

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023



GD NUMBER 2023/0018



**ISLE OF MAN
CONSTABULARY**

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER



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31st March 2023

Minister Jane Poole-Willson
Chief Executive
Tromode DHA Headquarters
Tromode Road
Douglas
IM2 5PA

Dear Minister

I am required by the Police Act 1993 to provide an annual report on the performance of the Isle of Man Constabulary. The Act does not stipulate the way that the report should be constructed, but by convention it has become the case that it contains data and a narrative about all aspects of the Constabulary's performance. We have discussed the way that the report is structured and I know that you are keen to see that data, analysis and commentary and suitably balanced.

I had hoped that the 2022-23 report would look different in terms of how data was presented. I had anticipated that our use of Microsoft Power BI would make the report look and feel much more contemporary. Unfortunately, the absence on maternity leave of our lead analyst and the need to focus on considerable operational demands, notably in terms of dealing with serious and organised crime, meant that our use of the software has been delayed until the start of the 2023-24 year.

I thought that the 2021-22 report would be my last, as I was due to retire on 31st December 2022. However, the Department of Home Affairs had to put considerable effort into finding my successor, which led to me remaining in post until 31st March 2023, the last day of the reporting year. As a result, my very last act as Chief Constable has been to prepare this report.

It is a privilege to present my report for the 2022-23 year. The document is similar to that published last year, except that I have added two case studies to show the efforts that the Constabulary has made (and surely will continue to make) to tackle the threats posed by organised criminal groups. This is a supremely safe place, yet the threats to that safety posed by criminal groups from Liverpool and other parts of the United Kingdom are considerable. This issue and how it leads to the exploitation of young and vulnerable people is the most important one affecting public safety and, therefore, the quality of life enjoyed by the community. I am encouraged that a nascent community safety partnership is now in place. This body will make a difference by ensuring that the whole public service focuses on these threats.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

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In many ways the year was another average one – similar in many ways to 2021-22. The overall level of crime rose slightly (by 7 %), but much of this increase was a reflection on extra police activity, rather than on a change to the safety of the island. I also have concerns about our crime recording practices, which have led to an over-recording of crime. In the body of the report I explain how recording rules will change from 1st April 2023. More work to tackle drugs, more activity in the night-time economy, more focus on anti-social behaviour all lead the police to record more crime. There are a couple of important matters to note: the value of drugs seized rose from around £650,000 the year before to over £2 million this year, with the amount of cannabis seized rising by over 400%. Additionally, there was welcome decline in the number of serious assaults. All of this said and as I have written for several years, the effectiveness of a police service cannot simply be judged by the overall level of recorded crime. Our role is now about more than just criminal offending and law enforcement.

It is important to note that overall detection rate of 48% remains considerably higher than anywhere else in the British Isles. In broad terms, it is over four times higher than England and Wales and higher too than in the other Crown Dependencies. The detection rate for serious sexual violence is an important matter and one that rightly attracts considerable scrutiny. For the second year I have provided a narrative to show how far cases progress. This shows that a lack of support from the complainant is the biggest single reason why matters do not reach court. There are very many reasons why people speak to the police, but do not subsequently want a case to reach court. What is important, though, is that people come forward and then get the support that they need. It is disappointing that project to open a Sexual Assault Referral Centre is still running, more than seven years after discussions were first held.

If tackling the threats posed by organised criminal groups was the external priority, then internally the most important matter – by a considerable distance – was the impact of high levels of inflation on police officers. The sudden growth in inflation adversely affected many people in the community, but police officers were particularly badly hit. In overall real terms police pay has fallen by almost 20% in the last decade and the effects of this were felt at individual and organisational levels. Put simply, some police officers struggled to live: some used foodbanks, some could not afford presents at Christmas for their children and others had to sell their homes. A survey of its members by the Isle of Man Police Federation received a very high level of response and, effectively, it determined that police officers love their work, but increasingly cannot afford to live properly. The loss of several mid-service officers at the end of the calendar year showed that, without remedial action, a police pay problem could easily become a police retention crisis. At the time of writing a working party on police pay is making decent progress.

The policing landscape was complex in 2022-23, largely because of events in the United Kingdom. Shocking events largely, but not solely, in London suggested that policing is in the midst of a crisis of confidence. The Constabulary was not directly affected by these matters, but is important that we should make every possible effort in the coming months to continue to show that we are different, that we police with the community and that we both have and deserve the trust of the people of the Isle of Man. If I have learned anything from thirty nine years of police service it is this: police officers are truly remarkable people, who routinely do extraordinary things for this island. I am proud to have led so many of them for so long.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

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I am grateful to you and your political colleagues for the support that have continually given since you took up your role. It is difficult to overstate the importance of political support. Police legitimacy comes from this and from the continuing trust that the public places in us. The Isle of Man Constabulary is fortunate in both regards.

My successor, Russ Foster KPM, arrived on the island in February 2023 and our handover has convinced me that you have made a good choice. I know that he will relish the challenges that he faces and welcome the scrutiny and support that you give.



Gary Roberts QPM
Chief Constable

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HOW THE REPORT IS LAID OUT



A balance has been sought between data and a narrative account of the performance of the Isle of Man Constabulary (IOMC) throughout the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. Where possible data has been set out in an easy to understand graphical format, but detailed data tables are linked to the report for those who wish to dig behind the headline figures. Where necessary an interpretation of the data is offered.

In addition to graphics and data tables, the report contains an overview of the most important issues facing the IOMC as it strives to keep the Isle of Man safe. These range from the exploitation of young and vulnerable people, through to the tackling of international money laundering. There are also two case studies describing the kind of work that the Constabulary carries out to tackle organised criminal activity. One study looks at an operation that largely focused on the supply of class A drugs, while the other looks at efforts to tackle the supply of cannabis.

A section deals with organisational issues, providing a short narrative about people, finance, facilities and information technology.

At the end of the report there is a section focusing on the future, highlighting some of the issues facing the new Chief Constable.

GARY ROBERTS QPM

CHIEF CONSTABLE



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CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW

The 2022-23 year felt much more like a normal year than the two preceding years, as the community learned to live with COVID-19. However, the impacts of the pandemic continued to be felt, with clear signs that challenges around mental health and about the way that some young people behave, which first became apparent after lockdown periods, were becoming deep-rooted. In overall terms the year saw slightly higher demand levels than the year before.

This section provides a narrative regarding several of the most important issues facing the IOMC as it continues its mission to keep the island safe. Detailed data charts and tables are contained elsewhere in the report and they are accompanied by an explanatory narrative. [Click here to view.](#)

CRIME

Assessing the performance of the police is complex and the days are long gone when the best indicator was the level of recorded crime. The investigation of crime is only part of what the police do and the IOMC and its officers spend as much time dealing with issues caused by poor mental health, or by complex vulnerability, or on other safeguarding work as they do on crime. That said, it is accepted that for many people the overall level of crime is important, as it gives a basic indication of the safety of a place.

