AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AUTHORITY

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

JUNE 2010

REPORT OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

ORGANISATIONAL STRESS

1.0   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   At the Avon and Somerset Police Authority Human Resources Committee on 2nd February 2010 members requested further details on the Forces progress in meeting the recommendations contained with Robertson & Cooper Ltd Quality of Working Life - Stress Audit undertaken within the Force in June 2005.

2.0   BACKGROUND

2.1   The Robertson & Cooper Ltd Quality of Working Life - Stress Audit was undertaken as part of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary's Occupational Health Initiative in support of the Home Office Strategy for a Healthier Police Service.

2.2   The audit was performed in three phases which included:-

- **Phase One** – Training and data collection of over 5,500 employee surveys.

- **Phase Two** – Data analysis of the results of the survey to give an overall picture of the sources of pressure and levels of stress within the Constabulary. Preparation of initial report of findings.

- **Phase Three** – Focus groups in areas reporting high levels of stress. The focus groups have a strong emphasis on discussing any potential solutions employees can offer to their own particular problems.

2.3   Overall the principle findings were largely positive and typical of comparison groups within the general working population and the police service.

Main Positives

i)   There was a positive overall well-being profile compared with the general working population and to others in the police service. This suggested the sources of pressure experienced by

employees are currently not having a negative impact on health across the Force.

ii) There are good levels of commitment by employees to the Force. However, the perception of commitment back from the Force is slightly lower than this compared with the general working population. In summary employees perceive that they give more to the Force than they get back in return.

iii) There was generally a very good awareness and response by employees to the flexible working arrangements and work life balance policies within the Force.

iv) Generally pay and benefits systems and job security are good and not a significant source of stress amongst staff.

v) Aspects of the job such as working conditions and job satisfaction are good and not a significant source of stress amongst staff.

vi) There was generally a very good awareness and positive response by employees to satisfaction with occupational health service provision within the Force.

Main Stressors

vii) There was a general perception of lack of involvement in decision making and consultation.

viii) The extent of organisational change and employee understanding the reasons for change.

2.4 The findings of the Robertson & Cooper Ltd Quality of Working Life - Stress Audit were presented to and considered by the Chief Officer Group in or around early 2006. However, no definitive or specific instructions were given as to the way forward regarding actioning the recommendations or repeating the audit at any future date.

2.5 During 2008 the Senior Counselling and Welfare Officer and Head of Safety and Force Medical Adviser prepared a safety arrangement within the Force Health and Safety Policy on the systems in place for the management of stress in the workplace which was supported by a generic assessment of stress risks.

2.6 Members will be aware that many of the Forces proactive & reactive stress management interventions have their historical basis in the formation of the Occupational Health Unit in 1994 by the then Chief Constable Mr David Shattock. Over the past 16 years many interventions have been implemented such as:-

- Counselling and welfare support services
- Return to work and stress risk assessment advice.
- Long term psychological support programmes.
- Stress awareness training programmes.
- Critical incident / trauma defusing systems.
- The use of clinical psychiatrists.
- Signposts to the use of other agencies (e.g. Relate, AA, Positive Steps, MIND, Cruise, Hospice).

2.7   Members will be aware that many of the stress management interventions in place cut across a number of departments and functions within the Avon and Somerset Constabulary.

3.0   The Way Forward - HSE Stress Management Standards Approach

3.1   In 2009 the Health and Safety Executive re-launched its approach to managing work-related stress in order to help employers prevent work-related stress. Health and Safety Guidance HSG 218 "Managing the causes of work related stress" focuses on the application of the management standards approach for work-related stress which have already been used successfully by many organisations.

3.2   The stress management standards represent a set of conditions that, if present, reflect a high level of health well-being and organisational performance and cover such areas as: -

- **DEMANDS** such as workloads, work patterns and the work environment.

- **CONTROL** an employee has in the way they do their work.

- **SUPPORT** encouragement and resources provided by the Force, line management and colleagues.

- **RELATIONSHIPS** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

- **ROLE** Employees understand their role within the Force and the Force ensures that employees do not have conflicting roles.

