

An inspection of the police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024: Tranche 2. May 2025

Report: [An inspection of the police response to the public disorder in July & August 2024:
Tranche 2](#)

Response from: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

I welcome the publication of this second tranche of HMICFRS's inspection into the policing response to the public disorder experienced in the summer of 2024. While Hampshire and the Isle of Wight were not among the most severely affected areas, we did encounter significant incidents that tested our force's readiness and resilience.

Public order policing is a critical aspect of maintaining community safety and public confidence, particularly during periods of unrest. I am reassured to see that the report recognises the dedication of frontline officers who responded under extremely challenging circumstances, often placing themselves in harm's way to protect communities.

Locally, on August 7th 2024, a protest outside the Potters International Hotel in Aldershot escalated into violence, resulting in criminal damage, intimidation, and racial abuse. One officer sustained a minor injury. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary promptly released images of individuals sought in connection with these events and initiated a thorough investigation, utilising body-worn camera footage, National Police Air Service surveillance, and local CCTV.

Key Findings from the HMICFRS Report

The inspection identified several areas of concern as well as examples of good practice. Key findings include:

- Inconsistent readiness and training across forces in relation to public order policing, with some lacking fully deployable trained units.
- Challenges in mutual aid coordination, leading to delays in support deployment between forces.
- Weaknesses in intelligence gathering and sharing, which impacted the ability to anticipate and pre-empt disorder.
- Variable command and control structures, with some forces needing improvement in clarity and speed of decision-making.
- Good examples of bravery and professionalism by frontline officers, despite operational challenges.

Steps for Improvement in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

In response to these findings, I am working closely with the Chief Constable to ensure our force takes clear and measurable action. This includes:

1. Reviewing and strengthening public order training and capability, ensuring we have sufficient numbers of trained officers available for rapid deployment.
2. Improving operational planning and readiness, including simulation exercises to test and refine our public order response.
3. Enhancing intelligence-sharing mechanisms both internally and with regional and national partners, to better anticipate and prepare for emerging threats.
4. Strengthening command structures, ensuring senior leaders are confident, clear, and capable in managing large-scale public order operations.
5. Learning from best practice nationally, by adopting tactics and models that have proven effective in other forces.

Commitment to Change

Public order policing is vital to maintaining community safety, upholding the rule of law, and preserving the public's right to peaceful protest. My commitment is clear:

- I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for the force's preparedness and response capability.
- I will work with the Chief Constable and my peers to strengthening our approach to intelligence gathering and inter-agency coordination, both locally and through national frameworks.
- I will continue engaging with communities to ensure that public trust and confidence in policing remains strong, particularly around issues of protest and the use of force.

The lessons from 2024 must lead to lasting improvements. While Hampshire and the Isle of Wight was not among the areas most affected during the 2024 disorder, preparedness is non-negotiable. The ability to deploy trained officers at short notice, make use of national mutual aid agreements, and uphold public order while respecting civil liberties is central to effective policing. I will continue to scrutinise our local force's readiness to respond to public disorder and ensure that learning from this report is fully embedded into planning, training, and operational response.

Donna Jones
Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

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Response from: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Constabulary

In September 2024, the Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to carry out a review into the policing response to the violent public disorder that took place in many towns and cities across the United Kingdom (known as Operation Navette). The review did not focus on any specific force, but offered an opportunity to review local practices against national recommendations. This was published in December 2024.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's response was coordinated within the Joint Operations Unit. The force was required to provide extra resources as part of the Strategic

Policing Requirement which was over and above any local demands from protest threats, existing operations and football, which also required managing throughout this period. It is worth noting that the force met the considerable short notice demands throughout this period, which is a testament to the planning teams and the officers who had their duties changed to facilitate this request.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary have implemented a range of activity as highlighted in our response report to tranche 1.

In May 2025 HMICFRS published the second part of the report which centred on:

- Use of an intelligence led approach
- Arrangements for tackling online content and social media and;
- Criminal investigations (for large scale disorder)

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As a result there were three recommendations targeted at both a national and local level.