In the 2022-23 year several new offences were created by different acts of Tynwald, such as those set out in Sections 35 and 36 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2020. Although such new offences do not distort data, they make year on year comparisons a little tricky in places. It must also be borne in mind that police activity, such as the tackling of drugs offending, or early intervention in the night-time economy actually increase levels of recorded crime.

During the year recorded crime increased by 7%, bringing it almost back to the level recorded in 2020-21. As can be seen in the data section of the report ([chart on page 5](#)), the overall, long-term trend for recorded crime is still reducing. At the turn of the century the overall level was almost three times that now seen.

There was an increase of 23% in offences of theft, which in part reflected an unusually low level recorded the previous year; however, shoplifting offences rose by a third, which is perhaps indicative of the struggles that some people are facing because of very high levels of inflation, especially in terms of food prices.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW

CRIME CONTINUED

Burglary remained at a very low level, with the combined total of domestic and non-domestic burglaries of 75. (Again, this needs to be seen in context: in the mid 1990s there were usually around 600 such offences.) Currently there are only two categories of burglary, which means that entry into a garden shed is recorded as a domestic burglary. Changes to be effective from 1st April will add extra categories, and this nuance will help show how safe people are in their homes.

Violent crime declined slightly and this was due to a welcome reduction in serious assaults, which fell by 24%.

The overall crime detection rate is 48%. This means that this year continues an upward trend in detection rates, leading to a 5% rise over the last two years. In itself this is not particularly noteworthy, but what is remarkable is the gap that has opened between detection rates here and those seen in England and Wales. The detection rate achieved here is now around four times that of police forces there.

SEXUAL ASSAULTS

Last year I included in the report a data table, along with a commentary, that showed what had been done by the police in respect of each allegation of rape made to the IOMC. I know that people found this to be useful and I have repeated the exercise this year. The commentary shows how and at what stage investigations were concluded. As in the previous year, a significant proportion of allegations did not proceed because the complainant did not wish us to conduct a formal investigation. However, this year's report shows that our charging rate has increased to 6%. This is now considerably better than in England and Wales, where the charging rate hovers around the 1% mark.

It is important to reiterate points that I made last year about the support given to victims of rape and to the need for a Sexual Assault Referral Centre. The creation of such a facility has taken far longer than anyone would have wished, but it is scheduled to open in 2023-24. This will be of great benefit to people, who have undergone the trauma of sexual assault, but if our experience mirrors that seen elsewhere, there is likely to be an increase in the number of complaints.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW

SEXUAL ASSAULTS

BETWEEN 1ST APRIL 2022 - 1ST APRIL 2023 39 RAPE INVESTIGATIONS WERE OPENED

7

7 have been/will be resolved as "no crime". Examples include a case where the complainant subsequently admitted consent; an offence which transpired to have taken place outside the Isle of Man; and a third party report, denied by the alleged victim

10

10 cases were closed with identified suspects after the complainant declined to support a prosecution. Absence of other supporting evidence there was insufficient to proceed

2

2 cases were closed after the complainant declined to support a prosecution and involved an unknown suspect. The first involved an alleged assault 20 years previously by a former partner, whom the complainant declined to name. The other involved a stranger attack. The complainant had a history of serious mental health problems. She refused to fully co-operate with forensic recovery and provided inconsistent accounts of what had taken place

6

6 cases were closed "investigation complete" and involved a known suspect. These matters were referred to the Attorney General's Chambers for charging advice, but the evidence was considered insufficiently strong to support a prosecution

1

2 offences of rape have been charged during this period (of note one was reported during a previous period so does not form part of the 39)

13

13 offences were still under investigation at the close of the reporting period however in three of those investigations a person had been charged.

(As the investigations were not finalised they do not feature in the formal statistics until they are closed.)



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW

OFFENDING BY YOUNG PEOPLE

Throughout the year the Police Early Action Team (PEAT) saw a decline of nearly 17% in referrals of young people having committed crime. However the number of offences those people had committed fell by only 8%. So the people PEAT are having referred to them have generally committed slightly more crime. The spread of ages referred to PEAT were uncontroversial compared to previous years with the most work being done with thirteen and fourteen year olds, however the figures show the vast majority of youth offending to be committed by seventeen year olds, this is skewed by motoring offences committed by young drivers.

Whilst crime cannot be committed by a young person until they reach their tenth birthday, PEAT also worked with seven individuals who fell beneath the legal threshold but benefitted from interaction.

An overwhelming majority of those young people weren't seen by PEAT again, which offers significant evidence that what they do, works. However those that do continue to offend can become prolific, meaning that the majority of offences committed by young people is actually perpetrated by a very small minority of young people. In the last year a group of 15 prolific offenders were responsible for 282 offences.

The downturn in the number of people, whilst the number of offences haven't dropped as much tends to demonstrate that their diversionary tactics are working. Fewer people are coming back, but those who are have committed more crime. Most people who commit a single offence and work with PEAT aren't seen again, which leaves only those who are repeatedly offending.

PEAT's work focuses on causes of behaviour and demonstrates, as it has done previously that the majority of the most prolific offenders have had similar experiences in their early life which are likely to have shaped their offending behaviour.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW

DRUGS

One of the recurring themes of recent annual reports has been the efforts made by the IOMC to tackle the organised criminal groups that supply controlled drugs. Those groups are largely, but not exclusively, based in the Merseyside area and they are supported by networks within the Isle of Man. The groups seek to exploit young and vulnerable people in order to supply drugs and launder the proceeds of their crimes.

The IOMC seized more controlled drugs in 2022-23 than ever before. One operation, Operation Artemis, led to the seizure of well over a million pounds worth on cannabis. This and another significant operation are outlined in [ANNEX A](#).

The case studies are important, in that they show the extent of the reach of organised criminal groups, but there are other important aspects to them. For example, Artemis shows the frequency with which some of those bringing drugs to the island were able to use our open border. One offender was arrested after making more than a dozen short trips to the island in almost as many weeks. A simple extrapolation of data would, therefore, suggest that very considerable amounts of drugs are being brought into the island every week by people, who know that the absence of proper checks at our ports gives them free reign.

The Constabulary applied particular focus during the year to the exploitation of young and vulnerable people by those involved in the drugs trade. Collaborative work with Merseyside Police's county lines team and the further development of Operation Yarrow, an initiative that identifies those most at risk of being exploited and then applies bespoke safeguarding activities, helped to protect a number of individuals.

Drugs data shows the extent to which young people are being exposed to drugs. During the year several arrests were made of people, who were believed to be supplying young people. Arrests were also made of young people, who were supplying drugs to their peers. Some of the cases remain sub judice.

