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THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE MODEL: EARLY IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE IN THREE POLICE FORCE AREAS

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Executive summary

This report, commissioned under the second round of the Targeted Policing Initiative, presents the findings of a 21-month study of early experiences of implementation of the National Intelligence Model (NIM). The research was focused mainly on three forces which were originally chosen as 'development sites' to act, under close guidance from a national implementation team, as pilots for a general 'roll-out' of the NIM. In the event, the national team did not acquire sufficient resources to fulfil this role, and in the meantime other forces began their own implementation of the Model, so the TPI project did not proceed as planned. Nevertheless, the research produced a good deal of information about the experiences of three very different forces in trying to put the NIM into practice, as well as about broader developments across the country. All forces are now required to become NIM compliant by April 2004, and it is hoped that this report will allow other forces to draw on these experiences in developing and carrying out their own implementation strategies.

The research involved interviews with members of the National Intelligence Model Implementation Project (NIMIP) team and fieldwork in the three police force areas (Lancashire, Surrey, and the West Midlands) which were initially chosen as pilot development sites. The latter included interviews with, and questionnaires completed by, officers and civilians in a broad range of ranks and roles. Documentary material, including intelligence and analytical products, was collected throughout the course of the research. Information on the national progress of implementation was derived from data collected by the NIMIP team, and from analyst respondents at a national conference. Data were also collected on the financial costs of the implementation.

Section 2 of the report gives a brief account of progress made nationally between Spring 2001 and Spring 2003, based on comparison of an initial Gap Analysis undertaken by the NIMIP team and two Baseline Assessments carried out one year and two years later. These assessments adopted a simple 'traffic lights' system, whereby specific aspects of each force's progress with NIM development were categorised as 'red', 'yellow' or 'green' (corresponding roughly to unsatisfactory, moderate and good). They examined progress at both divisional and force levels (Levels One and Two). The main findings were that, over the two years:

- There was a clear increase in senior management commitment to the NIM.
- The total number of analysts increased significantly.
- By 2003, over three-quarter of forces were adjudged 'green' in terms of the structure of their Intelligence Units.
- There was a strong improvement in the quality of Strategic Assessments at both Level One and Level Two, only a handful of forces remaining 'red' in 2003.
- The setting of Control Strategies by Strategic TCGs improved from a very low base to 40 per cent of forces being adjudged 'green' in 2003. However, over a third remained 'red'.
- There was a steady improvement in the quality of Tactical Assessments, although these remained in the 'red' zone at Level Two in 30 per cent of forces.

- One of the greatest improvements was in the proportion of forces categorised as ‘green’ in terms of the appropriate staff attending Tasking and Coordinating Groups (TCGs): from a quarter in 2001 to over 80 per cent in 2003.
- Similarly, by 2003 the great majority of TCGs were being chaired by officers of appropriate rank.

Section 3 presents the findings from the studies in the three forces, fieldwork for which took place between early summer 2001 and late 2002. It was noted, first, that while one adopted a highly corporate approach from the outset (to some extent because the introduction of the NIM was tied up with other major force reorganisation) another devolved a great deal of responsibility and decision-making to individual basic command units (BCUs), leading to wide variations in practice.

When asked for their general views about the NIM, many managers welcomed it as a concept, but saw major problems in ‘selling’ it to ordinary staff, who – partly due to its title - tended to associate it with specialist intelligence functions (and hence not directly ‘to do with’ them) and found its structure and language complex and difficult to understand. Significant training needs were identified in this respect.

From interviews, observation and documentary analysis, while many encouraging examples were found of good practice and high quality work, a number of key aspects of the implementation of the Model were identified that currently cause fairly common difficulties in practice and which therefore represent a threat to its potential. These are classified under the following six headings:

1. Leadership and commitment

It was concluded that the presence of these qualities is vital, not just at ACPO level, but among Chairs of TCGs, both in and outside meetings.

2. TCGs

The main problems found regarding Strategic TCGs were limited input from partners, over-domination by concerns about performance indicators, and conflicts between competing priorities (especially between national and local priorities). The latter two comments apply also to Tactical TCGs, where further problems were identified concerning the frequency of meetings, the seniority of Chairs (which in turn could affect attendance) and in some cases the conduct of meetings (which could sometimes ignore analytical evidence and/or come to resemble ‘resource bidding’ sessions).

3. Intelligence Products

The main problems around Intelligence Products were the variety in quality (and availability) of Strategic Assessments, and the lack of standardisation (and again variation in quality) of Tactical Assessments. Clear training needs were apparent here. However, there were also strong signs that quality improved rapidly with ‘practice’, providing analysts received encouragement and constructive feedback from TCG members. Without this, there could be dangers of a ‘vicious circle’ developing, whereby TCGs lose respect for products and those providing them lose the incentive to put energy into improving their quality.

4. Standardisation

It is felt that the NIMIP team missed an opportunity to encourage standardisation of practices and products at an early stage, and that considerable variation has developed which will be difficult to change, as forces and BCUs have already become accustomed to their own ways of doing things. This is a problem which needs attention, as standard products are important to the links across and between levels.

5. Analysts

All three forces reported problems in retaining good analysts: this was made difficult mainly because of low pay, the lack of a well-developed career and promotion structure (though this is changing slowly) and strong competition for good analysts (both within the police force and with other agencies).

6. 'Ownership' and understanding of the Model

There were large 'knowledge gaps' about the NIM among all ranks of officers interviewed, as well as some resistance to it, based mainly on ignorance and on dislike of its 'academic' structure and language. As its effectiveness depends upon all staff contributing appropriately, there are major training needs as well as a need for creative efforts to 'win hearts and minds'.

Section 4 presents views from the 'shop floor', based on interviews with a wide range of police officers, interviews with analysts in the three forces, and a questionnaire survey of analysts attending a national conference. The main findings from the analysts' responses (which did not differ greatly in the forces and nationally) were:

- They came from diverse backgrounds in terms of education and experience
- A minority had been trained 'holistically' on the NIM, and only small numbers had received any training on certain products (especially Results Analysis and Risk Analysis)
- 60 per cent of the national sample thought that only a minority of TCG members understood the NIM and 24 per cent that their TCG Chairs did not.
- 40 per cent thought that their TCG Chair did not understand the role of analysts (and two-thirds that a majority of TCG members did not)
- 41 per cent thought that Strategic Assessments were not referred to when priorities were set
- 61 per cent stated that performance indicators always or often over-dominated TCG meetings
- 61 per cent stated that reviews of previous plans took place 'routinely'.

The main findings from interviews with samples of 'ordinary' police officers (which took place in only two forces) were:

- 57 per cent in one force, and 36 per cent in the other, said that they were 'familiar' with the NIM
- 56 per cent in one force, and 45 per cent in the other, said that they were 'familiar' with the TCG system.

- 72 per cent overall stated that working with the NIM was making their BCU more effective.

Section 5 provides a brief discussion of outcomes. It is noted that, as the NIM was not fully implemented in any of the three forces, it was impossible to carry out a proper evaluation of its 'effectiveness'. Moreover, there are many questions to ask about the appropriate criteria by which its effectiveness should be assessed. However, some very tentative attempts were made to seek any indications of possible impact.

First, a broad comparison of crime trends was made between those of the 21 operational command units (OCUs) in West Midlands which were assessed by experienced managers to be the most and least 'advanced' in implementing the NIM. This entailed comparing the numbers of offences recorded, and the detection rate, in each OCU in six months in 2002 with the same six month period in 2001. It emerged, however, that there were no significant differences in terms of crime reduction, and that the 'least advanced' OCUs had improved their detection rates more than the 'most advanced'. The latter finding may not be surprising, given that the NIM requires a strong focus on certain crime problems, meaning that detections and arrests may fall in other areas of offending.

Second, two 'case studies' are provided, one a cross-level, force-wide initiative against drugs-related crime, and the other an anti-burglary initiative in one town. These not only present some excellent examples of good practice, but include some indications of effectiveness. For example, the former seems to have contributed greatly to a 46 per cent increase in arrests for supplying drugs, and there is evidence (through test purchasing exercises) of effective disruption of open drugs markets. There is also some survey evidence of public confidence in police actions against drugs. In the latter case, there is evidence of an increase in intelligence logs, and around half of the targeted burglars have been arrested. None of the above, it is emphasised, provides conclusive evidence of the effectiveness of the NIM, but it provides pointers to possible future research in this area.

Taken together, the findings suggest that future attention (and research) should be directed at the following areas, which appear to be among the most important, and the most problematic, in terms of developing the potential of the National Intelligence Model:

- Leadership and committed management in key operational areas (especially the work of TCGs)
- Widening and deepening understanding of the NIM itself
- Communication and 'ownership' issues
- Training of key players and officers generally
- Placing the TCG at the core of policing business and activities
- When deciding upon priorities and plans, managing conflicts between the demands of performance indicators and messages from local analysis of problems
- Fully incorporating community concerns and the views of partner organisations into the assessment and planning cycle

- Standardisation of products and practices
- Analytical resources and career structures of analysts
- Measurement of impact and effectiveness
- ‘Maturing’ of the NIM - establishment of the necessary symbiotic relationship between the three levels, with regular flows of relevant information both ‘up’ and ‘down’, and compatibility and consistency of aims and approaches.

Section 6 presents information on the costs of the NIM and its implementation. As the evaluation took place prior to the full implementation of the NIM as envisaged by its designers, the scope of the costing exercise was limited to identifying those additional costs associated with analyst and researcher posts within BCU and central teams. The costs of the former were estimated at around £60,000 per BCU, with central team costs estimated at £200,000. However, such costs will vary with factors such as the size of a force, the level of Partnership agency input, and the degree to which NIM decision making is devolved to individual BCUs. In the longer term, other factors likely to impact on the costs include:

- The degree to which there is cultural inertia within forces.
- The need to extend NIM training throughout each force.
- The level of resources required as a ‘reactive’ policing reserve.
- Addressing issues of recruitment and retention of analysts, including levels of remuneration appropriate to the strategic nature of the role.

The report ends in Section 7 with a brief summary of the main findings, some ‘good practice’ lessons, and a few reflections on the difficult issue of how to measure the ‘effectiveness’ of the NIM Model, both *per se* and in particular applications. In relation to the latter, it is suggested that the best way forward is to set up collaborative action research in a small number of BCUs, where experiments can be conducted with a variety of options, including innovative definitions of outcomes, and ways of linking outcomes to the highly specific aims of TCGs’ strategic assessments and action plans.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Successive reports by the Association of Chief Police Officers over many years have recommended that criminal intelligence should play a more central role in the policing agenda (ACPO, 1975; ACPO, 1978; ACPO, 1986; ACPO, 1996). However, while ‘intelligence led’ policing (ILP),¹ in a variety of guises and to varying degrees, has long been practised by specialist squads (especially those dealing with serious and organised crime in a cross-border context), it is only relatively recently that attempts have been made to apply it systematically in more ‘mainstream’ areas of police activity. With a strong lead from Kent in the mid-1990s (Amey *et al* 1995; Maguire & John, 1995), the systematic collection and analysis of intelligence has increasingly been used to inform and direct police activity on both operational and strategic levels, and a number of forces have undergone major restructuring and resource reallocation to implement ‘intelligence led’ models (HMIC, 1997). A variety of factors have given impetus to these developments, not least the perceived gains in efficient and effective management of resources exhorted in influential independent reports (notably by the Audit Commission, 1993; for a more detailed account of the growth of intelligence led policing, see Maguire, 2000).

However, while the concept of intelligence led policing has been strongly promoted by the Home Office, ACPO, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and other central bodies, the actual intelligence structures and processes that have evolved in the police service have generally been developed on an individual force basis, with little centrally coordinated direction. Moreover, although there are many examples of good practice in individual forces, there are also well-documented examples of errors and implementation failures. Common problems have included lack of co-ordination and integration of key elements of intelligence-based systems; failure to create a ‘culture of intelligence’ (Friedman *et al*, 1997) in which information is ‘owned’ by the whole organisation; and lack of strategic assessment and prioritisation (for descriptions of a variety of successful and unsuccessful initiatives, see Maguire & John, 1995; Howe, 1997; Hook, 1998; Barton & Evans, 1999; Martindale, 2000; Fogg, 2000a; Fogg, 2000b; Innes, 2002; John and Maguire 2003; Cope 2004).

Crucially, too, divergence of practice between different police forces has contributed to the creation of barriers to the effective flow of information between forces, as well as between the local, national and international levels. As NCIS (1999) has emphasised, such barriers have undermined the potential impact of ILP in achieving both its business goals (value for money, best value) and its criminal justice goals (accurate targeting and best evidence).

Alongside these developments, advances in information technology, together with central government initiatives promoting multi-agency approaches to crime control (notably the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the development of community safety partnerships), have considerably enhanced the opportunities and the environment for information sharing between state agencies. There are currently proposals to further

¹ This term is now generally preferred to the less precise concept of ‘proactive’ policing, which was current in the late 1980s and 1990s.

broaden this traffic through legislation; for example, for a two-way flow of information to be established between the police service and the Inland Revenue in targeting certain categories of offenders such as drugs traffickers (Martindale, 2000). As well as simply data sharing, these developments provide impetus to a drive to promote cooperation and joint working between agencies in the identification and prioritisation of crime and disorder related problems and in the design and implementation of coordinated plans to tackle them.

A further factor which has to be taken fully into account in the implementation of ILP is the new legislative framework within which it has to operate. The Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 1998, Police Act 1997 and Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 1998, all have major implications for the circumstances in which particular methods of intelligence gathering may be used and the types of information that can be stored and exchanged (see, for example, Maguire and John, 1996; John and Maguire, 1999).

The rapidity and complexity of all the above developments pose a considerable challenge to police forces in terms of knowledge and professional competence (and hence training), as well as creating a need for organisational structures and systems properly suited to working in the new environment.

1.2 The National Intelligence Model

The National Intelligence Model (NIM) was developed by the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) in response to some of these challenges. It represents a major effort both to promote effective ILP on a national basis and to begin to standardise intelligence-related structures, processes and practices across all forces. Importantly, too, it aims to improve the flow and use of intelligence between the local, cross-border and international levels – a key aim here being to fill the ‘regional void’ which has increasingly been recognised as a serious lacuna in the effective control of serious crime and major offenders. In principle, the Model provides, for the first time, a cohesive intelligence framework across the full range of levels of criminality and disorder. As Flood (1999:9) puts it:

‘The model is, therefore, very ambitious, for in describing the links between the levels it offers for the first time the realisable goal of integrated intelligence in which all forces might play a part in a system bigger than themselves. How can we have a sound crime strategy if we cannot paint the picture of crime and criminality from top to bottom?’

Indeed, supporters of the NIM go further, arguing that it offers the police service as a whole a comprehensive ‘business process’ to rationalise and systematise the ways in which it handles information and makes key decisions about the deployment of resources.

The Model is built around the production and use of four broad categories of ‘product’: Analytical Products, Intelligence Products, Knowledge Products, and System Products (NCIS, 1999). These may be briefly described as follows:

Analytical Products are primarily brief reports drawn up by specialist intelligence units on the basis of analysis of information and intelligence from a variety of sources (within and outside the police). They vary in form and content according to the techniques employed and the sources of data from which they are drawn.