Recommendation 1: With immediate effect, the NPCC and Chief Constables should create a plan and begin to work to improve how the police service collects and analyses and communicates intelligence about disorder.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary have invested significant resource in the last 12 months into its Intelligence and Serious and Organised Crime Command including reintroduction of the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB).

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight response to Operation Navette demonstrated the force's ability to reprioritise work within the intelligence department and dynamically prioritise resourcing and processes accordingly. A learning review has also taken place for future continuous improvement.

Key functions in place include:

- Dedicated intelligence resource focusing on protest-related threat, improving 'business as usual' intelligence collection;
- Regular and effective engagement with internal colleagues (JOU Operations) and external partners (NPoCC SIB) through 24/7 Intelligence and FIB;
- Department-wide knowledge and experience of providing intelligence cell capability in response to planned and spontaneous large scale operations;
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities regarding the collection, processing and dissemination of protest-related intelligence;
- FIT and PLT input included as part of POPS Commanders' CPD.

The force welcomes further collaboration with other forces and the NPCC in order to continuously improve the force approach to the collation, analysis and communication of intelligence.

Recommendation 2: With immediate effect the NPCC and Chief Constables, working with the Home Office, should create a plan and begin to work better to understand and respond to the risk associated with online content.

Within the inspection report it is identified that police forces face challenges with managing the risk posed by online content. HIOWC will work collaboratively at a regional and national level to address this recommendation.

Our implementation of the geographical model and our force priority to deliver exceptional local policing has opened avenues of community engagement to enable greater understanding of local tensions and the potential for escalation both online and offline. This is delivered through our Neighbourhood Policing Strategy which has as strategic objectives;

- Improving local visibility, engagement and accessibility of policing, including rural, business and seldom heard communities as a strategic objective; and
- Working with local people and partners to identify and tackle the root cause of issues.

We will continue to deliver against these objectives through a range of mechanisms including for example; ongoing growth of our police numbers and through local digital engagement platforms including Let's Talk.

Let's Talk provides the force with an opportunity to engage with communities online in addition to a plethora of social media engagement accounts managed at a local level. Through this, the force can obtain greater understanding of what matters to them and allows our communities to be able to raise any concerns. As suggested by HMICFRS, Let's Talk is one avenue to 'provide a true narrative online to reach people who may be searching for information'. Let's Talk allows HIOWC to continuously remain connected to communities therefore providing opportunity to identify potential community tensions before they escalate or are exacerbated by misinformed online content.

Our Intelligence and Serious and Organised Crime command have also been working closely with neighbourhood teams to ensure the force has a joined up approach to the collation and action of intelligence and this is supported by our newly implemented briefing tool. This is also alongside the force Serious and Organised Crime Partnership and Community Coordinator who is closely linked with our district commanders.

HIOWC have in place a long standing Community Engagement team who link with communities, including hidden communities, to be able to understand core concerns and emerging issues. The team were effectively deployed during Operation Navette.

During Operation Navette, the force communications department were an integral part of the operational response, co-located within the command unit to provide live time updates, liaising with journalists, advising on stakeholder communications and responding to commentary on social media. Every element of internal and external communication was

carefully considered to ensure it mitigated any impact on already high levels of tension and provide reassurance to our communities.

It is recognised that the spread of misinformation and disinformation is a significant challenge for policing and is a key element of the force's crisis communications planning and community impact assessments. The force welcomes further support through the NPCC in engaging with social media platforms to continuously improve the mitigation of harm caused by misleading and disruptive online commentary.

Recommendation 3: With immediate effect the NPCC and Chief Constables, working with CoP, should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service investigates offences associated with large-scale disorder.

The implementation of our Investigation Standards team has provided HIOWC with a strong foundation to ensure our staff and officers are upskilled to be able to investigate large scale disorder.

To ensure a robust approach to this recommendation HIOWC will collaborate with the College of Policing and implement any subsequent guidance or APP.

Sam De Reya
Deputy Chief Constable, Hampshire and Isle of Wight