- **CHANGE** How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

3.3   In keeping with the management standards approach, managers and staff are encouraged to work together in identifying issues causing symptoms and working to address the problems. This has a positive effect on the employee's wellbeing. Line managers play a vital role in identifying and managing stress within the Organisation and this is the reason that in referrals to Occupational Health information from a management perspective is requested.

3.4 The provision of ongoing psychological support for Police Officers and Police Staff enables the Counselling Department to identify particular workplace stress 'hot spots'. Within the past 12 months where one hot spot was identified, liaison with managers has taken place and additional input into psychological support has been provided.

3.5 Two other areas of concern have been identified. i.e. there have been a number of referrals from those Departments and there appears to be a general theme to these. Psycho-educational groups are planned for those particular areas to support the managers and staff to resolve the issues.

3.6 Routine psychological support programmes are provided for a number of Departments whose roles are considered vulnerable, e.g. Internet Child Abuse Team (ICAT) and the Dangerous Offenders Unit (DOU). Routinely, contact is made between 1-3 times per year and should issues be identified, then appropriate action is taken, e.g. further counselling, referral to the Force Medical Adviser, +/- General Practitioner involvement. In cases where there is evidence of significant psychological problems and NHS treatment is not readily available, then Occupational Health Services utilise the services of a Consultant Psychiatrist who visits the Occupational Health Unit on an ad hoc basis, depending on the need.

3.7 Approximately 7% of Police Officers and Police Staff are referred for counselling and welfare (i.e. 238 Police officer and 236 Police staff in 2009, 76 Police officer and 72 Police staff so far in 2010). The NATIONAL average being 4% (not exclusive to Police Forces) – this figure excludes the routine psychological support and health promotion work. Initially all individuals are assessed using the CORE system, i.e. Clinical Outcomes for Routine Evaluation, which is commonly used in psychotherapy, counselling and other psychological therapies. This can be used to measure an individual's psychological state and their outcome after treatment and more than 90% of the clients seen have improved CORE scores at the end of such treatments.

3.8 It has been identified that managers do not always consider that they are fully equipped to implement the recommendations as in Policy in relation to sickness absence and return to work programmes. Thus, in the recent Health and Wellbeing Day it was decided to include workshops for managers, reviewing processes and encouraging them to consider possible concerns of individuals returning to work.

3.9 Also, managing shift work can cause issues both to that individual and their families and hence a 'managing shift work' workshop was also provided.

3.10 Reproduced as an appendix to this report is an analysis of the findings of the Robertson & Cooper Ltd Quality of Working Life - Stress Audit for each of the stress management standards, indicating what the standards requires, what should be happening, what is in place and signposts areas for further action.

4.0 <u>DIVERSITY</u>

4.1 There are no diversity implications from the Robertson & Cooper Ltd Quality of Working - Stress Audit and the Avon and Somerset Constabulary remains committed to practices that are free from bias and comply with the principles of diversity.
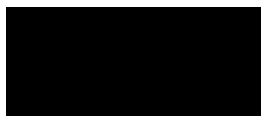
5.0 <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

5.1 Members are invited to discuss the contents of the Organisational Stress Report.

5.2 The Occupational Health Unit to adopt the methodology contained within the Health and Safety Guidance HSG 218 "Managing the causes of work related stress" and report its progress in meeting recommendations within the OHU annual report.

COLIN PORT
Chief Constable

Contact Officers:

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                  FMA
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The Standard	DEMANDS - Workloads, work patterns and the work environment.		
What the standard requires	• Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs. • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.		
What should be happening	• The Force provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work. • Employee skills and abilities are matched to the job demands and jobs are designed to be within the employee capabilities. • Employees concerns about their work environment are addressed.		
What is actually in place	• Effective recruitment & selection procedures of employees for roles, appointment to role based on employee skills & abilities. • Terms & conditions outline agreed hours / patterns of work, allowing employees to schedule work to meet deadlines. • Effective PDR systems (PDR Interview & quarterly meetings) which can monitor employee workloads / pressures. • Ensuring compliance with H&S (Working Time) Regs 1997, Variable shift systems to meet organisational demands and changes voted by employees. • Ensure daily & weekly rest entitlements are met, minimise disruption to work rosters, even allocation of overtime working. • Appropriate use of flexi working time arrangements and availability & use of flexible working schemes within Force. • Staff survey monitoring workload on employees (E.g. 2009 Staff Survey – 48% respondents believed that realistic work objectives are set by the Force and there is close correlation between realistic work objectives, the right workload and a good work-home life balance).		
Further action	• Ensure key messages around organisational workloads are communicated to managers and incorporated into the PDR process (e.g. via COG, ODG and similar meetings, corporate communications, team-talks and briefings)	Head of Corporate HR Planning	2010 – 2011
	• Attempt to understand why there is a large difference between districts in terms of contentment with workloads (from 54% in BANES to 40% in Somerset West) e.g. detailed analysis of staff survey response from each BCU.	Head of Corporate HR Planning / District Commanders	2010 – 2011