Some of these Analytical Products are combined or developed into *Intelligence Products*, which may be broadly subdivided into Strategic Assessments; Tactical Assessments; Target Profiles; and Problem Profiles (hotspots or crime series). These are used to inform decisions on the prioritisation of problems and targets, to allocate 'ownership' of problems to particular staff or units, and as the basis for planning of operational responses.

Knowledge Products are products that will inform future development of the NIM itself and maintain quality within it. The model already includes a wide-ranging list of examples, such as Data Protection Act guidelines, intelligence training, and ECHR compliant codes of practice for policing activities. Another important example is the creation of protocols at each level covering access to data (eg for research or for inter-agency access).

System Products are designed to ensure that appropriate technical and computer equipment is available to the model for its effective operation and to minimise inefficient practices such as the use of incompatible IT systems that act as a barrier to the sharing of information. They are also used to ensure that access is secured across the different levels (see below), and to other agencies, and international law enforcement bodies.

The key users (and in some cases, producers) of these four types of product are the core bodies which drive the whole NIM process, *Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups* (TCGs). These groups, of which the core members are representatives of intelligence units and senior officers with operational responsibilities, meet regularly to undertake informed assessments and prioritisation of 'problems' - including crime, criminals, disorder, and the opportunities for crime - and to plan, coordinate and manage police responses. In doing so, they utilise and request the further development of Intelligence Products, the contents and conclusions of which should underpin both prioritisation and operational decisions. This process takes place at three defined levels, Level 1 covering local issues, Level 2 cross border issues, and Level 3 serious and organised crime, often on a national or international scale.

The National Intelligence Model aims to encourage a holistic view of the resources (including human resources) available to intelligence units to develop actionable products or to create new information and intelligence on subjects that have been prioritised. Its inclusive approach to intelligence responsibilities, whereby specific tasks are given, for example, to patrol officers as well as designated proactive staff, is potentially an important factor in creating a general 'intelligence culture' and resolving some of the difficulties outlined above. Previous research has suggested that this type of integrated and refocused approach is an important determinant of the viability of proactive crime management strategies (Maguire & John, 1995) – though, of course, whether the NIM delivers this in practice remains to be seen.

1.3 Objectives of the research

The research presented in this report has to be understood within the framework of developments in 2001 and 2002 concerning the adoption and ‘rollout’ of the National Intelligence Model by the police service. The research was originally commissioned, in April 2001, to evaluate a 12-month NCIS project funded under the Home Office’s Targeted Policing Initiative (part of the wider Crime Reduction Initiative). The project in question was a ‘rollout’ of the NIM in three selected ‘pilot forces’. The plan was for NCIS to set up a sixteen-strong expert team. The core members of this team would be based in its headquarters in London, their main tasks including the provision of national advice and the development of training materials. The remaining staff were to be based in appropriate NCIS regional offices to provide close guidance and assistance to the three selected forces (Lancashire, Surrey and West Midlands) to implement the NIM in a systematic manner. The researchers would observe this process and evaluate its effectiveness, drawing out lessons from which a future ‘national rollout’ would benefit.

However, the NCIS project never materialised as planned. Owing to problems in persuading forces to release suitably qualified officers, NCIS managed to recruit only three staff to the new team (known as the National Intelligence Model Implementation Project, or ‘NIMIP’, team). Consequently, the NIMIP team largely abandoned the plan of assisting the rollout in the three selected areas, and concentrated instead upon other tasks, in particular developing national training packages for the NIM, acting as a reference point for queries about the Model from any force (including making advisory visits when requested) and setting up a system for monitoring progress with implementation in all forces across the country. In the meantime, the three ‘pilot’ forces were left largely to their own devices in terms of introducing the NIM.

These developments, of course, also posed problems for the researchers, who no longer had a planned ‘rollout’ to evaluate. After negotiation with the Home Office, it was decided that they would focus most of their attention upon the way in which the model was being developed in the same three forces, identifying similarities and differences in how each went about it, the main problems experienced, and examples of good practice. If at all possible, they would also seek indications of whether adoption of the NIM was having any impact in terms of crime control or reduction, although it was recognised that – quite apart from the fact that this could hardly be expected at such an early stage of the implementation - the research was not designed as an ‘outcome evaluation’ and any such findings would be unlikely to be robust. It was also agreed that they would maintain contact with the NIMIP team in order to gather information about progress with implementation across the country: in particular, they would make use of the ‘baseline assessments’ that the team produced in 2002 and 2003 to compare with the findings from its 2001 ‘gap analysis’.

As the research got underway, it quickly became clear that progress with implementing the NIM in the three forces (as in most other forces in the country) was much slower than originally hoped by NCIS. The evaluation was therefore extended by nine months (to December, 2002) in order to give time for the researchers to examine some more substantial developments. In the event, this made a considerable difference, as, generally speaking, much faster progress was made during the latter part of 2002. At the same time, important changes took place at national level.

Responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the NIM passed from NCIS to the Association of Chief Police Officers, and the Home Office, in consultation with ACPO, decided that all forces should be 'NIM compliant' to a set of agreed standards by April, 2004. This set in motion a significant national effort to assist them to achieve this, including the provision of Home Office funding for a major expansion of the NIMIP team.

In the light of all the above changes, it has been impossible for the evaluators to achieve the initial objectives set for them. However, in the following report the main aim has been to produce as clear a picture as possible of the three forces' practical experiences of adopting and implementing the NIM – information which, it is hoped, will assist other forces in their own efforts in this direction. A priority throughout has been the identification of good practice and of potential hurdles (and how these have been overcome). There is a strong focus on the model itself and the aspects of the model that appear either to work well or to pose problems. This is supported by analysis of the views and experiences of key specialists such as analysts and intelligence officers, as well as of ordinary police officers. Cost data are used to raise some general issues about the financial implications of adopting the NIM. In addition, some crude crime and arrest data are examined to see if there are any preliminary indications that areas introducing the model are seeing any major changes in the patterns of their statistics. Finally, a secondary aim has been to summarise broadly progress to date with the 'rollout' of the NIM across the country as a whole and, in doing so, to identify aspects of the implementation which seem to be going well or causing problems (see also John and Maguire 2003).

1.4 Methodology

In each development site, the evaluators adopted a variety of research methods, depending to some extent on the force's approach to implementing the Model. These included, *inter alia*: collection of documents relating to the implementation scheme and process; interviews with those responsible for force roll-out; interviews (in 25 different BCUs) with those responsible for implementation at BCU level; analysis of NIM related documentation, particularly Intelligence Products (Strategic and Tactical Assessments, Target and Problem Profiles) and a variety of Analytical Products; and observation of TCGs and other NIM related meetings and processes. Two sets of interview and survey data were obtained which are large enough to allow a degree of quantitative analysis. These are:

- Semi structured interviews with 31 intelligence analysts in the three 'pilot' forces.
- 75 returns from a self-completion questionnaires distributed to delegates at a national Analysts Conference in November 2002.

The research team also visited the NIMIP team offices at intervals to interview members of the team and to collect relevant data, including information from the gap analysis and baseline assessment covering all forces. One of the researchers assisted a team member with the development of a 'standards' matrix against which to assess the progress of individual forces in implementing the NIM.

Finally, data were collected about the financial costs of implementing the NIM. Values were placed on additional resources consumed within BCUs and central teams in relation to:

- Staff time
- Training
- Premises and equipment
- Recruitment costs

Discussions were then held with key project staff in order to identify the main factors likely to impact, in the longer term, on the size of the NIM implementation costs.

1.5 Structure of the report

Section 2 provides a brief overview of the national picture, based on information collected by the NIMIP team for its annual assessments of progress. Section 3 presents the main findings from the three police forces studied, focusing primarily on a selected set of key implementation issues, but looking also at managers' views about the NIM itself. Section 4, which is based largely on interviews and questionnaire survey data, presents views and experiences from the 'shop floor', particularly those of analysts and ordinary (non-specialist) police officers. Section 5 considers issues around the measurement of outcomes. It looks at changes in crime and detection rates in OCUs in the West Midlands, comparing those considered most and least 'advanced' in terms of NIM compliance and implementation. It also presents two detailed case studies of NIM-led interventions, one (county-wide and to some extent national) involving more than one level, and one in a particular town. As far as it exists, evidence is presented which indicates some of the outcomes of these cases. Section 6 covers issues around costs. Finally, Section 7 draws together the main findings, identifies some areas of good practice, and raises questions about gaps in knowledge and future evaluation of effectiveness.

2. The National Picture

In order to provide an overview of the extent to which the NIM was being implemented across the country, and to identify specific aspects of the Model (or its resource or organisational requirements) in relation to which progress had been either good or poor, the researchers obtained from the NIMIP team copies of their annual assessments. These are based on a combination of self-assessment returns from each force, and follow-up visits by NIMIP staff, as a result of which the assessments may be amended. The result is, essentially, a ‘traffic lights’ system, in which each force is categorised as red, amber or green in terms of its progress with each of a defined set of developments which are required to introduce and run the Model effectively.

An initial ‘Gap Analysis’ was undertaken in Spring 2001, followed by two ‘Baseline Assessments’ in Spring 2002 and Spring 2003.

Leadership

At the time of the Gap Analysis in early 2001, it was apparent that only a minority of forces had clear and committed ACPO leadership. Only 15 (37 per cent) of the 40 forces surveyed were rated as ‘green’ in the traffic lights system, and a further two (five per cent) as ‘amber’ at that time (see Table 2.1). The leadership of Directors of Intelligence in relation to the NIM was rated somewhat higher, but even here, 32 per cent were assessed to be in the ‘red’ zone. However, by the spring of 2002, the situation in both cases had changed dramatically: all but one forces were rated as ‘green’ on both criteria, meaning that each now had lead officers in place with specific responsibilities and commitment to introducing the NIM.

Table 2.1 ‘Traffic lights’ assessments of forces’ leadership in implementation of NIM: Gap Analysis (Spring 2001) and Baseline Assessments (Spring 2002, 2003)

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Assessment</u>			(n)
	<i>Green</i> %	<i>Amber</i> %	<i>Red</i> %	
2001 ACPO leadership	37.5	5	57.5	(40)
2002 ACPO leadership	98	2	0	(44)
2003 ACPO leadership	100	0	0	(44)
2001 Director of Intelligence	60	7.5	32.5	(40)
2002 Director of Intelligence	98	2	0	(44)
2003 Director of intelligence	100	0	0	(44)

TCGs and Products

There were also major gaps in 2001 in the operation of Tasking and Coordinating Groups, particularly in respect of strategic work and its products. As Table 2.2 shows, in 2001 nearly all forces were deemed to be in the red zone at both Levels One and Level Two in respect of Control Strategies and Strategic Assessments – in many

cases because of failures to produce any of the required documents. By 2002, the situation had improved markedly, with over 40 per cent moving into the green or amber zones in both respects. However, the NIMIP team still felt that many quality issues remained, as reflected in their notes on Strategic Assessments, where comments such as ‘needs development’, ‘short’, ‘in name only’, ‘no corporacy’ and ‘no recommendations’ were common. Moreover, while the situation had improved further by Spring 2003, over a third of forces remained in the red zone in terms of setting Control Strategies at Level One, and a quarter at Level Two.

Table 2.2 ‘Traffic lights’ assessments of progress in the work of TCGs, measured by Gap Analysis (Spring 2001) and Baseline Assessments (Spring 2002 and 2003)

		<i>Green</i>	<i>Amber</i>	<i>Red</i>	
Strategic		%	%	%	(n)
<u>Level One</u>					
2001	Strategic Assessments	5	5	90	(40)
2002	Strategic Assessments	11	30	59	(44)
2003	Strategic Assessments	34	52	14	(44)
2001	STCG sets control strategy	5	2.5	92.5	(40)
2002	STCG sets control strategy	23	20	57	(44)
2003	STCG sets control strategy	41	25	34	(44)
<u>Level 2</u>					
2001	Strategic Assessments	2.5	10	87.5	(40)
2002	Strategic Assessments	14	25	61	(44)
2003	Strategic Assessments	41	52	7	(44)
2001	STCG sets control strategy	0	7.5	92.5	(40)
2002	STCG sets control strategy	39	16	45	(44)
2003	STCG sets control strategy	41	34	25	(44)
Tactical					
<u>Level One</u>					
2001	Tactical Assessments	20	37.5	42.5	(40)
2002	Tactical Assessments	25	48	27	(44)
2003	Tactical Assessments	34	59	7	(44)
<u>Level Two</u>					
2001	Tactical Assessments	10	22.5	67.5	(40)
2002	Tactical Assessments	11	20	68	(44)
2003	Tactical Assessments	20	50	30	(44)
2001	TTCG meets regularly	70	15	15	(40)
2002	TTCG meets regularly	61	23	16	(44)
2003	TTCG meets regularly	77	18	5	(44)

Where Tactical TCGs were concerned, forces started in 2001 from a somewhat better position, but the rate of improvement appears to have been slower than in the strategic area. This was particularly true of Level Two, where even in 2003 only 20 per cent of forces were rated green in respect of their Tactical Assessments. Typical criticisms of Tactical Assessments by the NIMIP team included ‘need a lot of development’, ‘lack consistency’ and ‘mainly stats’.

Analysts

From the Gap Analysis in 2001, it emerged that the 40 forces surveyed (four were missing from the data) had between them 675 analysts. By the following year, the total in these same 40 forces had increased by 12 per cent, to 754. Information was available in the second year on the four ‘missing’ forces: these between employed a further 68 analysts, putting the overall national total at 822 in the Spring of 2002 – an average of 19 analysts per force. Just over 60 per cent of these were employed at Level One, and the remainder at Level Two. Precise data on analysts were not available for 2003, but the indications are that their numbers have continued to grow.

Other findings

There are a number of other issues on which statistics are available from the Baseline Assessments, but data were not collected in the Gap Analysis. For example:

- In Spring 2002, 29 and 23 forces, respectively, were adjudged ‘green’ in terms of the appropriate seniority of the Chairs of their Level One STCGs and TTCGs. By 2003 these numbers had increased to 37 and 38.
- In Spring 2002, only 11 and 8 forces, respectively, were adjudged ‘green’ in terms of the appropriate people attending Level One TTCGs and STCGs. By 2003, these figures had grown to 38 and 37.
- In Spring 2002, 21 forces were adjudged ‘green’ in terms of the structure of their intelligence units. This number grew to 34 in 2003. However, it is worth noting that all the remaining ten remained ‘red’.

3. Implementation issues in three forces

This and the following section of the report will describe and comment upon the experiences of the three ‘pilot’ forces (or ‘development sites’) in their efforts to plan and implement the introduction of National Intelligence Model. As noted above, each force was effectively left to determine its own means of implementation. To some extent (although to varying degrees), this also applies to individual Basic Command Units (BCUs) within the forces. Interviews with, and questionnaires completed by, representatives of other forces suggest that this picture was reflected on a national level – although it is important to note that more coordination has been evident since the expansion of the NIMIP team in the second half of 2002.

We begin in this section with a very brief overview of the basic approach adopted in each force, then look at their experiences through a variety of perspectives. First, we present some of the views of senior and middle managers in the three forces about the ‘image’ of the NIM and difficulties in ‘selling’ it to staff. We then identify and discuss some of the major issues that arose in its implementation in the development sites, both in general terms and in relation to key components of the model. In Section 5, we present findings from interviews and self completion questionnaires which describe the views and experiences both of specialist staff (particularly analysts) and of ordinary police officers.

