter 2 Progress on recommendations	5
Chapter 3 Conclusion	15
<b>Section 2: Appendices</b>	<b>17</b>
Appendix 1 Most Similar Force Group	18
Appendix 2 Methodology	19
Appendix 3 PSNI Action Plan	20





## List of abbreviations

<b>ACC</b>	Assistant Chief Constable
<b>ACPO</b>	Association of Chief Police Officers
<b>CJ</b>	Criminal Justice
<b>CJI</b>	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
<b>CSI</b>	Crime Scene Investigator
<b>DCU</b>	District Command Unit
<b>DNA</b>	Deoxyribonucleic acid
<b>FSNI</b>	Forensic Science Northern Ireland
<b>GMP</b>	Greater Manchester Police
<b>HMIC</b>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
<b>ICIS</b>	Integrated Criminal Information System
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>LINKS</b>	Project integrating police staff terms/conditions
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MSF</b>	Most Similar Force
<b>Niche RMS</b>	Records Management System
<b>NIO</b>	Northern Ireland Office
<b>NPIA</b>	National Police Improvement Agency
<b>PCSI</b>	Principal Crime Scene Investigator
<b>PSNI</b>	Police Service of Northern Ireland
<b>SLA</b>	Service Level Agreement
<b>SPD</b>	State Pathologist's Department
<b>SSM</b>	Scientific Support Manager

---



## Foreword

In December 2005, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) published their joint report *A Review of Scientific Support Services in the Police Service of Northern Ireland*.

The report made 25 recommendations, which were designed to improve the performance of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in terms of how its scientific support function was supporting crime investigation and detection. The PSNI accepted all but one of the Inspectors' recommendations. The report contained an action plan, supplied by the PSNI, which set out the means by which the 'accepted' recommendations would be implemented.

The aims of the review process were to:

- conduct a staged review of the implementation of the recommendations contained within the original report; and
- provide regular update reports for the Chief Constable of the PSNI.

The first review took place during the spring of 2007 with a report published in August of that year. At that time, eight of the recommendations had been implemented to the point the Inspectors considered it appropriate to 'sign them off'.

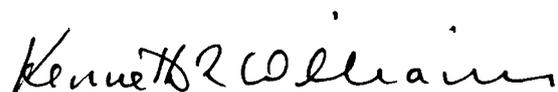
This revisit was focused on the 17 outstanding recommendations from the original 2005 report. Inspectors are able to sign off an additional five recommendations and transfer two recommendations to a long-term action plan as these are now outside the control of the PSNI. The issues around these two recommendations will also be covered by the forthcoming CJI inspection of *Forensic Science Northern Ireland*. A recommendation on Road Traffic Collision investigation will be covered by a separate report on *Roads Policing*.

Significant progress has been made against the remaining nine recommendations. We are confident that the Police Service will continue to progress the full implementation of all the recommendations and therefore propose to undertake a follow-up review in 12 months.

Inspectors are pleased that the PSNI has developed an Action Plan to address the outstanding issues. This Action Plan is attached as an appendix to this report.



**Kit Chivers**  
Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice  
in Northern Ireland  
May 2008



**Ken Williams CVO, CBE, QPM, BA**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary  
Northern Region & Northern Ireland



Section



# Follow-Up Review



# Introduction

This report sets out the findings of the Inspectors' second review since implementation of the recommendations commenced. It uses a traffic light grading system, as follows, to assess progress against each of the recommendations made in the original report.

## *Criteria for traffic light grading – PSNI implementation plan*

<b>Colour</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Future Action</b>
<b>GREEN</b>	<i>Recommendation implemented in full and 'signed off.'</i>	<i>No further inspection by the Inspectors. In-Service monitoring required.</i>
<b>AMBER</b>	<i>Evidence of progress towards implementation apparent. Further development required.</i>	<i>Medium priority for inspection. Continued in-Service development required.</i>
<b>RED</b>	<i>Limited or no evidence of progress towards implementation.</i>	<i>High priority for inspection. Significant in-Service development required.</i>

The use of scientific evidence to support crime investigation and detection can be broken down fairly simplistically into a three-stage process:

- evidence recovery from the crime scene;
- development and turn round using specialist processes e.g. fingerprint and DNA identification of suspects; and
- conversion of suspect identification into detected or cleared crime.