The exploitation of young and vulnerable people, some of whom then go on to join organised criminal groups, which deal drugs and in doing so exploit other young or vulnerable people, is a wicked issue. As I have written in the past, exploitation is accompanied by the accrual of debt, which brings threats and violence, which in turn leads to further drug dealing. This is a societal issue and one that the ongoing review of drugs harms by Liverpool John Moores University will no doubt touch upon. As a society we need to be very concerned about the way that young people are being lured into drug dealing and by the increasingly sophisticated ways that they undertake such activities. The use of social media in order to deal drugs is hugely challenging for all law enforcement agencies and it is clear that the companies behind apps, such as Snapchat, are not doing enough to help prevent serious offending.

There was a reduction of 9% in the overall number of drugs offences, but this should not be seen as being significant. What is, though, is the amount of drugs seized. Over 88kg of cannabis was seized, which was close to four times the amount seized the previous year, and the total street value of drugs recovered was just under £2m.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW



DRUG DRIVING

An amendment to the Road Traffic Act 1985 took effect in January 2022, which allowed the use of drug wipes to test drivers believed to be unfit because of their use of illegal drugs. The technology allows for drivers to be tested for cannabis or cocaine use. Each drug wipe kit costs about £16 and the cost of testing blood samples that are taken following a positive drug wipe test amounts to around £600. (The law does not allow urine to be taken, which would provide a cheaper alternative.) The IOMC arrested so many suspected offenders that we exhausted our forensic science budget within the first half of the year.

No extra financial provision was given to the IOMC to deal with the new legislation and courts have not ordered the full repayment of costs by those convicted of drug driving offences. This means that a substantial shortfall will continue to exist in the budget.

The most important aspect of this issue, though, is quite simply the sheer numbers of people, who were arrested and charged with drug driving offences. Over the course of the year there were 100 arrests. For half the year drug driving was the offence for which the most arrests were made. At times, there were arrests almost every day. What this shows is interesting. At one level it indicates, as I have suggested before, that cannabis use is endemic, and it also shows that those who use drugs before and while driving, either completely fail to see the risks that they pose to other road users, or that they see them but do not care.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW



FINANCIAL CRIME

During the year considerable time and effort was undertaken to begin to prepare for the rigours of Moneyval assessment, which is due to take place in around 2025-26. The basis of that work was to try ensure that sufficient focus and resources are applied to satisfying the assessment. There were two significant pieces of work: firstly, the separation of the investigation of fraud and local money laundering from the investigation of international cases; then, secondly, the obtaining extra resources to create a team that is of sufficient scale and experience to allow effective progress to be made.

In the second half of the year a split was made, with an international team, the Proactive International Money Laundering Investigation Team (PIMLIT) being established by taking some officers and staff from the Economic Crime Unit (ECU). In the autumn of 2022 the Treasury approved use of the Seized Assets Fund to allow extra staff, predominantly investigators, to be recruited.

At the time of writing PIMLIT is focusing on a handful of complex cases, which fit the criteria set by Moneyval for international cases. These cases involve criminality that has crossed international borders. There is much to be done and time is tight, but there are grounds for optimism.

The ECU had a busy and successful year, notching up some significant convictions. Its work is rarely of a high profile nature, but its efforts are important.

HMICFRS

In last year's report I mentioned that the IOMC had undergone an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The review was commissioned in the summer of 2020, on-island work was conducted in late November 2021 and the final report was published early in February 2022. The overall cost to the taxpayer exceeded £100,000, with £76,000 of that being paid to HMICFRS. The delays were almost all outside the control or influence of the IOMC.

It is perhaps for others to judge the usefulness of the report, but the process took far too long and the report itself was so slow in the writing that it was largely out of date by the time that it was published. That said, the report rightly highlighted improvements that can be made to the governance of the IOMC in terms of oversight by the Department of Home Affairs and in terms of modernising and streamlining laws about complaints against police officers. It also offered useful commentary on the future of call handling.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW



DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT 2020

The Act became effective in stages, with its main provisions becoming available from early January 2023. Amongst other things, the Act creates two specific offences of domestic abuse, including one of coercive control, and it provides the police with contemporary powers to protect victims. Every right-minded person would welcome these developments.

Given the implementation date, there is only limited data to show how useful the legislation will be. However, officers made careful and appropriate use of Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and courts also issued two Domestic Abuse Protection Orders. A noteworthy conviction was obtained for one of the domestic abuse offences, which helped establish the thresholds that courts will apply in such cases.

The amount of work needed to prepare for the legislation is indicative of future challenges in terms of implementing the much-needed provisions of the Sexual Offences and Obscene Publications Act 2021 and those of the Justice Reform Act 2021. These challenges will not merely be faced by the IOMC, but a considerable amount of time and effort will be needed to prepare secondary legislation without which the laws cannot take effect.

The sexual offences legislation will help courts to give sentences to sex offenders that are more in line with contemporary expectations, while the Justice Reform Act contains vitally important provisions about information sharing for the protection of the public, as well as making major changes to how the court system operates. These changes will make the system quicker and more cost effective.

KNOTTFIELD

Much has been written about what happened at Knottfield children's home. This [LINK](#) is to Tynwald's Social Affairs Policy Review committee's report on the matter. This report, the conviction (again) of Joseph Marshall and the apology given at the February 2023 sitting of Tynwald by the Chief Minister might help to start to bring closure for many of Marshall's victims. For some, it all came too late, as some had taken their own life and others died prematurely.

Marshall remains, in my view, the most significant and dangerous sex offender that this island has known. His imprisonment after a trial was much welcomed by many in the community. As has always been the case, he showed no remorse at all. I have spoken to many people who were harmed by him and the regime that he ran at Knottfield. The things that they shared with me will stay with me forever.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW



TT AND MOTORSPORT

In 2022 motorsport returned after an absence of three years caused by the covid-19 pandemic. The IOMC faced two challenges: ensuring that visiting motorcyclists did not come to harm after such an absence, and also in discharging its challenging functions with patrol teams that were lacking in experience. Almost 40% of patrol officers had not previously policed a TT festival.

The TT itself was difficult and more competitors died than in any single year since 1970. Police officers dealt with some particularly distressing matters. On public roads, though, there was much better news. For the first time in modern memory, no one died on open roads during the TT, MGP or Southern 100 periods. This was testament to the hard work, good planning and creativity of the comparatively small number of officers charged with keeping the roads safe.

MENTAL HEALTH

It has long been the case that the IOMC is playing too great a role in responding to calls for service linked to mental health. It is, of course, right that police officers should respond in emergency situations, where there is a threat to life, but for far too long officers have been filling gaps caused by shortfalls in health care provision. This is not a controversial statement: the crux of this argument is widely accepted by our colleagues in the health and mental health services.

During the year we conducted an analysis of our response to mental health cases in an attempt to determine the level of demand that such matters cause. Attached at [ANNEX B](#) is that work. It shows that calls about mental health account for the entire work of around 14 police officers a year. To put this into context: it takes more than six officers to provide one officer on a 24/7 basis all year round, so the equivalent of two officers are engaged on mental health matters all the time. The smaller neighbourhood policing teams – Castletown, Peel and Ramsey – routinely deploy only two officers a shift. In other words, the demands caused by mental health cases might mean that parts of the island are effectively unpoliced for long periods.