3.1 Broad approaches adopted

Each development site set up a project implementation team. The composition of these differed, as did the degree to which its members were abstracted to other duties or their ‘day jobs’. Nevertheless, a structured approach – albeit, again, different in each case - was adopted in each force.

Lancashire

Lancashire’s approach to the National Intelligence Model was, broadly speaking, to superimpose it over the ‘problem oriented policing’ (POP) model already established in the force. The initial focus of the implementation team was upon establishing the NIM at force level, leaving the BCUs to some extent to develop their own individual approaches, but efforts were progressively made to introduce a degree of standardisation. Indeed, a total of eleven working groups were established to develop force policy, guidelines and standardised templates on NIM-related issues and products. Members of the various working groups were selected from the centre and from the BCUs, resulting in a broad range of inputs and widening ownership of the model. Examples of ‘best practice’ identified in particular BCUs were incorporated into the working groups’ recommendations.

Lancashire is currently in the process of implementing the recommendations of the working groups throughout the force. The entire process described above has been overseen by the present Chief Constable (beginning when he was Deputy Chief Constable), ensuring that it receives high priority and commitment at a senior management level.

Surrey

Surrey introduced the National Intelligence Model alongside a raft of other significant changes, all with significant backing at ACPO level. Foremost amongst these was the restructuring of the force from seven to four divisions. The other major changes included: the adoption of a digital communications network; the establishment of a Crime Reporting Bureau; realignment of mobile support, to be incorporated into the divisional Targeted Patrol Teams; and transfer of the custody functions from a central to a divisional structure. The underlying rationale for many of these changes was the freeing up of officer time from functions which diverted them from frontline policing activities. A Chief Inspector noted that:

‘We have more officers on patrol to deal with incidents, but the key is that they are all given a detailed intelligence briefing, and tasked to look at our problem areas and individuals.’

Due to the range of change, Surrey adopted a particularly corporate, project managed, approach to the implementation of the NIM, with a Strategic Programme Board meeting weekly to oversee progress during the initial phases. Efforts were made to keep all staff informed of developments through a series of presentations (called ‘Staying Ahead’) delivered throughout the force. These explained the rationale behind the NIM, and placed it within the context of the other structural reforms.

The extent of change in Surrey, and the narrow time frame in which it took place, posed particular difficulties for any attempt to assess the impact of the NIM *per se* within this force. The change in divisional boundaries, moreover, made meaningful comparisons of statistics over a two-year period impossible.

West Midlands

The West Midlands’ implementation of the National Intelligence Model has taken place against the backdrop of a forcewide move towards more *local* control of policing, with significant transfers of resources from the centre to the 21 Operational Command Units (OCUs). A Community Safety Bureau (CSB) has been established in each OCU, and recently one has been established at force level. The CSBs were partly designed to co-ordinate and produce the principal NIM products. They combine intelligence personnel with staff who perform specific community support roles (for example, with victims and vulnerable people) or have partnership-related crime reduction responsibilities. Given the broad focus and membership of the CSBs, they potentially form a model of good practice in housing a variety of information sources and capabilities in one unit.

The high degree of decentralisation has been reflected in the roll-out of the NIM within the force. The centre has had limited resources and a weaker infrastructure than either Lancashire or Surrey to roll out a force wide interpretation of the Model and its operation. As might be anticipated, there has been wide variation in practice and in organisational structures throughout the OCUs. Nevertheless, monthly CSB Inspectors meetings have provided a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge and good practice, albeit in a less corporate manner than the other two development sites, and with less transparent drive from ACPO officers. It is anticipated that part of the role of the new Force CSB will be to take a corporate lead on NIM related issues.

3.2 The name, image and language of the NIM: management views

This section is included to provide the context for some of the specific issues that will be raised during later discussions of the implementation of the model in the three forces studied. It is based on semi-structured interviews and general discussions with implementation managers and experienced intelligence personnel, at both force and BCU level (a total of 25 BCUs were visited throughout the three development sites).

Name and 'branding'

A recurring theme amongst those interviewed concerned difficulties in 'selling' the NIM to police officers, particularly in terms of understanding its relevance to their everyday work. One concern was simply the name 'National Intelligence Model'. This issue was raised at a number of levels, including intelligence unit operatives, local managers, and those involved in managing force and national roll-outs of the Model. It was pointed out that this title misleadingly suggests that it is mainly 'about' intelligence and hence the province of CID and specialist units rather than 'mainstream' police work. Further problems were identified with the initial, highly visible NCIS ownership (or 'branding') of the Model. A number of interviewees felt that this fuelled a mistaken perception that it was primarily concerned with national rather than local issues. This view formed a considerable obstacle to 'selling' the Model to local managers.

The transfer of responsibility for the NIM to ACPO may have mitigated the latter concern to some degree. Nevertheless, a range of interviewees had continued to experience difficulty in persuading colleagues of the usefulness of the Model, as its association with 'intelligence' prevented them from understanding its relevance to other favoured models of working, such as 'community', 'problem oriented', or 'geographic' policing. The preferred alternative title amongst those who raised the issue was the more neutral 'National Policing Model'.

The language of the Model

The basic misconceptions stemming from the title of the Model might be relatively straightforward to overcome through direct (presentations) or indirect (cascade) interventions to educate managers and officers. A particularly strong example of the former approach was the 'Staying Ahead' presentations in Surrey, which, as described above, were convened forcewide during the summer of 2001 to inform all personnel of the raft of changes, including the NIM, that were being introduced to the force. Lancashire also put in place a number of mechanisms, including a specific course for senior managers, and a poster pull-out in the force newspaper summarising the central purposes and processes of the model.

A more difficult obstacle to overcome, however, is the difficulties that many officers clearly have in understanding the Model itself. This issue will be discussed in more detail later in the report, and here we shall concentrate solely on the general accessibility and language of the NIM. A not uncommon observation amongst those who had to become familiar with the Model was that it (the NCIS CD-ROM and related documentation) required substantial reading and re-reading before even the basic principles became clear. One intelligence unit inspector observed that:

‘The National Intelligence Model needs re-writing in English,’
and two comments from intelligence sergeants were:

‘I gave up on the CD-ROM, couldn’t understand it. I love intelligence, and wanted to learn, but the terminology was very user unfriendly. It is academically approached with little thought for the people actually using it.’

‘One major obstacle is the language of the model. People switch off, or they leave it altogether. To re-write it in simple language would be a big step forward. It is bureaucratic.’

The counter-argument to these concerns is that the Model needs to use relatively technical terms so that those familiar with them can instantly identify, for example, on which level a crime is being tackled, or which specific products are being used to shed further light on it. Although there are clear merits to this viewpoint, the overwhelming view is that it is insufficiently approachable and therefore not a transparent process. This was widely seen as a substantial obstacle to establishing a broad sense of ownership of the model outside of key personnel such as analysts and intelligence managers:

‘The labels, jargon, and posh names will lose people. Cliques have evolved using jargon and buzzwords that confuse and frustrate many staff.’
[Intelligence Inspector]

‘NIM is a simple concept made very difficult. It is academic. If you carve it up you can get the hang of it. In fact, it can be insulting, it’s so simple. But also police officers can be very basic in their approach. My own impression is that it was meant to be a management tool, that it was never meant for police officers. And with this apparently not being the case, I don’t see why the structure has to be so formal for police officers, for them to do their job. It contains a level of sophistication that turns people off.’
[Intelligence Sergeant]

‘The problem with the NCIS stuff [documentation] is it’s all circles and blobs. Give it to someone who is not very interested and they will throw it down’
[Inspector]

‘It’s jargon, not user friendly at all. It’s all theory, not practical. You need ‘war stories’ to give examples, to show how it can be implemented practically.’
[Inspector]

Of course, it would be impracticable to address this problem at this late stage through a major revision of terminology, but it is clear that a major communication effort needs to be made to ensure that at least the key terms become more familiar and properly understood. Further comment on this will be made presently.

3.3 General implementation issues.

We move now to look at five broad aspects of the NIM which emerged from the fieldwork as of particular importance to its effective implementation. These are discussed under six main headings, as follows:

Leadership and commitment
TCGs
Intelligence Products
Standardisation
Analysts
'Ownership' and understanding of the Model

Leadership and commitment

As outlined above, each development site had an implementation team for the NIM, albeit constituted differently. It is clear from the experience of the teams themselves, and of the overall progress of the implementation process, that a key factor in the roll-out of the Model is strong and committed leadership. Such leadership is vital at a number of levels.

First of all, a committed ACPO lead to 'drive the business' in each force is an important determinant of overall progress with the NIM, a fact recognised by the NIMIP team in that it forms one of their baseline criteria for assessing progress. Some changes in senior management in the development sites have produced tangible influences on the status of the implementation processes.

Strength of leadership is also important in other areas. Perhaps foremost amongst these is the chairing of TCGs. This factor came through strongly in the interviews in all three development sites, and through observation of a number of TCGs. Without effective chairing of the TCG – based on a full understanding of, and commitment to, the NIM - it could easily revert to simply a general performance review, or a 'bidding-for-resources platform', where personality rather than evidence from products was most likely to prevail. The more effective chairs, however, were able to maintain a focus on the issues within the Tactical Assessment and prioritise resources on that basis. Additionally, they were more likely to review the effectiveness of previous activities and seek to improve on results, rather than to dismiss them and move on to the next short term 'blip' or apparent crisis. Further comment on TCGs is given below.

Outside of the TCG itself, the commitment of the Chair (or Divisional Superintendent if different) was also an important determinant of the centrality of the NIM within the activities of a BCU, particularly in terms of the status, and therefore the influence, of the intelligence unit. A number of Detective Inspectors running such units expressed frustration with senior managers who did not understand the NIM, were not committed to it, and hence were not equipped to drive the business effectively. Examples were also supplied of occasions when strong predictive analysis had identified a problem that could have been effectively targeted, but it was not taken up as it fell outside narrow performance measurement criteria prioritised by a BCU commander.

One visible indicator of the commitment and understanding of senior BCU managers was the extent to which they were prepared to insulate their intelligence analyst(s) from the production of routine management information. Where analysts were not permitted to dedicate themselves primarily to intelligence analysis, their usefulness to

the NIM process was compromised. Indeed, if management expectations of the analysts' potential usefulness were low, it was not uncommon for them to lose the motivation to strive to produce more sophisticated products: 'Give them a map or a chart with pretty colours on, and they're happy' was a not infrequently expressed sentiment of analysts in this situation towards senior managers.

TCGs

Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups (TCGs) operate at two levels: strategic and tactical. These groups also exist at each of the three policing levels within the model: Level 1 being local issues (BCU); Level 2 cross border issues (force); and Level 3 serious and organised crime (national or international).

Strategic Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups (STCGs)

The purpose of the STCG is to set the control strategy for the appropriate level. The frequency with which STCGs sit varies currently between every 3, 6 or 12 months. The Strategic Assessment is the key product that informs the group. This will define the major crime and other policing problems expected to be salient in the coming period. A variety of sources of information should be used to establish these, including priorities set at other levels, and governmental and partnership concerns. From this 'menu' of priorities, the STCG will select the issues that will be concentrated upon – ie those that will form the basis of the control strategy.

It is largely the Level One process that has formed the focus of the evaluation of this aspect of the roll out. However, in this early period of NIM implementation, by no means all BCUs in the three forces examined had set up STCGs, and where they had, the quality of their Strategic Assessments varied considerably. As the Model and its processes mature, an important facet of future research will be the interrelationship between the STCGs and control strategies across the levels of policing.

The following were the main findings to emerge from examining those BCUs which had already prepared several Strategic Assessments.

1. Limited input from partners

Despite the intention behind the NIM that STCGs should involve not just police officers, but partners from other agencies, and that control strategies should draw upon information from a wide range of sources, only a few STCGs were set up in this way. Some examples of good practice were identifiable in each of the development sites, with individual BCUs involving a variety of partners including local authorities and the National Probation Service. Outside of these individual BCUs, however, such involvement was regarded as an area for future development.

2. Dominance of performance indicators

Not only were most STCGs dominated by a 'police view' of local problems, but the concern was raised by some intelligence operatives that managers tended to take insufficient note of those aspects of the Strategic Assessment that fell outside of police performance indicators. This, coupled with the lack of partnership representation at the strategic level, can lead to the priorities in the control strategy

remaining narrowly focused rather than intelligence or resource and achievability led. It was also noted that this in turn could influence the way in which intelligence staff approached their tasks, and that in some BCUs the content, presentation and diversity of sources used were being steadily amended to meet the narrower information demands of the managers. The comments below are typical of many on this topic by local intelligence officers:

‘If an issue is a KPI, it is given priority over non-KPIs, regardless of whether the KPI issue is as much of a problem as the other one.’

‘The TCG is a concentration upon performance indicators and little else. This needs changing. When priorities are set at TCG, if the performance indicators were taken out, then the real problems of the BCU would show up accurately. There is a distinct conflict between ground level police officers and the upper management (and their focus on performance indicators).’

‘The biggest problem in the area is drugs. KPIs are dominant and the problem is that they disregard drugs.’

‘Don’t always think that the KPIs reflect the concerns of the community. Non-KPIs can cause neglect and lose touch with the worries and concerns of the public.’

3. Conflicting aims and priorities

Finally, and more generally, the National Intelligence Model should allow policing organisations at each level to determine their policing priorities strategically over a set period of time. The setting of those priorities should be informed by a number of factors, including governmental and partnership priorities, issues of concern to the community, and the resources available at any particular time. Once the NIM has matured (ie the processes at, and flow of information between, the levels are operating effectively) this should become a symbiotic, circular process. Hence the priorities being set at BCU level should influence force priorities; in turn priorities set by the forces should influence governmental priorities, and so forth. At this early stage of implementation, however, the priorities set at each level were often not balanced, and in some instances were conflicting. For example, reflecting on the current absence of a Strategic Assessment for her BCU, one intelligence unit sergeant observed:

‘What the Government want contradicts what the BCU wants. But [we] must be patient. The Strategic Assessment will be up and running shortly and it is hoped that this document will assist the drive for the next 12 months with less reliance on Government objectives and more on the real need of the BCU. Everyone will be a lot happier to argue when the Strategic Assessment is the basis of fact. Then if performance indicators match real need – fine. If not, we can address it with knowledge and evidence.’

One frequently cited example of this kind of conflict was the impact of the government’s Street Crime Initiative (see Home Office 2002), which identified a ‘top ten’ of forces in which street robbery would be targeted as a major priority. However, the inclusion of Lancashire (as the tenth on the list) was said by many interviewees to have created significant problems for that force, as this type of crime was not generally considered a serious problem in most BCUs and the SCI resulted in policing

resources being diverted away from locally identified priorities. As one LIO succinctly put it: 'Here we need a vehicle squad, not a robbery squad.'

More generally, although many senior officers were aware of the issue, relatively little attention appeared to have been paid to the tricky question of how to ensure that the concerns of local communities are systematically identified and routinely taken into account in formulating priorities and strategies. Often, it was conceded, local community concerns could be very different to those reflected in government or police priorities.

Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating Group (TTCGs)

It is the responsibility of the TTCG to implement the control strategy, and to manage subsequent priorities that might arise. The principal document that informs the TTCG is the Tactical Assessment. The following (some of which apply also to STCGs) are the main issues to emerge during the fieldwork:

1. Frequency of TTCG meetings

There was considerable variation between the development sites in the frequency with which TTCG meetings were held. In one force alone, for example, different BCUs convened the meetings at weekly, fortnightly or monthly intervals (although this was later reviewed). Another force held its TTCG meetings fortnightly, with varying interim arrangements to review the priorities in the light of intervening events or results. Some BCUs, for example, held a weekly tactical update meeting, others daily briefings, and others a combination of the two. Some of these interim meetings were attended by the same members as the full TTCG, others had representatives from uniform, CID, and the intelligence unit. Yet another approach was to hold a full TTCG once a month, with an intervening 'tactical update' in the intervening fortnight: the tactical update reviewed performance against the priorities set.

There is some debate on what the most appropriate interval between TTCGs might be. The advantage of a monthly meeting is that it allows trends to become apparent and the proportion of analysts' time spent preparing Tactical Assessment documents is minimised. It also assists in preventing the process becoming dominated by 'knee-jerk', reactive activities based on responding to isolated crimes or short-term 'blips', and allows time for the agreed responses to have an impact. The major disadvantages, however, are that effective ongoing review of prioritised activities becomes more difficult, and the length of time can lead to the focus on those priorities being lost.

The comparative strengths and weaknesses of weekly meetings are essentially the converse of the above. They tend to encourage a short-term, non-predictive approach. Another recurrent criticism is that the proportion of analysts' time spent preparing the Tactical Assessment documents is too great – typically a day to two days prior to the meeting is spent preparing these. This impacts considerably upon the analytical resources available to create meaningful Intelligence and Analytical Products. A two weekly interval, possibly supplemented by an intervening update meeting, would appear to be a useful compromise between the two extremes.

2. Seniority of Chair and those attending

As noted earlier, through observation of the TTCGs and interviews with their members, it became increasingly clear to the research team that a crucial consideration in how effectively they drive policing business is the Chair's understanding of, and commitment to, the NIM, combined with his or her ability to focus the meeting on the relevant issues. The seniority of the Chair is also an important consideration. When it is the Divisional Commander or other senior manager, the membership is more frequently comprised of the resource managers rather than their representatives. At a number of TCGs observed, and from the minutes of others, it was clear that for many it was common practice for more junior representatives, such as police constables, to attend regularly in place of resource 'owners'. This undermined both the resource allocation potential of the TCG, and its ultimate accountability.

3. Conduct of meetings

Observation of TTCG meetings revealed some examples of good practice in each of the three forces: for example, routine and systematic reviews of previous plans and actions; readiness to change tactics in the light of evidence; and regular involvement and attendance of members of relevant partner agencies. However, a number of common weaknesses were identified that detracted from the potential of TTCGs to perform their main functions. These included:

- Members not reading the Tactical Assessment prior to the meeting. This sometimes necessitated the report being read out verbatim (usually by the analyst), reducing the time available for constructive discussion.
- A common tendency for the discussion to become sidetracked into the details of individual crimes, even where there was no clear link to previously established priorities. In one BCU, indeed, the lack of attention being paid to the Analytical Products had resulted in the analysts no longer attending the TTCG or producing Tactical Assessments. The civilian LIO now performed both functions.
- A tendency for the meetings to become dominated by performance indicator concerns, and subsequently for priorities to be set on this basis rather than by reference to the control strategy or addressing longer term trends.
- In some instances the TTCG more closely resembled a 'resource bidding' meeting rather than an intelligence driven one. Again, arguments for resources tended to be built around the desire to rectify dips in performance measured areas of policing, rather than the 'messages' emerging from Intelligence Products.

Intelligence Products

During the course of the research the three development sites and some of their BCUs were asked to provide samples of their Intelligence Products in anonymised form. Consequently, a large number of completed Intelligence Products were collected. These included: ten Strategic Assessments, close to 250 Tactical Assessments, 70 Problem Profiles, and a range of Target Profiles. The original intention was to use the review element of the Tactical Assessments to provide a mechanism whereby the impact of NIM could be tracked through measuring the outcome of each priority set

and the resultant activity agreed. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, this element of review is not yet a routine and explicitly evaluative element of NIM business – and where it does exist, it tends towards the qualitative rather than quantitative. A statistically-based analysis of results was therefore not possible.² Instead, the analysis focused on identifying the main issues (including quality issues) which emerged in relation to each of the products, as set out below. Further light was thrown on these issues by analysis of a range of other miscellaneous documents, such as TTCG minutes and Analytical Products.

Strategic Assessments

The Strategic Assessment is potentially the most significant document, due to its influence in determining the control strategy for a set period of time, and its distillation of priorities from a broad range of sources. Different police forces and their BCUs have approached the preparation and content of their Strategic Assessment very differently. In those BCUs which provided several Strategic Assessments, it was clear that there had been a considerable learning curve between earlier and later documents, with evidence of increasingly sophisticated analysis. Interviews with authors suggest that this process of development is assisted both by having the original document as a foundation on which to build, and the acquisition of a clearer understanding from the members of the STCG of what types of information are of most use to their decision making.

This having been said, considerable extremes were evident in the quality of assessments. One BCU's Strategic Assessment, for example, was little more than a loose and unstructured collection of data on a range of crimes. Comment on the statistics was descriptive rather than analytical and no reference was made to sources for determining priorities other than the meeting of existing performance indicators.

On the other hand, other BCUs with similar analytical resources had managed to produce much more comprehensive and sophisticated Strategic Assessments. Examples of these were evident in all three forces. The knowledge, training, and enthusiasm of analysts, and their protected abstraction of time from other duties by their managers, appear to be key factors in facilitating the production of high quality documents. Those interviewed stated that up to two months of work was required to produce these comprehensive annual Strategic Assessments. It was common practice for intervening quarterly updates to be distributed to provide a summary of progress and to present updated information.

One such Strategic Assessment is summarised as an exemplar, due to the overall cohesiveness of its structure, and its clear attempts to employ predictive analysis (see Box 3.1).

² In future research, it may be advisable to collect and analyse such documents from a small number of BCUs in which agreement is reached that they will complete reviews systematically.

Box 3.1 Summary example of a Strategic Assessment

The document begins with a clear statement of purpose, as follows:

‘The purpose of the Divisional Strategic Assessment is to inform the [TCG] process in setting priorities for crime, disorder, and quality of life issues, in order to inform other initiatives (such as changes in legislation), and to encourage a proactive and intelligence-directed approach to reducing crime, disorder and road casualties [at] Level One.’

The terms of reference of the assessment are clearly defined and signed up to by the Divisional Commander, DCI, DI, DS, and the analysts.

The report contains a detailed table of contents and executive summary (although NCIS guidelines recommend against executive summaries in order to encourage full reading, the force prefers it to be included to form the basis of discussion). A one page ‘forecast’ provides an annual time-line calendar, identifying seasonal trends from previous years. To complement this information the diagram also includes an indication of when planning for the predicted peaks should commence. Finally, the forecast includes a summary of the options that the intelligence, enforcement, and prevention arms of the police should focus on to address the problems.

This summary and forecast section of the assessment is followed by a clear statement of the aims and purpose of the report, the nature of the assessment, and an overview of the research methodology.

A ‘comparative review’ discusses the lessons learnt from the experience of using the previous Strategic Assessment, including the importance of not letting focus on the priorities set wane again in the second half of the year. It also summarises progress on those priorities set over the year.

An ‘external factors’ section then details governmental and force targets that will influence the setting of the divisional priorities.

The assessment then turns to thematic reviews of various policing problems. For 2002/2003 these are: acquisitive crime, drug-related criminality, quality of life, and the impact of borders. Although the specific structure of each varies, they typically include a summary of the current situation, a discussion of the market (if relevant), areas of concern, and recommendations in terms of intelligence, enforcement, and prevention. The discussion within each thematic review is notable for its links to a wide range of supporting information, including academic theory, that considerably strengthens the force of the recommendations made.

The main document ends with a summary of developments in, and further areas of improvements for, the division’s intelligence and problem oriented policing strategies.

Finally, the assessment includes several appendices that provide additional information on issues covered in the main report.

Tactical Assessments

The Tactical Assessment documents received also varied widely in scope and quality. As above, there were examples ranging from the simple presentation of descriptive statistics to the employment of a range of Analytical Products to identify, quantify, and assess the appropriate responses to a problem. Indeed, it was apparent in reviewing these documents that the *standardisation* issues discussed elsewhere in this report were acutely relevant here. With one partial exception, uniformity of structure and approach was strikingly lacking within each force. This was clearly a factor in the further finding that the exchange of information between different TCGs was not common: for example, only one force's Level Two analysts routinely collected the Tactical Assessments from their BCUs and were able to supply them centrally to the evaluation team.

As with Strategic Assessments, concerns about performance indicators often dominated Tactical Assessments, at the expense of other priorities. Minutes and action plans arising from the TTCGs suggest that this was often perpetuated in the meeting itself. Tactical Assessments were often retrospective rather than predictive in character, focusing on trends that had arisen in the intervening period since the previous document was produced. This was partly attributable to a lack of clear guidance to analysts from TCGs about the kinds of analysis they should be producing. It also contributed to a general tendency to concentrate on short term resolutions, rather than looking at longer term interventions. Examples of explicit and ongoing responses coordinated with relevant crime and disorder partners were found, but were in a small minority.

Problem Profiles and Target Profiles

These two categories are the most specific Intelligence Products as they focus on an individual problem or target (although links to other activities or individuals are frequently included). Problem Profiles are similar in nature and content to problem oriented policing products drawn up using the SARA (scanning, analysis, response, and assessment) technique. Although standardisation is preferred, it is less of a critical issue than with the products outlined above, as Problem Profiles are more likely to be owned by, and remain at, a particular level (force-wide initiatives requiring local control, such as the Street Crime Initiative, form an exception to this rule of thumb).

A key feature of both Problem and Target Profiles is their use by TTCGs to aid decision making on prioritisation of resources. Ideally, the TTCG will be presented with a menu of full products. The information that they contain will assist in determining which problems or targets will receive attention, and the form that any such activities will take. As such, the two products may draw on a broad range of Analytical Products to provide the requisite degree of information and analysis for the appropriate tactical options to be utilised. Version 2 of the NCIS guidelines, for example, suggests that Problem Profiles may draw (as appropriate) on Results Analysis, Crime Pattern Analysis, Network Analysis, Risk Analysis, Demographic/Social Trends Analysis, Market Profiles and an operational Intelligence Assessment. These products are also included for Target Profiles, with the exception of Demographic/Social Trends Analysis, and the addition of Target Profile Analysis and Criminal Business Profiles.

Gill (2000) raised the issue of intelligence being used as a justification for focussing on 'the usual suspects', rather than broadening the focus. In theory, utilisation of the Analytical Products in the manner outlined above, should mitigate such concerns by objectively assessing activity, risk, and the decision to target individuals. However, with some exceptions that clearly demonstrate good practice, it was apparent from the research that Target Profiles did frequently stray into speculative outlines of which known offenders might be responsible for which offences. The risk here, of course, is that organisational responses remain too narrowly focused on simply arresting a small set of known individuals, rather than on addressing underlying problems.

The general issues that arise from the above discussion are as follows.

1. Different forces, BCUs, analysts and other individuals in intelligence roles are at different stages of what is a steep learning curve for coming to terms with the model and its associated Intelligence and Analytical Products. Many of those who implemented the model in a structured way early on were able to demonstrate improvements in the level of analysis and sophistication of presentation over time.
2. Substantial investment in intelligence and analytical resources, and protection from abstraction, are necessary if products of a requisite standard are to be produced.
3. Something of a 'vicious circle' was also apparent. Without the above issues being addressed, it is likely that the products will remain comparatively weak, and their usefulness or 'added value' questionable to the members of the TCG. Without quality products it is less likely that senior managers (particularly the less knowledgeable or committed among them) will see the potential value of investing further in analytical resources. Further development of the model could therefore become 'stuck' and its potential unrealised.
4. Formal training and networking opportunities are necessary for analysts to be able to acquire and disseminate good practice.

Standardisation

One of the key aims of the NIM is to introduce standardisation of procedures and products. This is explicit in the structure of the Model, as demonstrated in the replicated processes at Levels One, Two and Three. Standardisation of the products that inform and influence the TCG meetings (both strategic and tactical) is therefore highly desirable. Very different interpretations of content and structure of the product documentation make their effective collation and analysis throughout the Level structure difficult to achieve. For example 21 very different Strategic Assessments at Level One will make the opportunities for Level Two prioritisation based upon them far more difficult to achieve. Similarly, if all 43 forces produce radically different Strategic Assessments, building a national picture will be difficult at Level Three. Ultimately, indeed, such blockages in the transference of Intelligence and Analytical Products may potentially undermine one of the main strengths of the NIM as a whole.

Given the fundamental nature of this issue, the attempts made at standardisation by the NIMIP team might be viewed as an opportunity missed. The first tranche of

guidance documentation provided very open exemplars of what should be done within each element of the process, and of what should be included within specific products. The more specific Version 2 guidelines focused upon Intelligence Products, providing an overview of the aims and purpose of each product, and recommendations as to the frequency of their production, appropriateness of their dissemination, etc. They also provided recommended formats for the four products, with fictional examples of each.

‘Too little and too late’ is probably the most accurate reflection of the views of intelligence personnel in the development sites about the usefulness of the latter guidelines. Another frequently expressed view was that the guidelines represented an attempt to impose a national standard upon the process with little appreciation for policing at force, and particularly BCU, level. For example, one Head of Intelligence noted that the NCIS Target Profiles were suitable at BCU level, but ‘insufficient’ for Level Two. In this regard, one of the development sites was particularly concerned at the lack of consultation between NCIS and the development sites in the creation of the guidance documents. It may well be that such difficulties are less pronounced in other forces which began their implementation in earnest at a later date.

In the absence of early clear national guidance, therefore, the three forces studied had adopted various mechanisms to develop their own in-house requirements and guidance for what the various processes should involve, and the content and format of their various products. The degrees of corporacy of these approaches varied. A constant feature, however, was that any such force-wide guidance and/or templates came into play a considerable time after initial implementation of the NIM, typically in the second half of 2002. In the intervening period, each BCU developed, and became comfortable with, using its own interpretation of the product. Consequently, later attempts to impose a template from an ‘external’ source tended to be met with some resistance. This problem was particularly acute where leadership on the NIM at force level was relatively diffuse. The result could be a multiplicity of variations of both the Intelligence and the Analytical Products.

Analysts

Analysts’ views and experiences of the implementation of NIM, which were gathered systematically via both semi-structured interviews and a self-completion questionnaire, will be discussed in Section 5 below. This section will raise some of the general issues that have been identified about the use of analysts as a resource. It will primarily concentrate on the numbers of analysts needed to produce the NIM related products, and on issues of recruitment and retention.