The first two stages of this process are the direct responsibility of the Scientific Support branch working either independently or with 'key' partners such as Forensic Science Northern Ireland (FSNI). From the outset, the Inspectors wish to acknowledge the progress that has been made by these 'key' players, in particular the Scientific Support branch of the PSNI, in terms of improving performance since the original inspection activity was undertaken in 2005.

A 'snapshot' of performance covering the period October 2006 – September 2007 shows how the performance of the PSNI against its Most Similar Force (MSF) group compares<sup>1</sup> (see Appendix 1).

The returns reveal that in terms of both the percentage of fingerprints and DNA taken at the scene, the Service is first out of six, but its performance at the identification stage has slipped below the MSF average for both areas.

Despite significant improvements at Stage 3 of the process, which Inspectors attribute to the introduction of dedicated 'converter' staff within the new District Command Unit (DCU) structure, the PSNI conversion rates remain well below the MSF average.

Whilst acknowledging the progress made, Inspectors consider that significant scope continues to exist for further improvements in performance (particularly at Stage 3) which is primarily a matter for the eight operational DCU commanders.

### **Forensic comparison to MSF group October 2006 - September 2007**

	Fingerprints			DNA		
	% Fingerprint taken at scene	% Identifications	% Conversions to detections	% DNA taken at scene	% Identifications	% Conversions to detections
Nottinghamshire	29	25	40	8	32	61
GMP	38	21	67	15	38	85
Northumbria	26	36	120	15	38	161
West Yorkshire	19	29	110	9	26	158
West Midlands	27	22	85	12	44	101
PSNI	42	22	42	15	28	66
<i>Average</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>105</i>

(N.B. conversion rates quoted include offences taken into consideration)

The methodology followed to undertake the review is set out at Appendix 2.

<sup>1</sup> During 2006, the Police Standards Unit developed a Most Similar Force group to compare the performance of the PSNI against peer forces in England and Wales. The comparator forces are Nottinghamshire, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester (GMP), Northumbria and West Midlands.

## Progress on recommendations

### Recommendation 3

**PSNI should set up a properly resourced unit for fatal and serious vehicle crashes and collisions, to reflect the service that currently exists in Great Britain, i.e. a dedicated crash and collision investigation unit ....a sufficient number of roads policing staff should be adequately trained in collision investigation, commensurate with training provided in England and Wales and which follows the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) manual of road death investigation.**

**Status: AMBER**

Whilst PSNI initially rejected this recommendation, it is now subject to review as part of a separate joint inspection of *Roads Policing* undertaken by HMIC/CJI. PSNI are developing an action plan in response to this recommendation as part of its response to the *Roads Policing* report. Progress on implementation will now pass to that inspection and subsequent follow-up review.

### Recommendation 5

**PSNI, in co-operation with FSNI, should develop and deliver a bespoke forensic science training package. Comprehensive training for all operational staff should be improved as a matter of priority.**

**Status: AMBER**

Since the initial review in 2007, the PSNI has acknowledged that it needed to reassess its commitment to ensuring the forensic awareness of front line officers is raised.

The PSNI has now purchased and is using an 'adapted' training package from the Forensic Science Service in England and Wales to educate staff. It has also recently introduced two forensic training officers at the PSNI College, Garnerville.

Student officers receive a five-day module during their initial phase of training designed to provide them with basic awareness of forensic requirements when attending crime scenes. Feedback from a small number of student officers confirmed their perspective that this training was valuable and equipped them with a basic appreciation of their duties and responsibilities to protect the forensic integrity of crime scenes.



It is also clear that Crime Scene Investigators (CSIs) within some DCUs are now being tasked to deliver forensic awareness training to uniformed personnel; however, this approach is not being applied corporately across the eight 'new' DCUs. Inspectors continue to have concerns about the levels of forensic awareness of some 'middle service' operational police officers. They contend it is here that the skills and expertise of CSIs should be focused to address any perceived or apparent weaknesses.

Evidence was obtained that the FSNI is participating in joint forensic training and these arrangements have been formalised within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the two agencies. Most of this training is directed toward junior officers with just over 10% aimed at senior detective officers involved in the investigation of major and serious crime.