The other issue that the data highlights is the need for there to be a better response to calls about mental health. In several of my reports I have written about the trial, which involved mental health professionals working with police officers from Police Headquarters. This was undoubtedly a success, but what has replaced it does not appear to be as effective. In the Tynwald debate on my last report the then Minister for the Department of Health and Social Care promised a review. This has not happened.



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OVERVIEW



MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUED

It is evident that police forces in the United Kingdom are wrestling with similar issues. There, the National Police Chiefs Council, the Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services are all now saying the same thing: the police should withdraw from responding to most mental health calls and leave things to the mental health service. Such an approach helped Humberside Police move from being in special measures to becoming the best police force in the country, by freeing officers to do the things that the public want.

It would be hugely difficult for the IOMC simply to extract itself from mental health calls in this way, but the data shows the effect that responding is having for the IOMC.

PRIDE

The IOMC had poor relations with the LGBTQ+ community for many years. Our efforts to create an effective inclusion scrutiny group, now chaired by Sarah Maltby MHK, have helped to change perceptions and the IOMC itself is a diverse and tolerant organisation. However, for many older members of the community the IOMC is distrusted and feared.

Working with the inclusion scrutiny group and with some members of the LGBTQ+ community I spent a considerable amount of time in the spring and summer of 2022 in seeking to try to draw a line under the past. For reasons that I fully understand this was not an easy task and I have no doubt that some in the community will never trust the IOMC. However, widely guided by those I consulted, I wrote an open letter to the Pride committee, which set out my views on the past policing of the gay community.

I am grateful to the members of that community who reached out to me to indicate that I had achieved what I set out to do. I cannot undo harm that was caused, but I believe that older members of the community might now be able to start to see the IOMC as many younger members of the LGBTQ+ communities do.

GARY ROBERTS QPM
CHIEF CONSTABLE



2022-23 IN FIGURES



2,862

recorded crimes

14,740

calls for action

The Isle of Man is safer than anywhere in the UK

Crime severity on the Isle of Man has steadily increased over the past 3 years, yet the Island remains the safest place in the British Isles, when compared to all 43 Police Force Areas of England and Wales. The Isle of Man has a crime severity rate over 60% lower than the lowest in England and Wales.



OFFENCE	COUNT	% CHANGE
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	658	+1%
DRUGS OFFENCES	480	-9%
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	559	+12%
THEFT AND KINDRED OFFENCES	581	+21%
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	187	-12%
SEXUAL OFFENCES	91	-4%
FRAUD OFFENCES	71	+16%
OFFENCES RELATING TO POLICE	67	+22%
OFFENSIVE WEAPONS	36	-14%

people arrested
1,877

of whom

240

were juveniles



over **£1,900,000** drugs seized



503 digital examinations conducted



over **141** search warrants recorded

over **£105,000** paid in fines



CHARTS & DATA



YOUTH JUSTICE



DEMAND



DEATHS & SUICIDE



CALLS FOR SERVICE



VULNERABILITY



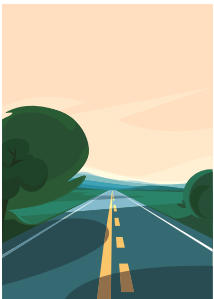
DRUGS



CRIME



CUSTODY



ROADS



FINANCIAL CRIME



ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS



DRUG DRIVING



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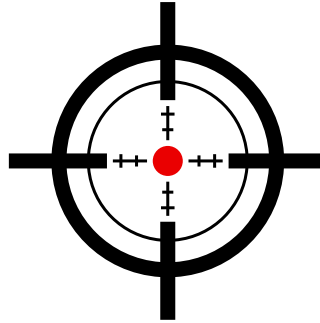
CHARTS & DATA



**DIGITAL
EXAMINATIONS**



**FIREARMS
LICENSING**



**FIREARMS
DEPLOYMENT**



SEARCHES



OCSIA



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ALL CHARTS & DATA



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INSIDE THE ORGANISATION

The things that happen behind the scenes – financial management, training and development, creating a fit for purpose technology infrastructure – are critically important to ensuring that the Constabulary is able to address its tactical and strategic policing ambitions. This short section deals with some of these issues.

RECRUITMENT,
RETENTION &
PAY

PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS

CLIMATE
CHANGE

FINANCES

SICKNESS

TECHNOLOGY



INSIDE THE ORGANISATION

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & PAY

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & PAY

The sudden and precipitous rise in inflation came at the end of a decade in which police pay had fallen in real terms by close to 20%. While it is readily acknowledged that much of the community is struggling to deal with the impact of rising prices, for the first time since the 1970s the Constabulary finds itself in a situation in which officers have started to leave the organisation simply to earn more money. The Police Federation, which represents officers below the rank of superintendent, surveyed its members during the winter of 2022-23 and its findings, based on a significantly large sample size, were stark: police officers enjoy their work and are proud to serve the community, but the majority of them are struggling to make ends meet and as many as 20% of them would leave for more pay if the right opportunity came along. Further work by the Police Federation revealed that some officers have to use food banks, others were selling their homes in order to downsize and some were unable to afford new toys for their children at Christmas.

Police officers have had reciprocity on pay and conditions of service since the Oaksey review of 1948-49 and for many years this stood officers in good stead. A sizeable pay increase that came from the Edmond Davies review in the 1970s made policing a decently paid occupation; however, this has largely changed. Policing is a fantastic career and the Constabulary rightly uses the uniquely rewarding job satisfaction that it produces to try to recruit new officers, but the real term decline in wages is now having a considerably negative impact.

For the first time for many years mid-service officers left for better paid jobs, elsewhere in the public service. Civil service salaries and wages paid by arm's length bodies, such as the Gambling Supervision Commission, were higher than the Constabulary could offer. For the first time, some of the officers who left early were sergeants. This ought to be a cause for real concern.

The time has now come at which steps ought to be taken to review the reciprocal arrangements. The politicisation of policing in England and Wales is part of a broader narrative, which has led to successive UK governments taking a scornful approach to policing. The setting of salaries reflects changes in policy and there is now a considerable gap between policy here and there. I welcome a commitment made by the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs to review police officer remuneration, not just in terms of determining what can be done to help with the effects of inflation, but more broadly in terms of examining whether reciprocity ought to end.



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RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & PAY

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & PAY (Continued)

Recruitment was not as easy as it has been. The number of applicants for student officer posts was down, with the autumn 2022 exercise producing around half the number of applicants seen in the last three or four years. At the time of writing, the winter 2022-23 campaign is struggling to attract applicants. Pay – and publicity about poor pay – appear to be at the root of this decline. All of this said, recent intakes of new officers have been notable for the quality (and age range) of the successful applicants.

Pension changes made in recent years can now be seen to be having some adverse effects, notably in regards to the recruitment of experienced officers from outside the island, but also in terms of career progression.