The Standard	CONTROL - How much say an employee has in the way they do their work.		
What the standard requires	• Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work. • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.		
What should be happening	• Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work and are encouraged to use their skills & initiative to do work. • Where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new & challenging pieces of work. • The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills. • Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken, employees are consulted over their work patterns.		
What is actually in place	• Systems that enable employees to have a say over the way their work is organised and undertaken, (e.g. through project meetings, one-to-ones, team working and meetings, performance reviews). • Allocation of responsibility to projects teams rather than individuals to take major projects forward. • Consultation and change management processes in place to allow open discussion on projects and major changes. • Effective recruitment & selection procedures of employees for roles, appointment to role based on employee skills & abilities • Effective PDR systems (PDR Interview & quarterly meetings) which monitor employee workloads / pressures. • Ensuring compliance with H&S (Working Time) Regs 1997, Variable shift systems to meet organisational demands and changes voted by employees. • Ensure daily & weekly rest entitlements are met, minimise disruption to work rosters, even allocation of overtime working. • Appropriate use of flexi working time arrangements, availability & use of flexible working schemes within Force. • Staff Survey 2009 - Communication within units remains strong, with the majority of staff (87%) believing there to be high levels of co-operation between people in their unit.		
Further action	• Plan to improve inter-department relationships and advocacy required (68% consider there to be good co-operation between their unit and other units).	TBC	2010 - 2011
	• Understand why PCSO's score below force average in this index (66% compared with force average of 75%).	PCSO Support Manager	2010 - 2011
	• Improve two way communications with employees (e.g. interactive intranet that permits forums and group discussion).	eServices Manager	2010 - 2011

The Standard	SUPPORT – encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the Force, line management and colleagues.		
What the standard requires	• Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors. • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.		
What should be happening	• The Force has policies and procedures to adequately support employees and systems that encourage managerial support. • Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues, employees know what support is available and how and when to access it, how to access the resources to do their job and receive regular and constructive feedback		
What is actually in place	• Effective PDR interview & quarterly meetings, team meetings and SMT meetings which monitor & allow employees talk about any emerging issues or pressures. • Appropriate use of flexi working time arrangements, availability & use of flexible working schemes within Force to enable employees to cope with domestic commitments. • PDR systems to identify training arrangements and refresher sessions to ensure competencies are up to date and appropriate for the core functions of employees' jobs. • Systems of support by the organisation that provide support if someone is experiencing problems outside work. • Availability of information on other areas of welfare support networks (HR, Occupational health, Counsellors, charities). • Systems in place for consultation and communication on individual and collective basis with opportunity to comment on proposals. • Staff Survey 2009 over a half of respondents perceive an appreciation of their work, respondents are far more likely to feel appreciated by their line manager (75%) than by senior management (40%) or by the organisation as a whole (37%). • Staff Survey 2009 in general, views and opinions on welfare provision have remained stable since 2005, with 50% of all staff confident in the Constabulary's commitment.		
Further action	• Include work-related stress / emerging pressures as a standing item for staff meetings and / or performance reviews. Determine how employees would like to access managerial support (e.g. 'open door' policies, or agreed times when managers are able to discuss emerging pressures).	Supervisory Staff / Head of Corporate	Ongoing
	• Determine why police officers have the lower feelings of being valued by senior management at 33% when compared to the whole organisation (40%).	TBC	2010-2011
	• Consider further OH health awareness and health promotion schemes and initiatives (available support) and /or increasing current staff resource	FMA	2010-2011
	• Explore development of a cost effective EAP scheme in support of current OH provision.	FMA	2010-2011