Despite these commitments and the progress being made, Inspectors conclude that this is an area which still requires attention before it is progressed to the point where it can be 'signed off' as implemented.

## Recommendation 6

**An urgent review should be carried out of all critical policies. This should result in the production of a suite of comprehensive corporate policies readily available via the Service intranet site, which ensures that procedures are up to date and staff are fully aware of what is expected of them and mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance. The areas in need of immediate attention are:**

- 6.1 Greater awareness of and compliance with existing policies on the management and co-ordination of crime scenes including who has primacy for forensic science, attendance and roles of attending specialists;**
- 6.2 Fatal and serious vehicle crashes and collision investigation;**
- 6.3 Role and authority of the Submissions Unit including clear guidance on submission priorities;**
- 6.4 Forensic science training and awareness for all operational staff;**
- 6.5 Storage, retention and management of all property (including vehicles); and**
- 6.6 Weeding and destruction of property.**

**Status: GREEN**

Confirmation was received that all 'critical' policies have been reviewed and are available globally across the Service's intranet site.



The onus is placed on individual officers and staff to familiarise themselves with the requirements of these policies.

Inspectors acknowledge the efforts that the PSNI has made to not only up-date these policies, but to circulate them for the information of staff.

Policy in relation to Road Traffic Collision investigation will be assessed as part of the *Roads Policing* inspection.

### Recommendation 7

**The proposed introduction of hard charging for all products and services by FSNI provides an opportunity for PSNI to identify and develop policies and processes to achieve greater accountability in terms of submissions, control and finances.**

**Status: Transfer to long-term Action Plan**

At the time of the original inspection, Inspectors were told that the introduction of hard charging was imminent and Inspectors were keen that PSNI would identify and develop policies and processes to improve financial accountability. Inspectors accept that progress against this recommendation is dependent on the supply of appropriate costings from FSNI and will not be achieved until after 2009. It is proposed that the costing of services and products by FSNI will be covered in the forthcoming inspection of FSNI.

As progress against this recommendation sits outside the control of the PSNI, it is proposed that the issue should be transferred to a long-term action plan and will not be covered by the next follow-up review.





### Recommendation 8

**The pilot sites for devolved forensic science budgets should be fully evaluated in light of the need to improve accountability for spend. It is also essential that the now-established Serious and Volume Crimes User Groups fully embrace their monitoring roles to ensure that non-performance issues under the SLA are actioned.**

**Status: A Transfer to long-term Action Plan**

**Status: B GREEN**

Whilst the 'new' DCU structure has been implemented, the anticipated devolvement of forensic budgets has so far, not taken place and cannot do so until FSNI product prices are clearly established. This part of the recommendation will therefore be transferred to the long-term action plan.

Part B of the recommendation can be 'signed off' as Inspectors were informed that monitoring on non-performance does take place.

### Recommendation 9

**Scientific Support staff should be actively involved in raising the standard of accommodation to ensure that their needs are met in the long-term.**

**Status: AMBER**

The Inspectors were made aware of proposals to relocate the fingerprint bureau and the mapping unit from PSNI HQ to new accommodation at Knocknagoney. The potential target date, which is cost dependent, is 2009.

Arrangements are well advanced to co-locate the photography unit (currently based at Gough Barracks, Armagh) within the Mahon Road, Portadown site, close to the CSI base at that location.

Whilst acknowledging the developments being made, Inspectors conclude that this recommendation remains as 'work in progress.' The impact of the current Comprehensive Spending Review settlement on capital spend is unclear at this stage.



### Recommendation 10

**Matters concerning Scientific Support staff need to be acknowledged and resolved as a matter of priority either directly with the Scientific Support Manger (SSM), through a CSI working group, or alternatively via the Serious and Volume Crime User Groups.**

**Status: AMBER**

As indicated in their initial revisit report, the Inspectors acknowledge that this recommendation links directly to Recommendation 17 (staff terms and conditions) and the LINKS project.

A 'new' police staff head of CSIs and the submissions unit has recently been appointed. He is a former Principal Crime Scene Investigator (PCSI) and is fully aware of the issues pertaining to staff terms and conditions as well as other issues affecting staff performance, such as the performance management regime and the statistical information used to support it.

His intention is to raise these issues directly with focus groups of staff and to improve communication flows.