In broad terms, the time that a police officer needs to serve in order to obtain a pension has changed in the last decade from 30 years to 37.5 years. The fixed link with British police pensions has been broken and, in normal circumstances, those officers transferring here will face some degree of loss in terms of the value of their pension. This has already deterred some officers. The primary route in to the Constabulary ought to be for members of our community, with experienced officers perhaps making up no more than a third of new officers. Indeed I gave this commitment to the Council of Ministers in 2013. This approach balances youth and experience and offers the public the best service. The pension changes can now be seen as posing a threat to this.

Additionally, the year saw a continuation of a decline in the number of candidates seeking promotion to sergeant. Some of this is because the operating environment for sergeants has been really challenging: high workloads and difficult shift patterns, but many potential candidates have made it clear that they have slowed their aspirations because of the longer service that they face.



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FINANCES

FINANCES

The effects of inflation were considerable and, with much of the Constabulary's infrastructure, such as buildings and vehicles, being owned by the Department of Infrastructure, there were challenges in meeting budgetary targets. The return of motorsport added to the complexity and the Constabulary spent more money on TT 2022 than ever before. It was therefore a considerable achievement for the Constabulary to end the financial year on budget.

Extra funding was approved from the Seized Assets Fund to allow for an international money laundering investigation team to be set up. This was welcome, but this funding can only be a temporary fix, with work being needed to try to increase the revenue budget accordingly in time for the 2024-25 year.

Close reading of the 2023-24 budget shows the considerable and deep-rooted challenges that the Isle of Man Government will face in order to maintain public services at their current levels. There may be a temptation to repeat previous approaches to fiscal difficulties by top-slicing budgets. It took the Constabulary the best part of a decade to recover from the last such exercise and the effects, notably in terms of neighbourhood policing and in things like the provision of support to schools, are still being felt. As I often said a decade ago: cuts have consequences. If those consequences are properly assessed and mitigated, then the impacts are less; if they are not, then not only is the quality of service threatened, so more especially so is public safety.

The state of Police Headquarters is a growing matter of concern. It is in a poor state of repair and it does not meet the needs or expectations of a contemporary police service, nor of a modern workforce. Work to create a shared facility for emergency services is unlikely to bring a change in the medium term, but long before then the state of the building will cause problems.

Similarly, accommodation for officers and staff dealing with financial crime, whether local fraud and money laundering or international crime, is cramped and quite unpleasant.



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PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

As can be seen from the data, there were 52 low-level, informal complaints about quality of service. There were only five formal complaints, which was the same as the year before. However these figures are assessed, they show remarkably low levels of complaints.

A lot of time was wasted, though, by fixated individuals who sought to make repetitive, or even malicious, complaints that were often a product of their own conspiracy theories or personal obsessions.

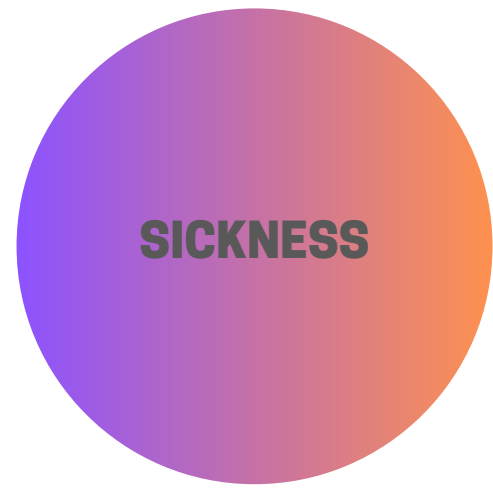
During the year the Police Complaints Commissioner, Geoff Karran MBE TH, retired after more than a decade of distinguished service. He will be missed for his objectivity, his pragmatism and his understanding of the local community. He wasn't the only Independent Commissioner to retire. Suzie Allegre, who was the Interception of Communications Commissioner, also stood down. She offered distinguished and expert service. Additionally, Brendan O'Friel stood down as the surveillance commissioner. He was the first person to hold this important role and he gave exemplary service.



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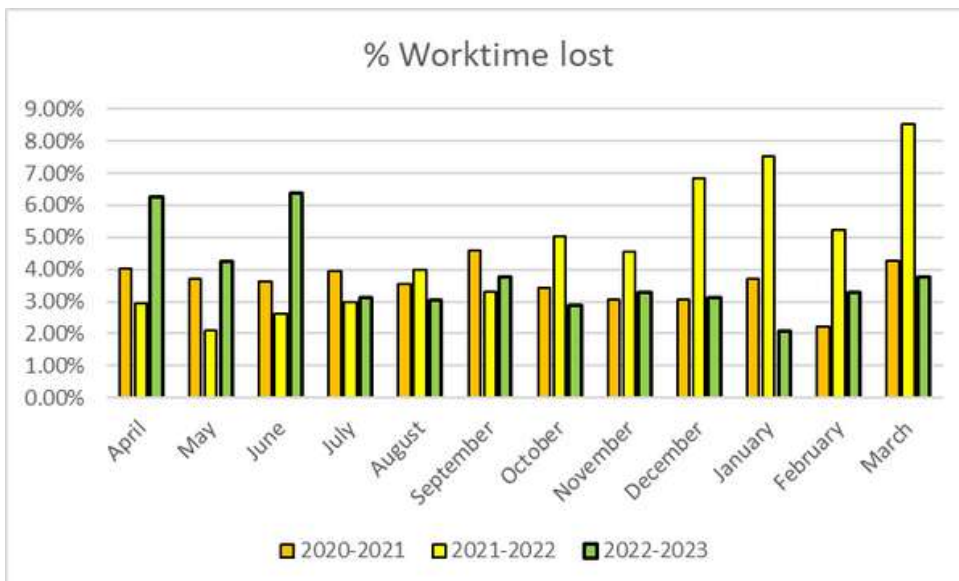
INSIDE THE ORGANISATION



SICKNESS

Sickness levels have not fully returned to pre-pandemic levels and it may be a long time before they do. The Constabulary faced several outbreaks of covid during the year and officers and staff rightly chose not to come to work with seasonal viruses, as once they might, in order to protect their colleagues. Broadly speaking, though, sickness rates remained low and long-term sickness levels were low. There were no ill-health retirements during the year.