The NIMIP team suggests that one analyst per 90–100 officers is required for divisional or BCU work for the Model to be run effectively. Due to a period of constant flux, data on how many forces match this recommendation are currently unavailable. From interviews and questionnaires, however, it is apparent that there are considerable disparities. For example, in October 2001, one of the pilot forces calculated that it was 70 per cent under strength in analytical capability according to this recommendation, whereas one of its neighbouring forces had met the target standard.

National competition for experienced analysts (from other forces, public bodies, and private companies) is currently intense, making the recruitment and retention of analysts an issue for each of the development sites. Many forces have considerably expanded their numbers of analytical staff as part of their introduction of the Model, as demonstrated in Section 2 above.

The development sites had differing histories of analytical strength. Two forces had invested substantially in analysts prior to NIM, further increasing their cohort since its introduction. The other force is currently increasing its capacity through recruiting a combination of analysts and intelligence researchers.

Recruitment of sufficient numbers of analysts aside, the retention of existing analysts was a major issue for many representatives of the forces spoken to. At the present time there is no nationally agreed pay structure or clear (hierarchical) career path for analysts. This produces two difficulties. Firstly, the lower paying forces frequently have their analysts poached by their more generous neighbours (or by other, non-police, employers). For example, one of the development sites in the two year period ending October 2001 experienced a 48 per cent turnover of analytical staff. In contrast, their higher-paying neighbouring force retained all its analysts over the same period. Given the expense of training analysts (estimated by one Principal Analyst at £5.5k for basic skills and £10 to £15k for comprehensive training), and the time taken for them to become accustomed to the way a BCU operates, this is a clear financial as well as human resources issue. Secondly, for those analysts who do remain within one force, there is little career incentive for them to seek to excel. Senior and Principal analyst posts are very low in number. One Principal Analyst summed up the position thus:

‘Staff retention depends upon job satisfaction, which includes professional development, career progression, salary and training. There is no professional structure within the analytical function to ensure analysts’ development and to guarantee quality assured work. There is no career structure for analysts to enhance their development and to ensure their accountability for performance.’

In the absence of a national career structure, a number of forces have taken an initiative in developing their own internal equivalents. Although this increases the prospects and job satisfaction for those analysts who remain, it does not solve the broader retention issues. A detailed assessment of this particular issue was outside the remit of this report, but it clearly requires specific attention at a national level.

‘Ownership’ and understanding of the Model

To be effective, the NIM relies on the understanding, commitment and involvement of police officers throughout the organisation, not just managers and intelligence staff. As has already been discussed in the summary of managers’ general views about the Model – and as will be demonstrated in the analysis of surveys of analysts and ‘ordinary officers’ in section 5 – there are still substantial problems among most groups of officers (senior and junior, and even including many members of TCGs) in terms of knowledge and comprehension of the NIM and the part they play in it. Intelligence staff and managers gave a number of reasons for this, including a general

lack of preparation and training, lack of time through involvement in operations, the ‘academic’ and complex nature of the Model and its language, and a widespread belief that the NIM was the province only of ‘specialists’. Comments included:

‘I had no training personally and had a complete lack of knowledge. The NIM booklet was the only facility available. As a result it is tough making decisions with no knowledge base, and an incredible challenge with the new job...to get to know staff, their roles, the area, and my own role’ [Intelligence Unit Inspector]

‘The reason why many TCG members don’t know anything about the NIM is because they are operational and don’t have the time to learn about it.’ [Local Intelligence Officer]

‘Training and awareness issues are a massive problem. Awareness of NIM is limited at TCG, even now, and ground level awareness is non-existent.’ [Detective Inspector]

When asked whether it was important for all officers to have a full knowledge of NIM, a small number of senior officers argued that, for example, patrol officers do not need to know the detail of the process by which their tasks are arrived at: intelligence gathering and input can be specified in much the same way as other policing tasks, and therefore the instructions are all the officers need to know, not how and why they were formulated. On the other hand, the majority saw such knowledge as vital to maintaining the viability of policing prioritised on an intelligence driven basis. Without general understanding, they argued, officers will feel no sense of involvement with intelligence, seeing it as the preserve of others, and will not engage in the process. Consequently, the quantity and quality of intelligence entering the system will see little improvement. Comments supporting this view included the following:

‘If officers doing the job generally have no idea why they are doing it, they will have less commitment to intelligence led policing and will only be interested in response methods. Inspectors in general have identified that sectors and individual officers need to understand the link between what they contribute in intelligence, and the feedback and tasking that comes from the CSB. They need to see that they are not feeding into a ‘black hole’ and that it is not a one-way process.’ [Superintendent]

‘There was no need to know about the Model when I was operational. But, with hindsight, it would have been good to know. It puts what policing should be into a structure’. [Inspector]

‘Education is the key, and ground level is as important as the intelligence unit and management, because at the end of the day they are the key contributors in that the work gets done (or not) and intelligence is collected (or not)’ [Inspector]

‘There’s a knowledge gap from ACPO to ground level officers... If ground level officers don’t understand why they are tasked, co-operation will be less.’ [Inspector]

3.4 Concluding comments

The main message from this Section has been that, while the NIM has gained considerable support and commitment among police managers, there remain some major challenges to its successful implementation. Most importantly:

- There is still work to be done (including substantial training needs) in terms of ‘selling’ the NIM to ordinary staff, many of whom continue to associate it with specialist intelligence functions (and hence not directly ‘to do with’ them) and who find its structure and language complex and difficult to understand.
- High quality chairing of TCGs is essential, to maintain focus on evidence, analysis and strategy, to resolve conflicts between competing priorities (eg local and national), and to avoid over-concentration on short-term issues and performance indicators.
- Maintaining and improving the quality of intelligence products is equally vital. This includes attention to standardisation of products, providing ongoing training for analysts, using analysts’ skills correctly (ie not simply as producers of ‘management information’), and efforts to retain good analysts in the face of competition for their services.

4. Views and experiences from the ‘shop floor’

In this section, we explore in a more systematic way the views, perceptions and experiences of (a) analysts and other intelligence staff and (b) ordinary police officers, in relation to the NIM and its structures, especially the work of TCGs. The findings here are based mainly on quantitative analysis of interviews and questionnaires.

4.1 Analysts and intelligence operatives

As already explained, analysts perform a pivotal role in the operation of the National Intelligence Model, being responsible in most areas for the preparation of the Intelligence and Analytical Products which are considered at TCG meetings. In order to explore analysts’ views and experiences, three main sets of data were collected:

1. Open-ended interviews were conducted with the Principal Analysts in each of the three forces studied.
2. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 31 analysts in these forces – six in Surrey, five in Lancashire, and twenty in the West Midlands.
3. Self-completion questionnaires were distributed to delegates (approximately 250) at the national Analyst Conference hosted by Lancashire Constabulary in November 2002. A total of 75 questionnaires were returned, representing 32 different forces or agencies. Of the 75, six were Principal Analysts, ten Senior Analysts, and 42 Analysts. The remaining 17 performed other roles including, for example, intelligence researchers and intelligence managers.

Education, training and previous experience of analysts

All analysts, either interviewed or responding to the questionnaire, were civilians. They were split fairly evenly between those who had been recruited internally from administrative roles and those who had been newly and expressly appointed to the role. The great majority of the latter had had a university education. Of the full sample of conference analyst respondents, 64 per cent held a first degree, and over one in five of these also had a higher degree. The proportions in the development sites were very similar. In both samples, too, 60 per cent of all analysts had previous experience in analytical roles in the police, other agencies or in the private sector.

The length of time they had spent in the role varied considerably (see table 4.1). One-third of the conference analysts, and 23 per cent of the development site analysts, had been in post for less than one year. On the other hand, a significant minority had been analysts for over five years.

Table 4.1 Time in post as analyst

	Pilot forces	National sample
less than 1 year	23%	33 %
1-<5 years	61%	47 %
5 years or over	16%	21%
Total	100% (N=31)	100% (N=58)

The training given to analysts once recruited varied considerably between the three forces, and between different BCUs within them. Just over a third of the development site analysts, and 49 per cent of the conference sample, had received specific training on the National Intelligence Model. The difference may be partly accounted for by the fact that the interviews were conducted throughout the duration of the research, whereas the conference provided a 'snapshot' near the end of the research period.

Only a quarter of the development site analysts described their training as 'holistic'. The remainder had attended a series of single courses, frequently concentrated on using specific computer systems or databases.

The conference respondents were asked whether they had received specific training on the use of the four Intelligence Products and/or the nine Analytical Products. As Table 4.2 shows, only a small proportion had been trained on all of either category, and most had been trained on less than half of the Analytical Products.

Table 4.2 Training on intelligence and Analytical Products

Intelligence products

	N	Per cent
All	6	10
Some	41	71
None	9	16
NA/don't know	2	3
Total	58	100

Analytical products

	N	Per cent
All	5	9
Majority	18	31
Minority	26	45
None	6	10
NA/don't know	3	5
Total	58	100

Beyond training, the most frequently cited means of learning about NIM and its associated products was through materials distributed by NCIS, particularly the CD-ROM and its accompanying booklet. Sixty-four per cent of the conference respondents had used such materials; 52 per cent had used guidance produced by their own force; and 24 per cent had used other sources, such as colleagues in other forces, and the internet. A similar picture emerged from the interviews with the development site analysts.

The diversity found in their academic background, training, and prior experience in policing and in analysis, is clearly a factor in the variable capabilities of analysts in terms of producing standardised and high quality documents, as well as of understanding and relating to police members of TCGs.

Intelligence and Analytical Products

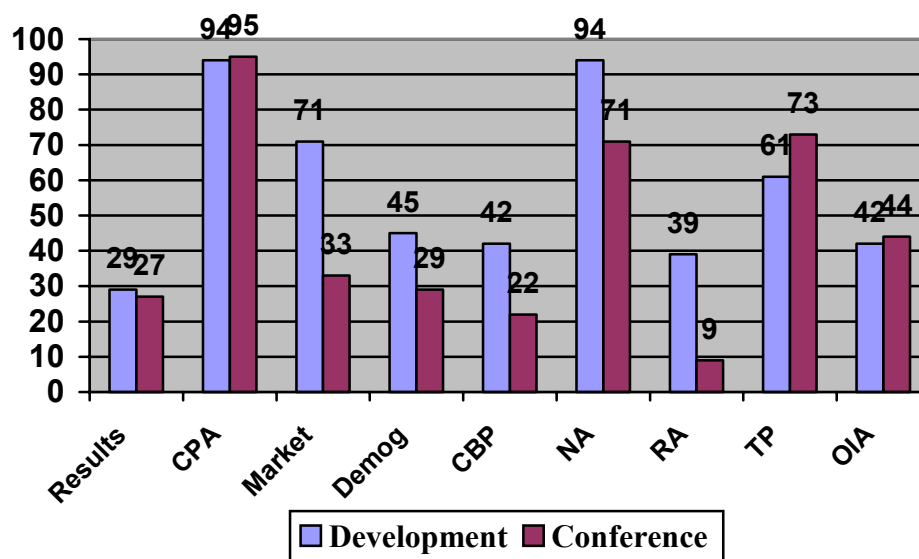
Interviewees in the three forces and respondents to the questionnaire survey were asked to state whether they had been involved in the creation of Intelligence Products. In both cases, the highest proportions had been involved in the creation of Problem Profiles and Tactical Assessments, but with the exception of Target Profiles in the development sites, the figures were fairly high for all products (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Analysts' experience of Intelligence Products

	Three forces (N=31)	National sample (N=56)
Strategic Assessment	74%	70%
Tactical Assessment	93%	75%
Target Profile	52%	70%
Problem Profile	97%	80%

Both groups were also asked to state which Analytical Products they had created. As Figure 4.1 shows, they were most familiar with Crime Pattern Analysis and Network Analysis, and least familiar with Results Analysis and Risk Analysis.

Figure 4.1 Percentages of development site and conference analysts who had created various categories of Analytical Products.



Key: Results = Results Analysis
 CPA = Crime Pattern Analysis
 Market = Market Profile
 Demog = Demographic Analysis
 CBP = Criminal Business Profile
 NA = Network Analysis
 RA = Risk Analysis
 TP = Target Profile Analysis
 OIA = Operational Intelligence Assessment

TCG meetings

The general structure of the TCGs in the development sites, and the frequency with which meetings were held, have already been described in Section 3.3. The conference respondents were asked to provide details of such arrangements in their own forces or agencies. Fifty-eight per cent of the 71 who responded to this question³ stated that Tactical TCG meetings were held fortnightly, 21 per cent weekly and 21 per cent monthly. The great majority of those whose forces held monthly or fortnightly meetings were content that the interval they named was appropriate, but almost half of those who mentioned weekly TCGs (7 of 15) felt that they were too frequent.

TCG Chairs' and members' understanding of the model and role of analysts

The importance of TCG chairmanship, and observations on this in the development sites, has also been discussed in section 3.3 above. Of the conference respondents, 60 per cent stated that TCGs were chaired by a Superintendent or deputy, and a further 20 per cent that they were chaired by a Chief Inspector, DCI or DI. The remaining chairs were described as 'other', but their rank not specified. The great majority said that analysts were present at the TCG meetings 'routinely' or 'always' (60 per cent) or 'often' (28 per cent). Only three per cent said that they 'never' attended, and nine per cent that they did so 'only rarely'.

When asked to state whether the Chairs of their TCGs 'fully understand' the National Intelligence Model, 62 per cent of the conference respondents thought that they did, and 24 per cent thought that they did not. The remaining 14 per cent did not know.

Interviewees from the three forces studied were asked whether they were 'confident that members of the TCG fully understand the NIM'. Twenty eight per cent replied 'yes', fifty five per cent 'no', and 14 per cent 'don't know'. The conference respondents were asked a similar question, but aimed at teasing out the *proportion* of TCG members with a good understanding. Only 10 per cent felt that all members fully understood the model, and a further 21 per cent that the majority did. Sixty per cent of the respondents considered that only a minority fully understood the model (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Perceived understanding of NIM among TCG members

	Per cent
All understand	10
Majority understand	21
Minority understand	60
Don't know	10
Total	100 (N=63)

Comments added to questionnaires included:

³The figures here are based on responses by conference participants in all roles, not just the analysts.

‘There is still a lack of understanding amongst those in key positions of what the NIM means - thus it is difficult to implement fully to a uniform standard throughout a Force. Senior officers, unless they have direct intelligence experience, are generally the worst offenders. But Level One analysts are not exempt!’

‘As the higher commanders fail to understand the NIM and its products, I often feel that my contribution to the TCG is a waste of my time and efforts - I get a better response from the wall.’

The development site analysts were also asked whether they were ‘satisfied that the members of the TCG fully appreciate the specific role of an intelligence analyst’. Forty five per cent answered ‘yes’, with another 35 per cent noting that this was ‘progressing’. Of the remainder, 17 per cent answered ‘no’ and three per cent did not know. The conference analysts were asked similar questions about both the Chair’s and members’ comprehension of the analyst’s role (see Table 4.5). In both cases, the answers revealed a considerable amount of doubt about others’ understanding of what they could contribute.

Table 4.5 Analysts’ perceptions of TCG members’ understanding of their role

Chair understands analyst’s role?

	Per cent
yes	42
no	40
don't know	18
Total	100 (N=50)

Members understand analyst’s role?