Cold calls at operational CSI bases confirmed variances in working arrangements and levels of staff morale. In addition, focus groups with staff also confirmed that two of the four PCSI posts are currently held by CSIs who are 'acting' in that capacity. Whilst Inspectors recognise the necessity, on occasions, of having staff perform roles with greater levels of responsibility, they are concerned that extended periods of time in such a situation can impose unacceptable

pressures on staff who have not been properly prepared. They urge the Service to seek rapid resolution to this situation.

The conclusion of the Inspectors is that whilst progress has been made, this recommendation remains 'live' and cannot be signed off.

### Recommendation 11

**PSNI needs to ensure that there is a 'return on investment' on initiatives such as fingerprint training, with performance outputs being monitored.**

**Status: GREEN**

The 'new' equipment, *Return to Scene (R2S)* that had recently been purchased at the time of the initial review is now being used widely to support crime scene management.

Whilst Inspectors understand that its deployment may not be in line with any form of Service policy (which they suggest should be developed), nonetheless they acknowledge that the requirements of this recommendation have been achieved and it can therefore be signed off.





### Recommendation 12

**PSNI should work with key stakeholders, particularly FSNI, to determine what databases are required, where they should be located and how access can be managed.**

**Status: AMBER**

The PSNI is committed to integrating its fingerprint database with those held on *Ident1* (United Kingdom fingerprint database). A mechanism has been proposed through which fingerprints can be shared between the two systems which minimises cost but provides the requisite functionality.

Some concerns exist around the funding available via the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), however a full scoping exercise has been completed and progress is taking place under a group chaired by the ACC (Rural).

The Inspectors acknowledge the progress made but conclude that this recommendation remains 'live' and should continue to be graded as amber.

### Recommendation 14

**A formal protocol should be agreed between the State Pathologist's Department and PSNI.**

**Status: GREEN**

The Inspectors acknowledge that progress on this recommendation rests with the State Pathologist's Department and with the PSNI. Inspectors have been informed by both parties that an agreement has been reached with formal ratification due.



### Recommendation 17

**A review of the out-of-hours service and geographical coverage should be conducted. The review should include remuneration and terms and conditions of employment for Scientific Support staff.**

**Status: GREEN**

The Inspectors are pleased to note that the LINKS project has concluded that the CSI function should be re-graded as a 'scientific' grade and therefore attract higher levels of remuneration. This has been accepted by the NIO but is currently awaiting final approval pending the decision of the Pensions Branch (following actuarial advice from the Government Service).

It was very clear that this remains an area of great frustration for CSIs and though it is appreciated that matters currently sit outside the control of the Service, they urge that once the awaited advice has been received, staff are informed of the decision as soon as is practicable.

The Inspectors are aware that a significant part of the future terms and conditions of CSIs will relate to their professional development and succession planning. They are pleased to note that the LINKS team, and senior managers within the Scientific Support branch, are collaborating to develop such a plan.

### Recommendation 18

**Improved communication should be established between the SSM and Scientific Support staff including more effective line management arrangements.**

**Status: AMBER**

CSIs continue to confirm that communication, particularly with senior managers, remains an issue of concern. With the appointment of the new police staff head of CSIs and submissions unit, many of the CSIs interviewed anticipate that the issues affecting them will be addressed more directly. An interview with the newly appointed head of unit confirmed that he is well sighted on the significant issues and has plans on how matters of concern can be addressed.

Inspectors who visited an operational station where the CSIs and CID officers were co-located within the same office, were struck by the confirmation that these arrangements are particularly effective, and result in increased communication and better productivity. These arrangements are not, however, being applied universally across the Service.

Inspectors understand that under these arrangements, whilst the CSIs remain as 'centrally owned' staff, their closer alignment to both investigators and DCU managers provides for improved communication and more effective and efficient working. They urge both DCU commanders and senior managers within the Scientific Support branch of Crime Operations department to work more closely together to achieve this form of





staff integration, where flexibility of operational accommodation allows.

Inspectors are looking for a clearer indication of corporate commitment before this recommendation can be signed off.

#### Recommendation 19

**Senior branch managers should reassess the physical location of some CSI bases, in consultation with the relevant DCU commanders, via the Volume Crime User Group, to deliver more effective and efficient CSI working across the Police Service as a whole.**

**Status: AMBER**

The Inspectors acknowledge that some relocation of CSI bases has occurred since their last revisit, following the re-structuring of the Service from 29 to eight DCUs.