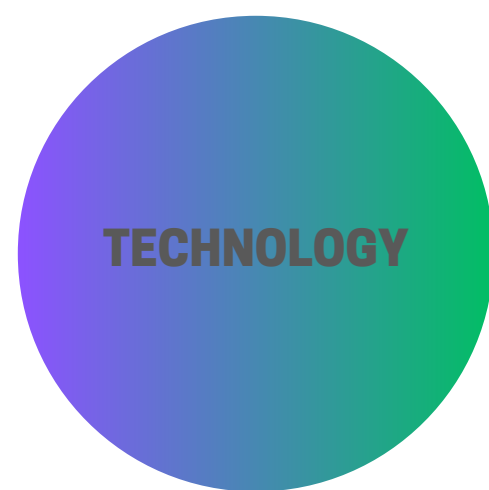
		Absence by number of Employees		
		Total Days Lost	Days Lost per FTE	% Worktime Lost
Previous Year	<i>(As published last year)</i>	3453.5	11.63	4.66%
	April	393	1.3	6.25%
	May	266	0.88	4.25%
	June	397	1.33	6.39%
	July	193.5	0.65	3.11%
	August	202	0.67	3.05%
	September	236	0.79	3.75%
Current Year	October	174.5	0.58	2.90%
	November	206	0.69	3.27%
	December	206	0.69	3.13%
	January	134.5	0.43	2.08%
	February	190.5	0.62	3.29%
	March	250.5	0.82	3.75%
		2,849.5	9.42	3.76%



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TECHNOLOGY

The year was a difficult one, again because of the lingering effects of the pandemic. The introduction of new software solutions were slower than hoped and our collaborative arrangements with NEC (formerly known as Northgate), which have been explained in previous reports, did not produce all the results we had expected. However, during the year the Constabulary successfully procured a new major incident platform, which will allow for effective cross-jurisdiction working, and it made good progress in terms of the rollout of the Nuix system, which amongst other things helps manage large-scale disclosure in complex criminal cases.

The Constabulary refreshed its digital strategy during the year and the most important goal remains that of creating a paper-free criminal justice system. Expected changes to the rules of court will help in this regard.

During the year the rollout took place of mobile devices for operational officers. This made a real difference to how they worked and to the amount of time that they had to spend inside police stations. The technology was welcomed by officers, who embraced its potential.

It is disappointing to note that our plan to move to cloud data storage and hosting for our core policing system was frustrated by disproportionately high projected costs at this time. We have therefore taken a more cost effective approach of simply upgrading our existing ICT infrastructure, although this does constrain our ability to grow our digital capabilities in the short term. It is hoped that associated hosting arrangements either through our supplier or Government ICT partner will be more achievable in the future to help accelerate delivery of our strategic digital plans.



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CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE

Legislation now places a duty on the Constabulary to cut emissions. Attached as [ANNEX C](#) is the Constabulary's green plan. It is not especially ambitious, largely because the Constabulary does not own its own buildings or vehicles and is therefore reliant on government policy.

All of these supporting functions are critically important and the work done by police officers and staff to deliver them (and others that haven't had specific mention, such as firearms licensing, analytical support, road safety and school crossing patrols) is key to keeping the Island safe. The trickiest support service challenges come in terms of shared services: fleet procurement and management, the management and maintenance of buildings, our technology infrastructure and services provided by the Office of Human Resources. There are strong arguments for some of these responsibilities to be returned to the Constabulary.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY



PAY & RETENTION



FINANCES



MONEYVAL



BORDERS



KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE



REPUTATION - UK POLICING



COLLEGE OF POLICING & TRAINING STANDARDS



CREATION OF A MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB



YOUTH JUSTICE



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

PAY & RETENTION

Policing is a difficult career, even in a small safe place. Officers generally carry heavy workloads and the unpredictable nature of policing means there can be considerable disruption to officers' private lives. Police officers cannot strike and they face many restrictions that are not found in other occupations. In real terms their pay has fallen by close to 20% in the last decade.

In the winter of 2022-23 the Police Federation, which represents officers up to the rank of Chief Inspector, surveyed all of its members. More than three-quarters of officers responded to the survey and the results effectively showed that, whilst officers enjoy their work and are proud to be police officers, very many of them find it difficult to enjoy a good quality of life. Some use food banks, others have had to sell their homes and some cannot afford things such as dental treatment. Anyone with any interest in the quality and effectiveness of public services should be concerned by these results.

At around the time of the survey two middle service sergeants left the IOMC for jobs elsewhere in the public sector. This is highly unusual and it helps support emerging fears that pay, conditions of service and the increasingly heavy demands faced by officers will make the retention of officers more difficult than before.

Recruitment has generally been positive, but at the time of writing an exercise to recruit up to ten new officers has brought a very low response level. In the past the IOMC sought to recruit two-thirds of officers locally and a third on transfer from the United Kingdom. Over the course of the last two years the full effects of a change in police pensions has begun to be felt. This means that there is no longer full portability of pensions, which has made transferring to the Isle of Man much less attractive than it used to be. In simple terms, transferee officers run the risk of losing several years' worth of pension and some who had contemplated moving here have been deterred from doing so.

There is not a recruitment or retention crisis, but one could swiftly emerge if care is not taken. Attached as [ANNEX D](#) is a letter that I wrote to the Justice and Home Affairs Minister about these issues. What was really, encouraging, though, was the understanding and support shown by her and her officers, which led to the establishment of a working group on pay and conditions. While the initial focus will be on finding an affordable solution to the short-term problems brought by the high levels of inflation, the working party will then have to focus on the continuing usefulness of arrangements that have been in place since 1948, which have linked police officer pay and conditions with those in England and Wales.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

FINANCES

The Isle of Man Government's 2023-24 budget outlines the considerable financial challenges that lie ahead. War in Ukraine, the impact of Brexit and the challenges posed by high levels of inflation pose a threat to the island's finances. There is a genuine risk that public service bodies will soon be required to identify and deliver cost savings from within their budgets. History seems to be repeating itself, in that this is the situation the IOMC went through just over a decade ago.

Identifying possible efficiencies is a good thing, but real care is needed to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated. A decade ago the IOMC lost close to 18% of its budget and almost 20% of its staff. The impact was felt at a local level in that community policing suffered. Some things that emerged, such as changes in how some young people behaved and the beginning of the exploitation of the young by drug dealers, have their roots in those budget cuts.

Policing the island will always be about balance. Competing demands, the wishes of the public, political imperatives and the changing nature of threats to public safety all combine create high levels of complexity. At the heart of the approach must always be high quality, properly resourced neighbourhood policing. That costs money. Any reduction in its scope and scale would be deeply regrettable.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

MONEYVAL

There is little doubt that the next Moneyval assessment, which is due in the middle of the decade, presents a strategic threat to the island and its economy. Demonstrating the effectiveness of the Island's approach to money laundering, international financial crime and the financing of terrorism will present a generational challenge. Nothing that the IOMC does in the next three or so years will have as much strategic importance.

There is a fundamental paradox at the heart of this issue: for the vast majority of the public Moneyval will not be an issue, unless the assessment produces a poor outcome. The biggest issue therefore is accompanied by almost intangible public awareness. However, driving activity to produce positive results will become the absolute priority of the IOMC.



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BORDERS

A theme of this report has been the focus that the IOMC consistently applies to the threat from organised criminal groups. The HMICFRS report made clear that the IOMC was doing well with limited resources and with better resources could do more. Resources alone will not be enough to bring about a step-change in approach. What is needed is a radically different approach to the policing of our borders.