	Per cent
All do	6
Majority does	23
Minority does	66
Don't know	4
Total	100 (N=47)

Three other important issues relating to TCGs which have already been commented upon in Section 3, were also explored in the questionnaire to the conference participants.

First, it was asked to what extent the Strategic Assessment was referred to by the TCG when deciding its priorities. The majority (59%) of respondents stated that it was referred to ‘routinely’, ‘often’ or ‘always’. However, the remaining 41 per cent said that it was referred to only rarely.

Secondly, it was asked whether performance indicator considerations ever dominated their TCG too much (hence interfering with the strategic aims). A clear majority felt that this happened ‘routinely’/‘always’ (35 per cent) or ‘often’ (29 per cent) in their TCGs, and only 36 per cent that it happened ‘rarely’.

Finally, the majority (61 per cent) of respondents stated that their TCG ‘routinely’ reviewed previous activities and results, with a further 22 per cent stating that this happened ‘often’. Only 17 per cent thought that it happened ‘rarely.’ However, while this finding sounds encouraging, it should be noted that the researchers’ experience in the development sites was that such ‘reviews’ were quite often cursory and superficial.

4.2. General police and civilian staff

Overview

In order to gain a picture of the views and experiences of non-specialist staff, a brief self-completion questionnaire was distributed in the West Midlands and Surrey towards the end of 2002 – as late as possible in the evaluation period, to allow the NIM implementations sufficient time to bed down. Co-ordinators in each division were asked to distribute questionnaires as widely as possible amongst staff (both police and civilian) who were not directly employed in the intelligence units or TCG process. In all there were 358 responses, 76 (21 per cent) from Surrey and 278 (78 per cent) from the West Midlands. The Surrey returns were mainly from three of the four divisions, while the West Midlands responses came from 15 of the 21 OCUs.

The overwhelming majority of the returns (93 per cent) were from police personnel, the remaining seven per cent from civilians. They covered officers with a wide range of service, including 40 per cent with less than five years’ service, and 15 per cent with 20 years or over. Only 16 per cent of the respondents had worked in an intelligence role at any point in their career within the police.

The majority (68 per cent) thought that their force was paying more attention to intelligence that it had two years previously, nine per cent thought not, and 24 per cent did not know (the responses were very similar in both forces). This may partly be accounted for by a visible increase in specific intelligence inputs in briefings.

Personal engagement with intelligence

Respondents were asked to comment on their personal engagement with intelligence. A substantial majority (83 per cent) of the police officer respondents stated that they submitted intelligence reports at least once per month, and one in eight of these claimed to submit over 10 per month. About three-quarters said that the subject matter was usually chosen by themselves, rather than being a response to briefing instructions, and nearly all the remainder that it was a balance between the two.

Over 70 per cent of all officer respondents also claimed to retrieve intelligence from one or more databases on a daily basis, and all but a handful to do so sometimes. Over 70 per cent, too, generally found the information they retrieved to be helpful to their job, compared with only 10 per cent who generally found it unhelpful. The Surrey respondents were somewhat more positive in this respect than those in the West Midlands (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 How helpful do you find the intelligence in the databases you access?

	very helpful %	helpful %	unhelpful %	very unhelpful %	Neither/not use/ no response %	<i>Total</i>
Surrey	14	62	3	0	21	100% (N=63)
West Midlands	18	51	4	6	4	100% (N=266)

The respondents were also asked whether they contacted their Intelligence Unit directly for information, intelligence, or advice. Fifty-five per cent of police officers did so, and 40 per cent had contacted the analyst(s) for advice.

NIM specifically

The respondents were asked whether they were familiar with the National Intelligence Model. Forty per cent said that they were. A higher proportion (47 per cent) were familiar with the TCG and the way that it operated within their BCU. There were again some differences here between the two forces, with somewhat more familiarity apparent in Surrey than the West Midlands (Table 4.7). This may reflect the more ‘corporate’ approach to implementation of the Model in Surrey, as opposed to the more devolved approach adopted in the West Midlands, where there were large differences in progress and commitment between OCUs (see Section 3).

Table 4.7 Percentage of respondents claiming to be familiar with the operation of (a) the NIM and (b) the TCG in their BCU

	yes	no	<i>Total</i>
<u>(a) NIM</u>			
Surrey	57%	43%	100% (N=72)
West Midlands	36%	64%	100% (N=273)
<u>(b) TCG</u>			
Surrey	56%	44%	100% (N=75)
West Midlands	45%	55%	100% (N=273)

Respondents were also asked to comment on whether the priorities set by the TCG were generally a true reflection of the crime and disorder problems in their BCU. Including only those who had stated they were aware of the TCG and its role, 68 per cent thought they were a true reflection, 18 per cent that they were not, and 14 per cent did not know. Among the same group, 58 per cent thought that the responses designed by the TCG in response to these priorities were appropriate, 27 per cent that they were not, and 15 per cent did not know.

Among those respondents who had said they were familiar with the NIM, 58 per cent thought that it had had an impact on the way in which they performed their duties. Comments here included:

‘There is a much stronger pro-active element now.’

‘When priorities are identified there is a better focus on them..’

A significant minority (44 per cent) of the same group thought that they had a clearly defined role within NIM. The remainder either thought that they did not (34 per cent) or did not know (22 per cent).

Finally, respondents who were aware of the NIM were asked to gauge its impact on their personal effectiveness and on that of their BCU (see Table 4.8). Over half stated that it had had a positive impact on their personal effectiveness, and only nine per cent a negative impact. The impact of the NIM on their BCU was judged positive by a clear majority, 70 per cent saying that it had made it more effective, and only ten per cent less effective.

Table 4.8 Percentage of respondents aware of NIM judging it to have made (a) their own work and (b) their BCU, more or less effective

	Much more	More	Less	Much less	No difference	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	
(a) Own work	5	47	7	2	39	100% (N=127)
(b) BCU	6	64	8	2	21	100% (N=129)

4.3 Concluding comments

One of the main messages from the findings presented in the section has been that analysts come from very diverse backgrounds, and have been trained ‘patchily’ rather than ‘holistically’ on the NIM. This suggests a need for much more standardised and complete training on all the NIM products. A second important finding was that substantial numbers of analysts were critical of TCG Chairs and members in terms of understanding of the analyst’s role and the use of key products such as Strategic Assessments.

An encouraging finding from interviews with samples of ‘ordinary’ police officers was that a clear majority felt that working with the NIM was making their BCU more effective. At the same time, however, only around half were prepared to claim that they were ‘familiar’ with the NIM.

5. Outcome measures and case studies

5.1 Introduction

As has already been emphasised, the evaluation took place during a period when implementation of the NIM was at an early stage in all three forces. Even by the end of this period, there were few BCUs which had as yet come close to the ideal of having a full complement of trained specialist staff, installing appropriate IT systems, running TCGs in a genuinely intelligence-driven way, and gaining the full commitment and understanding of all officers. Moreover, an important aspect of the NIM is the opportunity it gives for close communication and integration of knowledge and planning between different areas and across the three 'levels' of policing, but as yet this aspect was greatly underdeveloped. In short, the NIM was not yet being applied in the manner envisaged by its designers, and it would therefore be unreasonable to make any firm judgements about the 'effectiveness' of the Model on the basis of, for example, movements in crime rates in the three 'pilot' forces.

Furthermore, it is by no means clear what kinds of indicators are appropriate for making such judgements. The most obvious indicator is the aggregate crime rate in an area: if the NIM 'works', it may be argued, it will reduce the total volume of recorded crime. However, it is a key feature of the Model that it encourages a strong focus on particular types of crime (or 'problem') in particular areas, which in turn means that other types may be relatively neglected for periods. It may be that the problems prioritised and targeted contribute only a small proportion of total recorded crime (but have been selected for reasons other than volume, such as seriousness or public concern), in which case a significant reduction in the targeted offences may be 'swamped' by increases in other offences, disguising the effectiveness of the NIM process in achieving the TCG's agreed aims. A more sophisticated outcome evaluation based on crime rates, therefore, might take account of this by collecting detailed information about the problems targeted by TCGs over a selected period and looking for changes in recorded crime rates (or perhaps incident rates) relevant to those particular problems in those areas in those particular periods. Or, again, a full analysis might be undertaken of the reviews which are meant to be carried out at TCGs to assess the results of each agreed action plan after it has been implemented.

The evaluators initially hoped that it would be possible to adopt one of these latter approaches in this study, but this proved impractical owing to poor record-keeping of TCG plans and priorities generally, and in particular the lack of systematic and rigorous reviews. It is suggested that in future any research aimed at assessing 'effectiveness' by this route should be focused on a small number of BCUs which 'sign up to' a systematic monitoring system to facilitate the research.

In the absence of detailed information of the above kind, the evaluators attempted to get at least a preliminary sense of whether there were any obvious early 'NIM outcomes' by two main methods. First, a comparison was made of recent trends recorded crime rates and detection rates in different OCUs in the West Midlands force, comparing these with expert judgements of the stage of NIM compliance that each BCU had reached. Secondly, details were collected of two major police operations which were set up through the NIM process, including - as far as these are discernible - their 'results'.

5.1 Changes in crime and detection rates in West Midlands OCUs

In order to look for any obvious differences in crime trends between OCUs in relation to their implementation of the NIM, experienced managers with very good knowledge of the position across the force, were asked to place each OCU into one of three broad categories, reflecting their view of how advanced it was in terms of NIM compliance and implementation. They agreed that four OCUs should be placed into the top category, and seven into the bottom category, leaving the other ten as broadly average. We then looked at the 'top four' and the 'bottom seven' OCUs in terms of changes in both their total recorded offences and their overall detection rates, comparing a six-month period in 2002 with the equivalent six month period of the previous year (to help preserve anonymity, the months chosen are not stated here). Table 5.1 shows the results.

Table 5.1 Comparison of 'most' and 'least' NIM-compliant OCUs in terms of changes in crime and detection rates

(a) Four OCUs rated 'most advanced' in NIM

<u>Six-month period 2001</u>		<u>Six-month period 2002</u>		<u>% change in:</u>	
Total offences	Detection rate	Total offences	Detection rate	offences	detection rate
9610	25.9	8871	21.5	-7.7	-4.4
8152	22.4	7512	24.4	-7.9	+2.2
10916	21.0	10709	26.6	-1.9	+5.6
7223	23.8	6979	20.7	-5.9	-3.1
<u>All four</u>					
35901	23.2	34071	23.6	-5.1	+0.4

(b) Seven OCUs rated 'least advanced' in NIM

<u>Six-month period 2001</u>		<u>Six-month period 2002</u>		<u>% change in:</u>	
Total offences	Detection rate	Total offences	Detection rate	offences	detection rate
11506	20.4	10402	23.0	-9.6	+2.6
7527	25.2	1899	24.0	+1.6	-1.2
7241	32.3	2339	36.1	-13.5	+3.8
6938	22.6	1570	27.6	-13.0	+5.0
8296	29.0	2402	31.9	-3.1	+2.9
10008	22.5	2251	22.3	-1.7	-0.2
6954	20.6	1432	24.5	-4.4	+3.9
<u>All seven</u>					
58020	24.5	54870	26.5	-5.4	+2.0

It can be seen that there were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of crime rates: total offences had fallen by 5.1 per cent across the 'most advanced' OCUs, and by 5.4 per cent across the 'least advanced'.⁴ Where detection rates are concerned, moreover, the 'least advanced' OCUs did considerably better than the 'most advanced', raising their overall detection rate by two full percentage points (from 24.5% to 26.5%), compared with a negligible rise among the latter (23.2% to 23.6%).⁵

Although we have no other evidence to throw light on the finding that the less NIM-compliant OCUs performed better on clear-up rates than the more compliant, it is interesting to speculate whether one common result of the introduction of the NIM may be to reduce detection rates overall, as by focusing attention upon limited ranges of both offences and offenders (and often upon more serious offences) and upon prevention as much as detection, a number of other 'run of the mill' offences may be less thoroughly investigated or followed up than under reactive approaches to policing. This raises some important questions about the value or appropriateness of detection rates as an indicator of effectiveness.

Where crime trends are concerned, to some extent similar arguments can be made about the focus on limited ranges of offences, although one would ultimately expect a fully operating NIM system to demonstrate an impact on overall numbers of offences: after all, one of the aims is to identify prolific offenders, and if these are controlled or removed from the scene in large enough numbers, the impact on 'volume crime' should be noticeable. However, as already emphasised, these are 'early days' for the NIM, even in those BCUs where its use is most advanced, so it would be a surprise if such an effect was already apparent. Further work is also required to look at the impact of specific plans and operations in a much more focused manner, for example based on measuring change in the incidence of particular types of offence over particular periods in particular areas.

5.2 Case studies

Two case studies of NIM-led operations will now be described in some detail. These are presented partly to illustrate the kinds of data that may be used to indicate what 'results' have been achieved from individual operations, but also to provide concrete examples of the NIM process working largely as intended by its designers – and hence of 'good practice'. The first is a large-scale, long-term operation covering more than one level and a number of different BCUs. The second is a more bounded operation in one town. In both cases, some names, places and details of police methods have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

⁴ It is difficult to make a comparison with trends over precisely the same months in England and Wales as a whole, but between 2001/2 and 2002/3 as a whole, recorded crime rates rose nationally by 6.8 per cent. None of the figures shown, it should be noted, take account of changes in recording practice caused by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standards. The 'real' degree of change in all cases is likely to be in the region of 10 per cent less than indicated (see Simmons and Dodd 2003, Chapter 3).

⁵ In both cases, however, the figures rose more than those for England and Wales as a whole (23.4% to 23.5% - see Simmons and Dodd 2003:126).

Case 1: Coordinated action against crack cocaine and related crime

In April 2001 the Level Two Strategic Tasking and Co-ordinating Group (L2STCG) identified an emerging trend in the class A drugs market. An increase in the prevalence of crack cocaine was anecdotally attributed to be behind increases in burglaries in some divisions in the force. The increase was not thought to be present in all divisions. However, at that stage there was no objective or systematic evaluation of the situation and related threats. Three key questions were raised by the L2STCG:

1. Is the reported increase in crack cocaine real and sustained? And if so:
2. What is its impact on volume crime?
3. What is its impact on organised crime?

This research was tasked to the HQ Force Intelligence Department, who commenced a thematic Strategic Assessment. The first stage of this was to undertake an initial scan of the issues and threats relating to crack cocaine. The evidence obtained from this exercise strongly supported the original reports that there was an increase in misuse of the class A drug crack cocaine within the force area.

The next stage of the Strategic Assessment was to prepare a comprehensive collection plan to source intelligence in all of the key areas. This involved breaking down the three broad questions set by the L2STCG into a detailed set of sub questions. Once this list was compiled, relevant sources to answer each question were identified and contacted. These ranged from divisional intelligence units and source units to partner agencies such as the Drugs Action Teams and the Forensic Science Service. It was regarded as important to build as comprehensive and objective picture as possible, so treatment agencies were also interviewed and consulted.