As the immediately foregoing comment to Recommendation 18 confirms, distinct advantages have accrued where CSIs and investigators are co-located.

The linkages to Recommendation 9 also remain and currently the assessment of the Inspectors is that this recommendation is still 'live', though heavily dependent on the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

#### Recommendation 20

**Continued monitoring and action on quality control and continuity of evidence issues is necessary to ensure that trends and patterns within the Police Service are identified and actioned.**

**Status: AMBER**

Feedback from the FSNI confirms concern about the quality of the packaging of some exhibits being submitted for scientific examination by the PSNI during the three month period November 2007- January 2008.

It was apparent that consistent quality control was not taking place within the PSNI prior to exhibits being sent to the laboratory. Non-compliance certificates were then being issued by the laboratory, whether for minor clerical issues or more significant concerns.

Inspectors are pleased to note that the critical issue of quality control of the packaging of exhibits has been acknowledged by the PSNI, and steps have already been introduced which have proved effective and reduced the number of non-compliances.

Following the introduction of the Niche-based property system, the Service is currently examining how this technology, together with DCU property officers, can be utilised to provide an additional internal quality filter for exhibits before they are forwarded to the FSNI. Inspectors view this approach as important and urge the Service to introduce a system that is applied **corporately** across the eight DCUs and other operational units.



They are also aware the head of CSIs and the submission unit is alert to these issues. They expect to find greatly improved compliance rates for the submission of exhibits to the laboratory at the time of their next revisit.

The Inspectors conclude that this recommendation links directly to Recommendation 23 and that additional work is needed before both can be 'signed off'.

#### Recommendation 21

**When the single point of contact is introduced in FSNI, it is important that this information and the anticipated benefit is circulated within the Police Service.**

**Status: GREEN**

This recommendation has been overtaken by developments within the FSNI which has introduced, as part of its development plan, an Operational Support Team (OST) that not only provides a single point of contact for PSNI, but also delivers improved customer service. Relevant key staff within the PSNI are aware of the development.

Whilst the planned inspection of FSNI later in 2008 will specifically revisit this issue to assess its impact, Inspectors conclude that the requirements of this recommendation have been met. They consider it suitable for sign off at this time.

#### Recommendation 23

**Exhibits and samples should be correctly packaged and labelled as any errors will result in delays.**

**Status: AMBER**

This recommendation links directly to Recommendation 20 and remains 'work in progress.'

#### Recommendation 24

**A common numbering and identification system, in barcode format and easily scanned, should be agreed and introduced by both PSNI and FSNI.**

**Status: AMBER**

The FSNI has been briefed on the benefits and desire of the PSNI to introduce a single bar coding system for use by both organisations, however, it is FSNI's position at present that it intends to maintain its own internal bar coding system for exhibit management purposes which will be separate and additional to that of the PSNI.

The early adoption of a single approach will be of benefit to both organisations. They are currently working together to assess the implications of moving towards one system.

This remains 'work in progress'.





## Conclusion

Inspectors acknowledge the good progress that has been made since their initial review in 2007.

Five additional recommendations can be signed off, and the recommendation on establishing a specialist crash and collision investigation unit has now been accepted by the Service and will be monitored via the *Roads Policing* Inspection/Follow-Up Review.

A further two recommendations are dependent on actions within the FSNI and can therefore be transferred to a longer term action plan. There are now nine outstanding recommendations, most of which have progressed significantly over the past three years.

Inspectors are assured that the PSNI regard Scientific Support Services as critical to the investigation and detection of crime and that further progress will be made in relation to the outstanding recommendations. It is proposed that a further follow-up review by HMIC/CJI should take place 12 months after publication of this report.

The main areas for attention by the Service are:

- Improving the management of property so that quality control and continuity of evidence is of a consistently high corporate standard;
- Strengthening the relationship with FSNI to deliver a more effective and efficient service to the criminal justice system;
- Developing a more corporate approach to training;
- Enhancing communication processes within the various scientific support units and addressing the root causes of staff concerns as expressed to Inspectors; and
- Ensuring that the needs of Scientific Support are considered and delivered by the Comprehensive Spending Review settlement.