There is ample evidence to show that criminals exploit the open nature of our borders. As important as is the concept of the Common Travel Area, we are effectively wide open to those who see this is a place to traffic drugs and exploit the young and the vulnerable. This openness also poses a threat to safety in the United Kingdom in a way that is rarely discussed: lack of checks between here and Ireland and the very limited supervision of ports outside Douglas would allow the movement of those intent on harm, who could pass through here.

If we adopt the premise famously set out by the American writer, Dr Marshall Goldsmith, that “what got us here, won’t get us there”, it is possible to see that our approach to protecting the community from threats that cross the border cannot possibly work in an age of travelling criminality, organised criminal groups and the exploitation of some of the most vulnerable in society.

Creating a fit-for-purpose borders policy is for the Council of Ministers, but Chief Constable Foster will be fighting organised crime with one hand tied behind his back unless there is radical change.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE

The police alone cannot keep people safe. What is required is a genuinely concerted approach, linking government policy to a properly resourced strategy to delivery at a local level. The creation of a community safety partnership towards the very end of the 2022-23 year brings an exciting opportunity and a real threat: a cross-agency focus on community safety issues, supported by a wide-range of partners and with political oversight promises to make a real difference; embedding it without a different approach to funding, one in which money is attached to desired outcomes, will make success harder to achieve than would otherwise have been the case.

In 2023-24 a multi-agency safeguarding hub, otherwise known as a MASH, will be established. This ought to offer better outcomes for individuals and families in need of support. There is a danger that the MASH will not succeed unless there is real clarity about what is expected from it. There is a fear that it will wrongly become all things to all people, which would not help anyone.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

REPUTATION - UK POLICING

There can be little doubt that the reputation of British policing has collapsed. Scandals, including the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Metropolitan officer, have led very many people in the United Kingdom to lose trust in the police. This is understandable and, whilst the IOMC has made great efforts to show that it is different, there are grounds to believe that the near-constant stream of negative media coverage about the police will begin to affect how people here think.

The lack of trust is also playing out at a political level in the United Kingdom, where politicians clearly have little trust in the police. This has a direct impact here, as that lack of support will inevitably translate into poorer outcomes in terms of police pay. And, of course, police pay here is linked to England and Wales.

The IOMC is trusted and respected right across the community, but it will become ever more difficult to maintain high levels of trust. We have considerable political support, which is important. Ensuring that trust is not eroded will necessarily be a policing priority and making sure that there are adequate ways of measuring levels of trust will be equally important.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

COLLEGE OF POLICING & TRAINING STANDARDS

One of the challenges faced by any small police service is how to train and develop officers. Specialist training is necessary; budgets for training are comparatively low and as policing continues along a path of accredited training, keeping pace with changes in curricula is difficult. The IOMC, along with the other Crown Dependency police forces, has struggled for some time to get the College of Policing to understand its needs and that it is in the interests of the United Kingdom for us to be as well-trained as possible to contemporary British standards. A further proposed price hike was imposed by the College in the final quarter of the 2022-23 year without any meaningful consultation.

Resetting the relationship with the College and building an understanding of the challenges faced by the Crown Dependency police services has been attempted several times in recent years. Further efforts are required.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

CREATION OF A MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB

For a little while several years ago partnership working became difficult, largely because of the effects of budget cuts. Efforts to place different partner agencies together to provide new, targeted services failed, as did the Youth Justice Team. Over the course of the last couple of years the partnership environment has improved. The creation of Manx Care has made a difference as has the leadership provided by some of its senior officers. As a result, work is underway to create a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, more commonly known as a MASH.

A virtual MASH came into existence during last year, with the introduction of partnership meetings focusing on vulnerability. It is intended that the real version will be up and running by the summer of 2023.

Making sure that the MASH is effective and that its purpose is clear and clearly understood will be a priority for the new Chief Constable. There is a danger that it will be seen as being all things to all people and, without clarity, there is a chance that it will struggle to make an impact. Its potential is considerable.

One significant issue that will affect the MASH is information sharing. Rightly, there will be need to be extensive information sharing protocols in place to allow the MASH to function within the law, but there is evidence to show that professionals across the Island are afraid to share information. This needs to be addressed and it is hoped that the helpful data sharing provisions within the Justice Reform Act 2021 can soon be brought into operation.



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THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S IN-TRAY

YOUTH JUSTICE

The collapse of the Youth Justice Team has been examined by Tynwald's Constitutional Affairs and Justice Committee, which recently produced a report on its findings. The magistrates association has also expressed its concerns at the way that offending by young people is dealt with. The committee's report rightly highlights the importance of collaborative approaches to youth justice and the new Chief Constable will be at pains to ensure that its recommendations are addressed. As with the creation of the MASH, information sharing will be important.

Figures from the Constabulary's Police Early Action Team can be seen in the data section of the report. They again show the importance of the work being done, the success of early intervention, which sees most young people being deterred from reoffending, but also the need for a focus on a hard core of young offenders, who commit a lot of offences. Almost all of them have had very troubled starts to their lives and some have been exploited, but until such time as there is a renewed and joined-up approach to youth justice, the problem of offending by young people will be a challenge.



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ANNEX A CASE STUDIES

**OPERATION
ARTEMIS &
ACHILLES**

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ANNEX B



MENTAL HEALTH DEMAND

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ANNEX C

GREEN AGENDA



Isle of Man Constabulary

Protecting our Environment: Meeting Our Climate Change Obligations

Why have a plan?

- There is overwhelming evidence that human behaviour is accelerating climate change.
- Without deep-rooted and radical behavioural change the rate at which global temperatures are changing will accelerate.
- Rapidly rising temperatures will increasingly pose a threat to all life on the planet.
- Change can only come from a combination of action by governments, organisations and individuals.
- The Isle of Man Constabulary and its officers and staff have a responsibility to play a part in bringing about change.

Our Legal Obligation

- All public bodies (including the Isle of Man Constabulary) have a duty to support key principles set out in the Climate Change Act 2021:
- Helping the island achieve its statutory climate goals - net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050; a 35% reduction by 2030; a 45% reduction by 2035.
- Supporting the just transition and climate justice principles
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services.
- We must report annually on how we have addressed our duties.



ANNEX C

GREEN AGENDA

What we can and cannot do

We can:

- Commit to local delivery of services, so that we travel less distance to people who need our help; and the public has less distance to travel to see us.
- Use technology to allow easier access to our services for the public.
- Where possible we will share facilities with partners to reduce our emissions.
- Provide agile working for our staff, so that they can work from home when needs be.
- Ensure that where possible we buy locally or use local, sustainable products.
- As a principle we will try to deploy police officers from the closest station to where they live, so reducing travel and emissions.
- We will work with our partners in the Department of Infrastructure to plan for a low or zero emissions vehicle fleet and to help create an estate that is modern, fit for purpose and environmentally friendly.
- Place our climate responsibilities into our governance processes, so that all of our decisions are made with our duties in mind.
- Encourage all of our people to think about climate change and to make small adjustments to their behaviour.

