


# PCC and CC Force Inspection response record

Version:

<b>Force</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Police and Crime Commissioner</b>	Ben Adams
<b>Chief Constable</b>	Chris Noble
<b>Title of inspection</b>	<a href="#">An inspection of how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms</a>
<b>Inspectorate</b>	 <p>HMICFRS His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &amp; Rescue Services</p>
<b>Summary of inspection</b>	<p>Thematic inspection. HMICFRS examined how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms, including specialist munitions. We did this by answering the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How well do policies, structures and processes comply with relevant guidance and legislation?</li> <li>- How effectively do forces work together operationally across force boundaries?</li> <li>- How effective are forces in the selection, training and deployment of tactical firearms advisors, TFCs and SFCs?</li> </ul>
<b>Grade</b>	N/A
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> By 31 July 2024, chief constables should make sure there is access to both specialist strategic firearms commanders and specialist tactical firearms commanders, through a 24-hour rota covering their region.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 3</b> By 31 October 2023, all chief constables should make sure the armed response vehicle asset tracking equipment, as provided by Counter Terrorism Policing, is available and used in their forces. They should train relevant staff in its use.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 5</b> By 31 December 2023, all chief constables should make sure that all strategic and tactical firearms commanders have observed the firearms tactics and the use of specialist munitions they can authorise, before being operationally deployed</p> <p><b>Recommendation 6</b> By 31 December 2023, chief constables should make sure that the annual accreditation process for strategic and tactical firearms commanders includes familiarisation with any new weapons systems and observation of any new tactics or specialist munitions the force has introduced or is planning to introduce.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 8</b> With immediate effect, each assistant chief constable regional firearms lead should attend all National Armed Policing Portfolio meetings. If they are unable to attend, they should make sure another assistant chief constable armed policing lead from a force in their region attends on their behalf.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 10</b> With immediate effect, chief constables should improve senior officer oversight of their armouries, including an independent annual audit.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 12</b> With immediate effect, chief constables, through their armed policing governance structure, should make sure that all armed deployment records are stored and auditable</p>

## Police Crime and Commissioner's initial response

Commissioner Ben Adams welcomes this balanced and practical inspection into the effectiveness of police deployment of firearms. Thankfully, police forces are effective in deploying firearms, and officers discharged weapons at only 0.02 per cent of armed operations in 2021-22. In Staffordshire firearms were aimed 28 times in the last 12 months and there have been no operational discharges. The report makes 12 recommendations to help the police improve a national system which already has good governance and structures. Although Staffordshire was not inspected this time the report provides reflection on current practices elsewhere which can be used to build upon for continuous improvement. I am satisfied these are being reviewed and tracked through the force's internal governance system.

## Chief Constable's response

The force was ahead of the recommendations similar to the ones published in the report and was already assessing our position against the HMICFRS Action Plan for Armed Policing.

The two main areas of specific concern would be recommendations 10 and 12. However, the force is about to mandate after the signing off of a new Recording, Review and Audit policy by Staffordshire's - ACC armed policing portfolio holder. This policy has created a standardised set of command logs and mandates the use for the firearms command functions. These are then all stored within of firearms management system (Chronicle).

Updates for each recommendation listed as below:

**Recommendation 2** *The region is in early talks surrounding a regional rota. The force will continue to monitor and engage in the regional operations meeting and around the regional rota, options for Staffordshire Police.*

**Recommendation 3** *Basic asset tracking is in place for Staffordshire Police which was provided by NPCC armed policing through the airbox software and funded until February 2024. The full product has been funded as part of a section 22 agreement and a regional purchase. This is expected to be completed by the end of 2023 / early 2024.*

**Recommendation 5** *Currently live demos are built into our annual firearms command CPD where firearms instructors demo tactics and expose commanders to specialist munitions where needed. New commanders who go onto national courses are given an opportunity to discuss the range of tactics with a firearm's tactical adviser or lead TFC. We are also working towards new and innovative methods, using digital videos / recordings of tactics to allow commanders to self-refresh as part of ongoing CPD and for mandated command training.*

**Recommendation 6** *Any new element, tactic or weapon system is built into our annual firearms commanders CPD. Further command training will also be built around the new policy around debriefing / review panel to ensure its fully embedded.*

**Recommendation 8** *ACC Operations in WMP from the region has always attended and circulates the agenda items / discussion. This will be check balanced and reassurance sought from Staffordshire ACC Armed Portfolio holder.*

**Recommendation 10** *The force currently has a policy which mandates armoury oversight and checks within its Senior Management team up to Chief Inspector level and includes the Chief Firearms Instructor (CFI) and an*

*independent verifier. We are going to widen this process to ensure that the Operations ACC, Chief Superintendent and Superintendent have allocated time in their yearly planners for spot checking.*

**Recommendation 12** *All deployments are already securely recorded on the Chronicle system, which is fully auditable. The commander's logs can now be added into Chronicle as part of the new policy which is a mandated process.*

### **Police Crime and Commissioner's overall comments**

The comprehensive update from the force provides me with assurance that Staffordshire is already assessing the position against the HMICFRS Action Plan for Armed Policing and has taken on board the relevant recommendations.