Section



# Appendices



## Appendix 1 Most Similar Force Group

During 2006, the Police Standards Unit developed a most similar force group (MSF) to compare the operational performance of the PSNI against 'similar' police forces in England and Wales. The MSF group comprises:

- Nottinghamshire Police
- West Yorkshire Police
- Greater Manchester Police
- Northumbria Police
- West Midlands Police



## Appendix 2 Methodology

This revisit was conducted between 4–6 February 2008 by four members of staff representing the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice Inspection for Northern Ireland (CJI) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). Verbal feedback on findings was subsequently provided to the ACC (Crime Operations) and the Service's Scientific Support Manager.

The methodology used comprised the following key stages:

### **Stage 1 – Understand the context**

A desktop review of key PSNI papers relating to the implementation of the recommendations was conducted.

### **Stage 2 – Brief the Service**

The ACC (Crime Operations) was briefed concerning the scope and focus of the inspection.

### **Stage 3 – Carry out reality checks**

The report's findings are drawn from examination of documentation and extensive interviews with staff from different specialisms within the Scientific Support branch, regional and headquarters staff within the PSNI, together with additional interviews with 'key' external stakeholders.

During the course of their fieldwork, Inspectors undertook interviews, discussions, meetings and visits to gather evidence to support findings within the inspection.

### **Stage 4 – Publish a report**

The Inspectors provided the Chief Constable with a draft report and an opportunity to comment further on matters of factual accuracy and content. This report is published on the website of CJI ([www.cjini.org](http://www.cjini.org)).



## Appendix 3 PSNI Action Plan

Rec.	Detail	Outstanding issue	Comment	Action	Lead	Completion date
3	PSNI should set up a properly resourced unit for fatal and serious vehicle crashes and collisions, to reflect the service that currently exists in Great Britain, i.e. a dedicated crash and collision investigation unit ...a sufficient number of roads policing staff should be adequately trained in collision investigation, commensurate with training provided in England and Wales and which follows the ACPO manual of road death investigation.	Full Recommendation.	The establishment of a Collision Investigation Unit is being incorporated into the PSNI Action Plan which will be published alongside the forthcoming inspection of <i>Roads Policing</i> .	Roads Policing to develop implementation plan.	Roads Policing.	Please refer to the PSNI Action Plan contained in the forthcoming <i>Roads Policing</i> Inspection Report.
5	PSNI, in co-operation with FSNI, should develop and deliver a bespoke forensic science training package. Comprehensive training for all operational staff should be improved as a matter of priority.	A corporate approach to forensic training needs to be developed. Concerns expressed regarding the forensic awareness of middle service operational police officers.	Forensic trainers have been appointed to the Police College and are well placed to develop an appropriate course. Enhanced awareness of packaging and documentation is a key issue in regards to Recommendations 20 & 23	Forensic trainers to develop forensic awareness pack for volume crime scenes based on National Occupational Standards. All districts to undertake delivery through schools of instruction to all response officers within 12 months.	Police College.  District Commanders.	June 2008.  June 2009.
9	Scientific Support staff should be actively involved in raising the standard of accommodation to ensure that their needs are met in the long term.	Inspectors acknowledge proposals for relocation of Fingerprint Bureau and Mapping to Knocknagoney, and Photography (Gough) to Mahon Road. View as a work in progress. Links also to Recommendation 18 which acknowledges the advantages of co-location of CSI with Districts.	It is now unlikely that any projects other than the relocation of Photography at Gough will be progressed within the next two years.	Head of CSI to advise DCU of accommodation requirements for those at CSI who would be based within Districts. Districts to consider options for co-location with converter teams and advise accordingly.	Head of CSI.  District Commanders.	May 2008.  June 2008.