The Standard	RELATIONSHIPS – Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.		
What the standard requires	• Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns		
What should be happening	• The Force promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness. • Employees share information relevant to their work. • The Force has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour. • Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour. • Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.		
What is actually in place	• Fairness at work systems & procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work. • Fairness at work systems & procedures to prevent, or quickly resolve, conflict at work. • Systems & procedures for grievance & disciplinary procedure for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work. • Provision of fairness at work training to help staff deal with and defuse difficult situations and unacceptable behaviour at work. • Staff Survey 2009 almost 80% of respondents have not been harassed or bullied in the last 12 months.		
Further action	• Encourage good, honest, open communication at all levels in work teams. Improve two way communication with employees (e.g. Interactive intranet that permits forums and group discussion)	eServices Manager	2010 – 2011
	• Create a culture where colleagues trust and encourage each other. Development of cultural change programmes. Consider the development of existing psycho-educational training (e.g. anger management, relaxation and assertiveness)	Head of HR	2010 – 2011
	• Agree which behaviours are unacceptable and ensure people are aware of these. Defining leadership behaviours.	Corporate Personnel Manager	2010 – 2011
	• Districts and departments to re-emphasize and enforce the zero tolerance for unacceptable behaviour.	Corporate Personnel Manager	2010 – 2011

The Standard	ROLE – Employees understand their role within the Force and the Force ensures that employees do not have conflicting roles.		
What the standard requires	• Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities. • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.		
What should be happening	• The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible. • The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities. • The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear. • Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.		
What is actually in place	• All roles have associated role profiles with clearly defined core competencies and behaviours • Effective recruitment & selection procedures of employees for roles, appointment to role based on employee skills & abilities. • Effective PDR interview & quarterly meetings, team meetings that allow employees to discuss role conflict. • Systems of cascading individual, team and department targets and objectives to help clarify unit and individual roles. • Up to date and clear job descriptions to help ensure the core functions and priorities of the post are clear. • Effective systems of induction arrangements for new staff to make sure all members of the team understand the role and responsibilities of the new recruit. • Clearly defined organisational structures so that all team members know who is doing what, and why.		
Further action	• Consider the introduction of personal work plans which are aligned to the outputs/objectives of the unit.	Head of Corporate HR Planning	2010 – 2011
	• Avoid competing demands, such as situations where it is difficult to meet the needs of the business and the customer (development of employer concentric work life balance policies)	Head of Corporate HR	2010 – 2011

The Standard	CHANGE - How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.		
What the standard requires	• Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change. • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.		
What should be happening	• The Force provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes. • The Force ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals. • Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. • If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs. • Employees are aware of timetables for changes. Employees have access to relevant support during changes.		
What is actually in place	• Organisational Impact Assessment - who, what, where, when are the changes likely to impact (Macro level impact assessment) • Communications officer in place to assist with the communication of change messages to staff and Force. • Behavioural change impact assessment in order to understand the extent to which people's behaviours will change and what will be expected of them in the future. Appropriate training is planned from this. • Stakeholder engagement framework to ensure that all stakeholders are fully engaged in the change process and are supporting there own teams. This assists in ensuring leaders provide appropriate leadership throughout the change. • Change management network to ensure that change issues are managed at a local level. • Organisation design assessment to assist understanding the extent to which structures may change – resulting with consultation with Unison, Police Federation and HR to ensure that changes in staffing levels are fully understood, the rationale clear, and the consequences planned for. Benefits management to ensure that the benefits required are understood and managed • Training – to ensure that staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge to deal with the changes. Ensure staff are aware of the impact of the change on their jobs (management of change policy). • Staff Survey 2009 staff do not have high opinions about the ability or desire of the organisation to react to and implement change. There is dissatisfaction (particularly amongst police officers) with the way in which change is implemented in the Constabulary, coupled with the view that the Constabulary does not regularly implement new approaches that improve the service we offer.		
Further action	• Change management policy and practice needs to be reviewed (27% are satisfied with the way that changes or innovations are implemented in the Constabulary). • Internal communication continues to be highlighted as a key issue for members of staff and has not changed over time. Only half of the organisation are satisfied with the internal communication with just 43% feeling informed about important organisational development.	HR / Head of PPIU TBC	2010 – 2011 2010 - 2011