The data from this research were collated and the Strategic Assessment was produced for the August 2001 meeting of the L2STCG. This assessment focused on the following areas:

- Crack Cocaine – The Physiological Effects
- Current Trends
 - Prevalence, Availability, Cost & Quality
 - Increase in Misuse
 - Increase in Availability
- Impact on Crime
- Impact on Organised Crime
- The Market Structure
- Importation
 - Supply & Distribution
 - Supply (street level)
- User characteristics
- Other Related Criminal Activities
- Violence & Firearms

The assessment clearly described a threat to the constabulary from increasing misuse of crack cocaine, particularly where heroin markets existed. The threats in a number of areas were clearly presented to the L2STCG. This allowed the group to consider

the level of priority given to dealing with class A drugs, as well as to look across the broad area of class A drug misuse and related criminality to identify where the greatest threats lay.

The outcome of the Strategic Assessment was a change in the Level Two control strategy to include the threat from class A drugs and related criminality. This was backed up by specific conclusions in the report about where the greatest threats lay and the recommended strategic and tactical responses. The tactical responses were remitted to the Level 2 Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating Group (L2TTCG).

The inclusion of the threat from class A drugs and related criminality in the Level Two control strategy gave a clear message at both Level Two and Level One about the priority to be given to tackling drug related crime. This was an important message and ensured that there was a clear rationale at both levels for tackling this type of criminality. The control strategy dealt with any conflict that may have previously occurred between dealing with core performance targets and these issues.

Whilst the level of priority had been clearly identified in the Intelligence Product, this needed to result in activity. The L2TTCG progressed this initially by requiring a review of all Level One drugs strategies in the light of the changing trends and threats, the aim being to ensure that they included appropriate tactical responses to these changing trends. The group identified the relevance of open drugs markets as being key in the proliferation and introduction of crack cocaine alongside existing heroin markets. These markets were initially prioritised and targeted through a corporate drugs operation.

One of the key recommendations from the Strategic Assessment was the need to implement co-ordinated interventions at levels one, two and three. This can be seen in recent activity such as Operation Annie targeting class A drugs distribution (Level Two regional), Operation Gertude targeting open drugs markets in the county (Level Two force) and ongoing partnership approaches through Communities Against Drugs funded activity at Level One.

Under Operation Gertrude, a dedicated team was established to undertake test purchase operations across the whole of the county on a rolling programme. Analytical support was identified to ensure that Intelligence Products could be developed for the second stage of the operation. This involved and continues to involve Network Analysis of street level dealers to identify links to serious and organised criminal networks, with a view to reducing the availability of class A drugs on the streets, disrupting and dismantling their organisations. At the completion of each stage, arrest teams were established through mutual support across divisions.

At the same time, multi-agency projects funded through DAT Partnerships and Communities Against Drugs have been addressing wider issues such as treatment and rehabilitation of problem drugs misusers. A media strategy has also been pursued to gain community support and involvement and to increase 'reassurance', for example through high profile 'strike days', when concerted efforts are made to arrest simultaneously all targets against which evidence packages have been compiled.

Finally, those involved stress that the above interventions do not constitute a ‘one off’ case study. Sustainability is considered of critical importance, as even if open drugs markets are seriously disrupted, given time they are likely to re-emerge. This has been the rationale for repeated operations in the same areas to increase the perceived risk to dealers. The L2STCG also continues to monitor the threat from class A drugs and related criminality through ongoing analytical assessments of the key threat areas, and regular strategic and tactical updates are provided to the TCGs to inform their decision-making.

Outcomes

The outcomes and results of the above processes and actions are difficult to quantify due to the breadth of the operations and the many contributory factors. At the time of writing, the most easily available relevant data are statistics reflecting police enforcement activity. To date, 274 arrest packages have been produced under Operation Gertrude alone, leading to 164 arrests. More generally, increases in police activity across the county are clearly indicated by sharp rises in the numbers of recorded drugs offences and arrests in virtually all divisions in the force in 2002. Table 5.2 shows the numbers of offences of possession and supply of drugs in April to December 2002, compared to the same period the previous year: there were overall rises of 16 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively. The total number of drugs seizures in the county also increased by 54 per cent over the same period, from 417 to 613.

Table 5.2 Offences of possession and supply of drugs, force area 2001 and 2002.

(a) Possession

<i>Division*</i>	<i>Apr-Dec 2001</i>	<i>Apr-Dec 2002</i>	<i>Change (%)</i>
A	324	375	+16
B	353	430	+19
C	241	360	+49
D	212	277	+31
E	358	430	+17
F	377	313	-17
Other	10	13	+30
All	1875	2178	+16

(b) Supply

A	125	87	-30
B	111	53	-52
C	22	167	+659
D	17	95	+459
E	129	123	-5
F	16	89	+456
Other	1	1	--
All	421	615	+46

Note The ‘Supply’ table covers a slightly longer period than that for possession, as it includes offences up to 29th January (rather than stopping at 31st December) in each case.

*To preserve anonymity, these are not the correct names of Divisions

Other less easily quantifiable outcomes claimed by the police for the linked operations have included:

- An improved intelligence picture of open drugs markets and supporting criminal networks to inform intelligence led operations.
- Increased public confidence. Some evidence for this is provided by a public opinion survey undertaken in the county between October and December 2002, which showed that the second most frequently named reason for public confidence in the police force was 'drug related activity (24%, following 'good service delivery', with 36%).
- Disruption of open drugs markets, leading to harder access to class A drugs for 'new' users and a move towards closed markets. Evidence for this is that targeted purchasing operations have become increasingly difficult.
- Strengthening of partnerships, police and public morale through being seen to take positive action against class A drugs and related criminality.
- Increased drug dealers' perception of risk, resulting in moves to closed rather than open market dealing and hence a reduction in open access to class A drug on the street.

All the above outcomes are important and the evaluators have no reason to doubt that they were achieved. However, they are typical of the kinds of claims made for proactive police operations, in that they are based on relatively little verifiable evidence. There is clearly a major challenge to find more systematic and reliable ways of assessing the results of NIM-related activity.

Case 2: Burglary in Town X

The second case study relates to NIM-led interventions in one part of a Division, referred to here as Town X. A peak in burglary (both domestic and other) was forecast in the Strategic Assessment 2002-2003 as likely to occur across the Division in May to June 2002, based upon historical trends. Burglary has always been a priority for the Division, as well as the Force, in terms of deployment, resources and performance. The trends identified have tended to follow recurrent cycles of offending for local prolific thieves who rely on burglary for as a source of income and, more often, as a means of funding drug addiction.

Dissemination

Based upon the statistical forecast, the anticipated peaks were communicated through both the Divisional Strategic and Tactical TCG meetings. Whilst all management, including senior management, were given a copy of the Forecast Timeline, the anticipated increase was noted in the Quarterly Strategic Update (April 2002) as well as in the weekly Tactical Update and bi-weekly Tactical Assessment. Problem Profiles were also produced in anticipation of the increase, and released towards the end of May. Recipients included Geographic Inspectors, the POP Coordinator, Armed Response Units, Crime Prevention, Targeting Team, and departments with operational responsibility.

Planning and implementation

The Problem Profile was openly welcomed by the Geographic Inspector in Town X, who invited many partnership agencies to attend a planning session to set up a coordinated operation, which will be referred to here as 'Operation Maggie'. The scope of the Operation was to be a focussed, directed and holistic approach towards combating the anticipated increase in burglary. It was not restricted solely to burglary, as it was noted that many of the area's prolific criminals were highly adaptive, and focussing simply on burglary might displace their offending to other kinds of acquisitive crime such as theft from vehicles and shoplifting. During the planning round, all agencies were provided with sanitised copies of the Problem Profile and were split into groups to look at particular aspects of the operation, which included a range of preventive and enforcement oriented interventions. Representatives from the following agencies were involved from the inception:

- The Probation Service
- The District Council
- The Anti Social Behaviour Unit
- The Juvenile Referral Scheme
- The DAT (Drugs Action Team)
- Crime Prevention panels
- Community Wardens and Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators.

Based on information and suggestions in the Problem Profile, the following interventions were adopted under the banner of Operation Maggie:

- An 'Adopt a Criminal' scheme was introduced, whereby individuals were identified and circulated to operational personnel. Any received intelligence was coded 'Operation Maggie' in order to monitor quality and track changes in offending patterns.
- Informants were paid supplements for information relating specifically to active burglars and handlers accepting stolen goods.
- Intensive surveillance and other covert and overt policing methods were undertaken once the targets were confirmed as active.
- Intelligence gaps received serious attention, a proactive approach being adopted to identify them and to open up new sources of information (including recruitment of new informants where necessary).
- Curfew Monitoring became standard practice within the newly established Targeting Team.
- Suggestions for a property marking scheme were explored.
- Crime Prevention mobile units were sent out into the community to raise awareness and encourage information from residents.

- Council departments were approached about security weaknesses, and fences were identified for immediate repair.
- Operation Maggie is still ongoing, and its name is used in any press communication aimed at raising the profile of police activity against prolific criminals.

Outcomes and ‘lessons’

Evaluation of the outcomes of such operations is still a difficult issue, as it is not formally undertaken with any rigour within the force. Operation Maggie has not been evaluated in any meaningful way partly because it is still an active operation. However, the collection of information through which it might be evaluated was not put in place at the time it became live, leaving any future comparison and evaluation to fall back on crude comparisons of recorded crime statistics or police activity indicators. For what it is worth, the researchers established that by the late Autumn of 2002, 17 burglary targets had been identified, and eight of these had been arrested for multiple offences. There was also a considerable increase in intelligence entries over the period of the operation.

A more positive point is that the Operation offers some useful pointers towards ‘good practice’, as well as some favourable comparisons in approach with neighbouring areas. In terms of the National Intelligence Model, the process from the Strategic Assessment forecast, to Tactical Assessment to Problem Profile directly translated into a proactive approach to an identified peak in activity. There was specific action directed towards a projected problem, encompassing a holistic approach. The Problem Profile mobilised action specifically in this example.

However, this was not the case elsewhere in the Division. Problem Profiles were created for three additional geographic areas in the Division that were also predicted to experience increases in burglary. None of these areas chose to address the impending increase (which did occur in all areas).

The actions that resulted from the Problem Profile in Town X were in many ways the result of personality: the Geographic Inspector here was very impressed with the product and chose to act on it in order to achieve a reduction. The Inspector adopted the recommendations where possible and promulgated them out through his management team. This is the greatest difficulty within Intelligence Units and amongst Intelligence Analysts specifically – they do not have the authority to ensure that recommendations are acted upon or even discussed, though they are based on a thorough understanding of the problem and underlying issues. In recent months, the Division has worked towards bolstering its means of tracking recommendations and actions by identifying ownership and responsibility to specific individuals. At the time of the burglary profiles, this was not in place. If the method was available, owners would have been responsible for reviewing each Problem Profile and creating action plans to act on the anticipated increase – largely based on the recommendations put forward in the product. This has occurred with recent profiles (Volume Violent Crime and Hotel Car Park Crime) and provides an opportunity to evaluate the value of the Problem Profile itself as a useful document for directed police activity.

6. Costs

‘Traditionally the police have allocated resources in line with their operational requirements – with most resources being distributed in response to demand, and on the basis of the likelihood of success rather than cost’ (Stockdale et al, 1999)

6.1 Introduction

New initiatives such as the introduction of the NIM pose new challenges for the justification of public expenditure for a number of reasons. First, NIM represents a fundamental and long-term shift in strategic thinking within the police service. Second, it requires more resources to be deployed in a very different way. And third, it requires the introduction of those resources well ahead of any demonstrable improvements, success or savings.

Having an awareness of the cost of implementation is important for a variety of reasons. Without a realistic assessment of costs, budgets are likely to be insufficient to allow for proper implementation. A knowledge of the true cost brings with it a realisation that this represents a significant investment and hence requires a permanent change in organisational structure and functioning. This in turn ought to lead to an examination of elements of traditional policing which are now redundant and so can safely be abandoned, freeing up resources for re-investment in the new approach.

On the basis of information supplied by a number of forces, we have attempted to estimate the set-up costs of NIM at a local level. Because police forces vary greatly in size, we have presented these figures as they apply to an average sized BCU with estimated central costs presented as a range in relation to overall size.

6.2 Direct implementation costs

Table 6.1 presents the main results of the costing exercise. Set-up costs associated with the NIM over the first year are shown for both BCU and central operations. The principal resource used in the implementation was staff time – namely the additional input from analysts and researchers employed on the NIM. In this respect, the figures in Table 6.1 are based upon two additional staff per BCU (one analyst and one support researcher) and six additional analysts within a central team.

For comprehensiveness, costs are also included for associated non-staff expenditure such as recruitment (recruitment packs, internal and external adverts), training (core analyst, strategic, and ‘Excel’ training) and equipment purchases – the costs of the latter based upon annuitised values according to standard Home Office guidance (Legg and Powell 2000).

Table 6.1: First year costs of implementing the NIM

Cost Type	<i>Cost per BCU (£)</i>	<i>Central Team Cost (£)</i>
<i>Staff*</i>	42,700	146,400
<i>Training</i>	5,500	33,000
<i>Premises**</i>	4,620	13,860
<i>Equipment</i>	2,360	7,075
<i>Recruitment</i>	7,440	1,060
<i>Total</i>	<i>62,620</i>	<i>201,395</i>

* Includes staff on-costs at 22%

** Based on office space in central Birmingham (1 person = 10m2), Healey & Baker (2000)

The overall first year cost per BCU was estimated to be £62,620. The additional cost for a central team of analysts was estimated to be £201,395. It is worth noting that these costs are likely to be highly dependent not only on the overall size of a particular police force, but also on the degree to which activities surrounding NIM implementation – such as staff recruitment and training - are ‘devolved’ to the BCUs within that force.

6.3 Other costs

While the costs in Table 6.1 provide useful estimates of resource consumption associated with setting up the NIM, they do not take into account more indirect additional costs ranging from, for example, support from senior police staff and partner agency input, through to wider staff training including time spent reading/researching NIM material. Identifying the costs associated with these ‘in-kind’ resources is less straight forward, not only because projects are not yet fully implementing the NIM, but also more broadly because many ‘functional’ changes from the introduction of the NIM (and beyond) involve simply the re-organisation of existing resources rather than new investment.

Issues of Culture Change

Of course, implementation of the NIM is about very much more than the transference of physical resources. For decision-makers who seek also to draw conclusions about

the longer term, the costs associated with changes in organisational culture or ethos within each force also need to be considered.

The costs associated with such changes could be substantial, particularly in relation to activities such as the wider training of staff in issues of NIM. For example, in Section 3.2 it was shown that additional training with wider focus may be required in order for lower level police grades to ‘buy in’ to the language and other cultural manifestations of the NIM and proactive policing more generally.

Overall, the danger would be that longer term cultural inertia promotes a ‘yo-yo’ effect between reactive and proactive policing. Conversely, there could also be costing issues where a proactive policing approach was introduced without recognition of the need for resource transference from more traditional reactive activities – that is, forces aiming to implement both proactive and reactive approaches in parallel. It is arguable that both the ‘yo-yo’ and parallel approaches would significantly increase the overall cost effectiveness of delivery.

Despite these concerns there will be ongoing requirement for at least some reactive policing, particularly in relation to high profile incidents. This does suggest too that additional resources will be required ‘in reserve’ even where cross border co-operation, such as the West Midlands ‘Precept Model,’ allows one Operational Command Unit to call upon the resources of another to meet reactive demands.