We cannot:

- Make swift changes to our vehicle fleet, as we no longer have ownership of it, nor are there significantly advanced zero emissions vehicles available for our specialist use. However, we will keep in step with developments.
- Change our estate, which is not in our ownership.

Being part of a bigger whole

- Our plan should be seen as being a key component of the approach being taken by the Department of Home Affairs.
- Monitoring of our emissions will be undertaken by responsible officers within the Department of Home Affairs.
- We will engage with partners, both here and in the United Kingdom, to ensure that we stay in step with developments in the island's public service, but also in policing.
- We will respect and try to enhance the island's biosphere status in whatever we do.



ANNEX D

RETENTION & RECRUITMENT



MEOIRYN SHEE-ELLAN VANNIN

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Our Ref: GR/SK

3rd February 2023

Honourable Jane Poole-Wilson MHK
Minister for Justice and Home Affairs
Tromode DHA Headquarters
Tromode Road
Douglas
IM2 5PA

Dear

Re: Police Officer Remuneration

As you know, I have been raising the issue of police officer pay for much of the last year. In my annual report for 2021-22, which as published last summer I said this:

"Police officers have had a real pay reduction of about 20% over the last decade and many are struggling to make ends meet. Student constables start on £24,000 a year and many young officers cannot find their way onto the housing ladder."

In recent months officers including sergeants, have told me about how hard things are for them. Some have little or no disposable income towards the end of the month, some cannot afford to have a social life, some cannot afford dental treatment.

I accept that very many people are suffering because of the lasting effects of the pandemic and because of inflation, but the damaging consequences of low police pay could be felt across the community for a long time. Fewer officers, fewer good officers, poor morale and even, in a worse case scenario, corruption were all unintended consequences the last time police pay fell in real terms, which was the late 1970's.

At a meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee held on 3rd November 2022 it was agreed that a working party would be established to look at police pay."

It is disappointing to note that nothing has been done to progress this matter. I understand the pressures that the department faces, but I believe that the situation has deteriorated since the decision to establish a working party was made.

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ANNEX D

RETENTION & RECRUITMENT

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History tells us that police pay goes through cycles: it falls to low levels, a variety of serious problems arise, and then radical solutions have to be put in place. In the aftermath of World War 2 the Constabulary found itself unable to recruit because of the very low pay given to officers. The Westminster Parliament's Oaksey Committee, which was set up in 1948, not only led to the police being given a large pay rise, but it created a negotiating framework. It was at that point that the Constabulary's officers achieved reciprocity with their counterparts in England and Wales in terms of pay and conditions. In 1960 a Royal Commission on Policing led to officers receiving a pay increase of over 20%, largely because of problems with recruitment and retention. In 1978 a commission of inquiry led by Lord Justice Edmund Davies was established because of "very severe problems" with the recruitment and retention of police officers. His report led to police officers being given pay increases in the region of 45%.

All of the factors that were present in 1948, 1960 and 1978 are once again in place. We ignore them at our peril.

The last fourteen years have been disastrous in terms of police pay. A series of pay freezes, reduction in pay for new and young in service officers, below inflation pay increases and the abolition of a variety of allowances, including reductions to the rate at which extra duty is paid have led to the fall in real terms of police salaries. There are a variety of ways of assessing this reduction, but most commentators agree that the overall reduction is in the region of 20%.

In some ways the police pay is trapped in a perfect storm: years of real-term reduction, inflation at the highest rate since the 1970s, strains on public finances caused by Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine are just some of the factors at play. Furthermore, the prospects for change are dismal at best. The scandalous behaviour of some police officers, largely but not solely in the Metropolitan Police; failures at senior levels in policing to deal properly with organisational threats, such as how police officers deal with violence against women and girls, and what appears to be governmental dysfunction in the United Kingdom suggest that there will be any immediate political will to overhaul and improve police pay.

In recent weeks the Isle of Man Police Federation has surveyed its members. It has today released the results of that survey, which in some ways offer a remarkable insight into how police officers think. Most noteworthy are the extraordinary 62% response rate; that 80% of officers do not feel suitable remunerated; that 89% of officers feel that the Constabulary does not offer good pay and conditions; 69% of officers rely on overtime to make ends meet; and 84% of officers worry about their financial future. Despite all this, around two-thirds of officers feel proud to be part of the Constabulary.

Over the last three or four years the Constabulary's retention rates have been steady and steadily above rates seen in England and Wales. That appears to be changing. Since the beginning of December one very talented young Constable has left to become a teacher, with her pay rising by a third and with her being given a £25,000 bursary to allow her to gain a teaching qualification; two mid service Sergeants leaving to take jobs with the Gambling Supervision Authority; two long-serving officers – an Inspector and a Sergeant – taking reduced pensions to leave a year ahead of schedule.

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ANNEX D

RETENTION & RECRUITMENT

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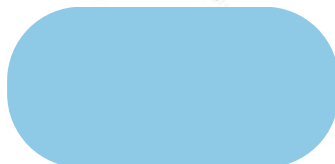
I do not wish to indulge in hyperbole, but we are on the verge of a crisis. I genuinely fear that my successor, Chief Constable Foster, will be left on a burning platform. Officers are angry – and angrier than I have ever seen them – because of pay and not because of what they do. Their efforts in respect of drug trafficking, safeguarding, domestic abuse and criminal investigations show this. A small anecdote from last month's winter weather shows this: officers investigating an allegation of rape left work at 4am after working for 19 hours; they struggled to drive in really poor conditions, but got home and then drove back through blocked roads to be at work again at 9am. The system is letting down these officers and their colleagues. Police officers should not have to rely on overtime, they should not have to use food-banks, they should not have to buy second hand toys for their children at Christmas, but these are things that are becoming the norm.

Police officers cannot take industrial action; they are prevented by law from lobbying politicians; they are not allowed to make public comment on policy matters; they cannot join a trade union. The service that they give is extraordinary, but just as extraordinary is the nature of the problems that we are facing. Without a swift and considered response, it is easy to foresee the financial pressures faced by officers increasing rapidly to the point where a large number of officers leave the service. Were this to happen – and I genuinely fear that it will – then the consequences will take years to mitigate. There are various ways to calculate the costs that arise when an officer leaves. If an officer leaves after five years' service the aggregate cost to the taxpayer is in the region of a third of a million pounds.

Recent changes to the pay of teachers have angered police officers. A starting salary of £36,000 - £10,000 more than given to police officers – has added to a sense that policing is becoming the poor relation. Officers understand the constraints affecting the Isle of Man Government; they largely understand that current arrangements mean that pay problems are the consequence of UK government action (or inaction) but they are now looking to the Isle of Man Government to come up with a solution.

I know and genuinely welcome the personal support that you give to the Constabulary. Officers are now looking to you to try to help them through these difficult times in a way that secures the effective future of the Constabulary.

Yours sincerely



Gary Roberts QPM
Chief Constable

CC Isle of Man Police Federation

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