Rec.	Detail	Outstanding issue	Comment	Action	Lead	Completion date
10	Matters concerning Scientific Support staff need to be acknowledged and resolved as a matter of priority either directly by the SSM, through a CSI working group, or alternatively via the Serious and Volume Crime User Groups.	Inspectors acknowledge this Recommendation links directly to Recommendation 17 (staff terms and conditions) and the LINKS project. Inspectors urge the Service to seek a rapid resolution to the requirement for staff to act up to cover PCSI vacancies.	All supervisory positions are now filled with substantive PCSI. The Crime Scene Manager and SCRT posts have also been filled. There will always remain a requirement to fill short-term absences, such as those which have resulted via maternity/ paternity, through an acting-up process.	Agreement to appointment additional CSI supervisors. Progress appointment through HR. Agreement with LINKS on progressing the CSI review.	ACC Crime Operations.	June 2008.
12	PSNI should work with key stakeholders, particularly FSNI, to determine what databases are required, where they should be located, and how access can be managed.	Establishing exchange mechanisms with <i>Ident 1</i> is the underlying issue.	NPIA have now moved to be supportive of a two-phased approach. The issue may now be one of finance within PSNI.  April 08 - A project has been set up between PSNI & NIPA the purpose of which is to progress a viable interface between the two fingerprint systems. The required Business Case and project documentation is being tracked by the Project Board.	MoU to be signed between PSNI and NPIA agreeing to the proposed phased approach to linking the databases.  Business case to be prepared by ICS for approval by Programme Board.	Head of ICS/NPIA.  Head of ICS.  Work to commence this financial year and complete Q2 2009-10 financial year.	August 2008.  July 2008.
18	Improved communication should be established between the SSM and Scientific Support staff including more effective line management arrangements.	Inspectors urge DCU Commanders and senior managers within Scientific Support, to work more closely together to achieve alignment between CSI and Districts, where flexibility of operational accommodation allows. If an indication of corporate commitment can be evidenced in later visits, the Inspectors are confident this Recommendation can be progressed rapidly to sign off.		As per Recommendation 9.	Head of CSI/DCU Commanders.	May-June 2008.
19	Senior Branch managers should reassess the physical location of some CSI bases, in consultation with the relevant DCU Commanders, to deliver more effective and efficient CSI working across the Police Service as a whole.	Inspectors link this to Recommendations 9 and 18 and the closer physical location of CSI offices to the districts they serve.		As per Recommendations 9 and 18.	Head of CSI/DCU Commanders.	May-June 2008.



Rec.	Detail	Outstanding issue	Comment	Action	Lead	Completion date
20	Continued monitoring and action on quality control and continuity of evidence issues is necessary to ensure that trends and patterns within the Police Service are identified and actioned.	Inspectors expect to find greatly improved compliance rates for the submission of exhibits to the laboratory at the time of the next revisit. Urge the Service to introduce a corporate approach to quality control.	Significant progress has been made in improving the management of exhibits – Niche property, exhibits and property managers in place, non-compliances collated and notified to Departments and District. Satisfying the Recommendation will involve minimising non-compliant exhibits before they are referred to FSNI. This is a role for the Property and Exhibits managers.	The role of Property and Exhibits managers must be clarified to include Quality Assurance of exhibit packaging and documentation. Process must be developed for the management and notification of non-compliance at Property Manager level. SLA with Districts to be amended to include conformance with forensic submissions policies. Corporate training programme, including instruction on dealing with non-compliance to be delivered to all Property managers. Niche reports on non-compliances registered by Property Managers. All response officers must receive a standard forensic awareness training programme which highlights non-compliance issues. Submissions unit to issue reminders on conformance with packaging and documentation at the approvals stage.	District Commanders.  Head of C6.  Head of College.  Head of Forensic Submissions.	May 2008.  April 2008.  June 2008.  Completing by June 2009.  May 2008.
23	Exhibits and samples should be correctly packaged and labelled as any errors will result in delays.	Links directly to Recommendation 20.	As above.		Head of C6.	On-going.
24	A common numbering and identification system, in bar code format and easily scanned, should be agreed and introduced by both PSNI and FSNI.	Inspectors note the organisations working together and that redesign is required within FSNI documents and processes.	FSNI have apparently decided to maintain their existing bar code system for purposes of internal exhibit tracking. This will result in two bar codes being attached to PSNI exhibits.	Clarification required from FSNI and agreement on a common numbering system for reporting purposes.	Head of C6.	May 2008.





Copyright© Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland  
All rights reserved

First published in Northern Ireland in May 2008 by  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSPECTION NORTHERN IRELAND  
14 Great Victoria Street  
Belfast BT2 7BA  
[www.cjini.org](http://www.cjini.org)

Typeset in Gill Sans  
Designed by Page Setup