Staff retention

In Section 3.3 it was noted that the recruitment and retention of analysts poses a significant problem for forces implementing the NIM. In one site, turnover of analysts for the two years to October 2001 was around 48 per cent. Clearly, this has implications for ongoing costs, not only in terms of the need for additional recruitment drives, but also the need for additional training. We should be also be aware that, in the current situation of intense competition for experienced analysts, alternative measures aimed at addressing high turnover will attract additional costs. For example, formal career plans are likely to involve progression for Analysts to posts of a more strategic nature over time (a process defined by one Principal Analyst as ‘strategic drift’), suggesting also the need for a comparable increase in the salary-related benefits.

With all this in mind, it seems prudent to suggest that many of the additional costs identified in Table 6.1 should not be viewed as one-off (set-up) costs but rather as a reflection of *ongoing* annual costs. Indeed, the issues raised above suggest a need for longer term consideration of the cost and cost effectiveness implications of the NIM model. Of course, to compare for cost effectiveness, information is needed on both costs *and* outcomes. It was noted in Section 5 that identifying suitable measures of outcomes is by no means clear and little progress has to date been made in this area. Nevertheless, the costs described in Table 6.1 and the additional issues raised above do seem relevant to a more detailed evaluation of value-for-money at a later date.

6.4 Conclusion

In this section we have presented an estimate of the costs associated with the set-up and early implementation of the NIM. It was noted in Section 5 that the evaluation took place prior to the full implementation of the NIM as envisaged by its designers. As such, the scope of the costing exercise was limited to identifying those additional costs associated with analyst and researcher posts within BCU and central teams. The costs of the former were estimated at around £60,000 per BCU, with central team costs estimated at £200,000. Thus in the West Midlands force, which contains 21 BCUs, the overall additional costs for the first year were estimated to be around £1,315,000.

It was pointed out that such costs would vary between forces mainly as a result of the size of the particular Police force, the level of Partnership agency input and other ‘in-kind’ support, and the degree to which NIM decision making is devolved to individual BCUs within that force.

In the longer term, other factors likely to impact on the costs include:-

- The degree to which there is cultural inertia within forces promoting either a yo-yo effect between proactive and reactive approaches or an attempt to introduce a proactive policing approach without the re-allocation of reactive policing resources.
- The need to extend NIM training throughout each force in order to promote understanding of the NIM and ‘buy-in’ co-operation at all levels.
- The level of resources required as a ‘reactive’ policing reserve.
- Addressing issues of recruitment and retention of analysts within some forces through formal career plans, including levels of remuneration appropriate to the strategic nature of the role.

Given all of this, it was noted that many of the costs such as training and recruitment described in Table 6.1 should not be considered one-off costs.

While the results of the costing exercise described above provide a starting point for further investigation into the cost effectiveness of the NIM, the degree to which the NIM had been implemented within the three forces to date, together with the lack of suitable outcome measures or indicators from which to compare costs, precluded a full analysis at this stage.

Nevertheless, there does seem to be scope for conducting such research in the future. Section 5 makes it clear that to consider issues of effectiveness, a more sophisticated approach to measuring outcomes will be needed. The implications from this section are however, that further investigation needs also to be conducted into the long-term costing implications of the NIM, particularly in relation to the costs of cultural change within forces.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Main findings

The national picture

After a relatively slow start, national implementation of the Model was boosted significantly by the expansion of the NIMIP team, the transfer of responsibility to ACPO, and the national policy of expecting NIM compliance in all forces by April 2004.

A comparison of the results of nationwide Baseline Assessments carried out by the NIMIP team in Spring 2002 and 2003, with a Gap Analysis conducted in 2001, indicates rapid and substantial progress in several aspects of implementation. It is clear that the levels of leadership and commitment to the Model are now universally strong, that the numbers of analysts have greatly increased, and that work in strategic areas of the NIM, in particular, has improved rapidly. Most notably, between 2001 and 2003, the proportion of forces assessed as 'green' or 'amber' on a traffic lights system in relation to Level One Strategic Assessments rose from just 10 per cent to 86 per cent. Even so, there were still major differences between forces, and over a third remained in the red zone in 2003 in terms of setting Control Strategies at Level One, and a quarter remained 'red' at Level Two.

Progress in Tactical TCGs, which started from a higher base, was somewhat slower, but by 2003 only three of the 44 forces were adjudged to be still in the red zone in the important area of Level One Tactical Assessments. Moreover, in the great majority of forces (38 of the 44), chairs of TCGs were by then being appointed at an appropriate level of seniority, and appropriate staff were attending the meetings. The main weakness in terms of Tactical Products appeared to be at Level Two, where 30 per cent of forces remained in the red zone regarding the production of Tactical Assessments.

The three 'pilot' forces

Where the three forces studied in depth are concerned, after a slow start major progress was made in the last six months of the study. However, a number of issues continued to cause difficulties. A general problem identified by managers was the complex structure and language of the NIM, which many staff found difficult to understand, and most agreed that there were major training needs to overcome this. Beyond this, key implementation problems were discussed in Section 3 under the following six headings:

Leadership and commitment

It was concluded that the presence of these qualities is vital, not just at ACPO level, but among Chairs of TCGs, both in and outside meetings.

TCGs

The main problems found with Strategic TCGs were limited input from partners, over-domination of concerns about performance indicators, and conflicts between competing priorities (especially between national and local priorities). The latter two comments apply also to Tactical TCGs, where further problems were identified in the variable frequency of meetings, the seniority of Chairs (which in turn could affect attendance) and in some cases the conduct of meetings (which could sometimes ignore analytical evidence and/or come to resemble 'resource bidding' sessions).

Intelligence Products

The main problems around Intelligence Products were the variety in quality (and availability) of Strategic Assessments, and the lack of standardisation (and again variation in quality) of Tactical Assessments. Clear training needs were apparent here. However, there were also strong signs that quality improved rapidly with 'practice', providing that analysts received encouragement and constructive feedback from TCG members. Without this, there could be dangers of a vicious circle developing, whereby TCGs lose respect for products and those providing them lose the incentive to put energy into improving their quality.

Standardisation

It is felt that the NIMIP team missed an opportunity to encourage standardisation of practices and products at an early stage, and that considerable variation has developed which will be difficult to change, as forces and BCUs have already become accustomed to their own ways of doing things. This is a problem which needs attention, as standard products are important to the links across and between levels.

Analysts

The main problem found concerning analysts (apart from those mentioned above) was that of retention of good staff: this was made difficult mainly because of low pay, the lack of a well-developed career and promotion structure (though this is changing slowly) and strong competition for good analysts (both within the police force and with other agencies). Other problems affecting analysts included some difficulties in gaining acceptance due to cultural differences with police officers; a tendency for managers to ask them too much for management information and too little for proper analysis; and 'patchiness' in training across the full range of NIM products.

'Ownership' and understanding of the Model

There were large 'knowledge gaps' about the NIM among all ranks of officers interviewed, as well as some resistance to it, based mainly on ignorance and on dislike of its 'academic' structure and language. As its effectiveness depends upon all staff contributing appropriately, this suggests urgent training needs, as well as a need for creative efforts to 'win hearts and minds'.

Views from the 'shop floor'

The main findings from the analysts' responses (which did not differ greatly in the forces and nationally) were that:

- They came from diverse backgrounds in terms of education and experience
- A minority had been trained ‘holistically’ on the NIM, and only small numbers had received any training on certain products (especially Results Analysis and Risk Analysis)
- 60 per cent of the national sample thought that only a minority of TCG members understood the NIM and 24 per cent that their TCG Chairs did not.
- 40 per cent thought that their TCG Chair did not understand the role of analysts (and two-thirds that a majority of TCG members did not)
- 41 per cent thought that Strategic Assessments were not referred to when priorities were set
- 61 per cent stated that performance indicators always or often over-dominated TCG meetings
- 61 per cent stated that reviews of previous plans took place ‘routinely’.

The main findings from interviews with samples of ‘ordinary’ police officers (which took place in only two forces) were:

- 57 per cent in one force, and 36 per cent in the other said that they were ‘familiar’ with the NIM
- 56 per cent in one force, and 45 per cent in the other said that they were ‘familiar’ with the TCG system.
- 72 per cent overall stated that working with the NIM was making their BCU more effective.

Outcomes and case studies

As the NIM was not fully implemented in any of the three forces, it was impossible to carry out a proper evaluation of its ‘effectiveness’ (this was anyway not one of the aims of the study). Moreover, there are many questions to ask about the appropriate criteria by which its effectiveness should be assessed. However, some very tentative attempts were made to seek any indications of possible impact.

First, in comparing crime trends between the four OCUs in West Midlands assessed by experienced managers as the ‘most advanced’ in their implementation of the NIM, and the seven OCUs assessed as ‘least advanced’, no significant differences were found in terms of crime reduction between 2001 and 2002: both groups had experienced reductions in recorded crime of around five per cent. Moreover, the ‘least advanced’ OCUs had actually improved their detection rates more than the ‘most advanced’. The latter finding may not be surprising, given that the NIM requires a strong focus on certain crime problems, meaning that detections and arrests may fall in other areas of offending.

Second, two ‘case studies’, one a cross-level, force-wide initiative against drug-related crime, and the other an anti-burglary initiative in one town offered some excellent examples of good practice, as well as some possible indications of effectiveness. For example, the former seems to have contributed greatly to a 46 per cent increase in force arrests for supplying drugs, and there is evidence (through test

purchasing exercises) of effective disruption of open drugs markets. There is also some survey evidence of public confidence in police actions against drugs. In the latter case, there is evidence of an increase in intelligence logs, and around half of the targeted burglars have been arrested. None of the above, it is emphasised, provides conclusive evidence of the effectiveness of the NIM, but it provides pointers to possible future research in this area.

Taken together, the findings suggest that future attention (and research) should be directed at the following areas, which appear to be among the most problematic in terms of developing the potential of the National Intelligence Model:

- Leadership and committed management both in the implementation process and in key operational areas (especially the work of TCGs)
- Widening and deepening understanding of the NIM itself
- Communication and ‘ownership’ issues
- Training of key players and officers generally
- Placing the TCG at the core of policing business and activities
- When deciding upon priorities and plans, managing conflicts between the demands of performance indicators and messages from local analysis of problems
- Standardisation of products and practices
- Analytical resources and career structures of analysts
- Measurement of impact and effectiveness
- ‘Maturing’ of the NIM - establishment of the necessary symbiotic relationship between the three levels, with regular flows of relevant information both ‘up’ and ‘down’, and compatibility and consistency of aims and approaches.

7.2 ‘Good practice’ lessons

It is difficult to provide confident or comprehensive guidance on ‘good practice’ at this stage, as the implementation of the NIM was very much in its early stages at the time of the research. However, a number of fairly clear messages emerged.

First of all, at a general level, it may be concluded that, as with any major change in a large organisation such as the police service, careful ‘change management’ is essential throughout the implementation process. Ideally, this includes frequent and open communication with existing staff about the nature of the change, full integration of knowledge about the NIM into probationer training, regular monitoring of the implementation process and of any emerging problems, and - above all - involvement and commitment of managers at all levels. To achieve this, one force set up a Strategic Programme Board, with clear project plans, weekly meetings to oversee progress, and a planned series of presentations to all staff. Another made rapid progress as the implementation process was directly overseen by its highly committed Chief Constable, who ensured that the message went out that the force was entirely serious about change in this area, and that all senior managers were fully ‘on board’.

Secondly, at an operational level, a number of specific examples of good practice were identified. These included, in no particular order:

1. In order to ameliorate the problem of a tendency for insufficient communication between TCGs, both horizontally (eg BCU to BCU) and vertically (between Levels), one force's Level Two analysts routinely collected all Tactical Assessments from BCUs in the force and summarised them for their own TCGs.
2. To ensure that analysts' time was not taken up too much by *ad hoc* demands for statistics and maps, some managers protected their analysts by filtering such requests and giving them blocks of time dedicated to the production of 'real analysis'.
3. The optimum frequency of TTCG meetings appeared to be fortnightly (although this may vary with local circumstances).
4. It was clearly good practice to insist that TCG members read documentation (especially products like Tactical or Strategic Assessments) before coming to meetings, rather than time being wasted in reports being read out to them by analysts.
5. As noted above, good chairing ensured that the meeting maintained a clear and objective focus on key issues and strategic goals, and took into proper account the messages from intelligence products, rather than being sidetracked into speculation about individual offenders, or excessive concern about performance indicators.
6. The routine review of, and feedback about, plans and decisions from previous meetings was clearly beneficial to TCGs, rather than simply 'starting again' at each meeting. Equally, putting in place – *before they begin* - mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of major operations was seen to be helpful to the feedback process: too often, such evaluation was an 'afterthought'. More generally, the more far-sighted managers understood the value of a continuous process of learning and feedback, and the key aim of the NIM to facilitate the use of previous knowledge in future analysis and operations.
7. Finally, the case studies presented in Section 5 provide a number of 'good practice' lessons, most importantly the way in which those involved demonstrated the value of genuinely following the NIM logic, moving through the various stages of identification of a problem, more detailed analysis of that problem, the formulation of plans based on the analysis, the execution of the plans, and feedback on the results.

7.3 Future measurement of outcomes

Finally, we offer a few comments on what is going to be one of the thorniest problems as the NIM develops, but one which is of vital importance if enthusiasm for the Model is to be sustained at government and senior police management level over a long period: that of finding robust and meaningful ways of measuring the effectiveness and impact of this way of policing. This includes a need both for clear research evidence that, put at its simplest, the National Intelligence Models 'works' (or at least will work when properly implemented); and for a simple and routinely repeatable way of measuring and comparing the performance and outcomes of different forces and BCUs in implementing the NIM.

Clearly, any measure of effectiveness has to reflect the central aims of the activity being assessed. The most obvious aim is that of 'reducing crime', but in this case, rather than reducing crime in general, it may be to reduce *specific types of crime in specific areas at specific times*. Moreover, these crime types and areas may change quite quickly over time, as new assessments are made and new priorities and plans are created. It may be, therefore, that a much more flexible means of measuring effectiveness has to be developed, based on linking outcomes to specific plans and targets as set by, perhaps, Strategic TCGs. This however, requires much more systematic setting and recording of objectives, and reviewing of outcomes, by TCGs themselves, than was found currently to exist. The most promising next step appears to be to set up an experiment in two or three BCUs, where researchers work collaboratively with police managers to ensure that appropriate and accurate information is recorded, and a variety of possible measures are developed.

The appropriate outcomes may not be limited simply to recorded crime rates (whether general or of specific offences): in any case, these are highly problematic where offences that come to light mainly through police activity (such as drug possession and supply) are concerned. A range of indicators needs to be developed, including some imaginative new measures to offer a picture of, for example, the 'quality' as well as the number of arrests; the extent to which criminal enterprises have been 'disrupted'; or the extent to which an identified 'problem' (which may not be sufficiently described simply by numbers of recorded offences) has been 'solved'. The latter point raises questions of whether information from other agencies (eg concerning numbers of people accepting drug treatment) may be used as indicators of effective problem-solving. In short, as the perception of crime problems moves beyond traditional police ways of measuring and responding to them, and involves both new interventions and partnership with new agencies, thinking about how to measure the effectiveness of these new approaches has to move beyond the traditional police measures of recorded crime and detection rates.

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