

ACPOS response to HMICS report on PNC inspections

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS) has today issued a report on inspections carried out in 2009 where they reviewed the Scottish police forces' compliance with the Police National Computer (PNC) Code of Practice.

The Police National Computer (PNC) is the primary police computer system in the UK. It holds details of people, vehicles, crimes and property that can be electronically accessed 24 hours a day by the police and other criminal justice agencies. It allows information to be shared through a secure network and is also electronically linked to a number of other databases used in public protection and law enforcement.

While all police forces in Scotland have direct access to PNC, the vast majority of transactions concerning the start and end results of criminal proceedings are processed through Scotland's own Criminal History System (CHS). Police input details into the CHS and criminal justice partners can then update cases with the outcome of proceedings. The information held in the CHS is transferred automatically to PNC.

In response to the release of the report, Assistant Chief Constable Gordon Samson (Central Scotland Police) who holds the CHS / PNC Portfolio within the ACPOS Criminal Justice Business Area said:

'We welcome the independent scrutiny of our processes in relation to the Police National Computer (PNC). The inspection which was carried out in 2009 identified a number of outstanding issues. Since the inspection we have enhanced the strategic management of PNC and each force has taken significant steps towards improving processes and the management of information. I am pleased to say that over 70% of the earlier recommendations have now been fully achieved with many others achieved in part.'

'We recognise that a number of processes could be more efficient, however we have found no evidence to suggest that there is any compromise to the safety of either the public or our police officers.'

'As the report states, the inspection did not examine the business processes of the Scottish Court Service (SCS) or the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). Both these partners play an integral part in the management of the Criminal History System (CHS) and PNC data. We have therefore instigated a further review with our criminal justice partners to extensively evaluate all existing practice and processes in order to ensure PNC is managed in line with the PNC code of practice.'

'We will continue, with renewed vigour, to engage very closely with SPSA, our criminal justice partners and Scottish Government to ensure PNC is managed in the most efficient and effective manner.'

Notes to Editors

For further information, please contact:

ACPOS Communications

0141 435 1240

07771 842 881

communications@acpos.pnn.police.uk