



HM Inspectorate
of Constabulary
for Scotland



Scottish Criminal Record Office

Primary Inspection 2000

Scottish Criminal Record Office

2000 Primary Inspection

**A Report by Her Majesty's
Inspectorate of Constabulary**

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Recommendations

Recommendation 1

HMIC recommends that the SCRO Executive Committee determine arrangements to ensure that the Director, Deputy Director and other senior staff of SCRO are subject to an annual performance review.

(para 2.9)

Recommendation 2

HMIC recommends that the Director of SCRO's scheme of delegation be considered as part of the re positioning of SCRO within a new Common Police Services arrangement.

(para 2.9)

Recommendation 3

HMIC recommends that the issues identified within the Corporate Plan are supported by detailed action plans, with SMART objectives, specific to these issues and designed to achieve the desired outcomes.

(para 3.3)

Recommendation 4

HMIC recommends that outcome performance measures be developed for each of the Bureaux to reflect activities within the Corporate Plan, the statements of intent and planning statements published in the Annual Report.

(para 3.3)

Recommendation 5

HMIC recommends that where possible benchmarking of processes be employed to gauge effectiveness and secure Best Value.

(para 3.4)

Recommendation 6

HMIC recommends that SCRO develop an absence management policy detailing the effects employee absence has on SCRO, the function of return to work interviews, the consequences to the member of staff of repeated absence and put in place robust absence management monitoring arrangements.

(para 4.13)

Recommendation 7

HMIC recommends that the Financial Memorandum be completed and ratified as soon as possible.

(para 5.14)

Recommendation 8

HMIC recommends that SCRO in conjunction with the Scottish Executive review the account structure within the corporate accounting system in order to facilitate the direct extraction of meaningful monitoring information from the Scottish Office Accounting Package (SCOAP).

(para 5.16)

Recommendation 9

HMIC recommends that another support staff member within SCRO is identified and trained as cover to maintain financial records in the absence of the designated post holder.

(para 5.17)

Recommendation 10

HMIC recommends that SCRO investigate, in conjunction with Justice Department Police Division, the resource and technical requirements to enable direct payment of creditors.

(para 5.20)

Recommendation 11

HMIC recommends that a framework be established which identifies the nature and level of delegated responsibility for expenditure within SCRO.

(para 5.21)

Recommendation 12

HMIC recommends that the cost centre structure within SCOAP be revised to enable the direct identification of costs at bureau level.

(para 5.22)

Recommendation 13

HMIC recommends that a service level agreement be established between SCRO and Strathclyde Joint Police Board detailing the services to be provided, the costs of such services, the monitoring arrangements and payment mechanisms and that such an agreement should be subject to regular review.

(para 5.23)

Recommendation 14

HMIC recommends that a bank account be established consistent with the procedures operated within the Scottish Executive for the operation of local bank accounts and that all receipts and payments be accounted for in accordance with Government Accounting.

(para 5.24)

Recommendation 15

HMIC recommends that ACPOS in consultation with SCRO take action to maximise the crime prevention and detection potential of the Criminal History System.

(para 6.7)

Recommendation 16

HMIC recommends that ACPOS and SCRO (and where appropriate the Police National Computer (PNC)) further develop standards, measures and management information in order to secure maximum efficiency of the Criminal History System.

(para 6.11)

Recommendation 17

HMIC recommends that SCRO review and define their IT security policies to ensure that they encompass the requirements of the ISCJIS Data Protection & Security Baseline Security Requirements.

(para 6.16)

Suggestions

HMIC suggests that SCRO develop and implement regular customer satisfaction surveys at the earliest opportunity.

(para 3.7)

HMIC suggests that careful consideration is given to establishing a new date for the implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997, given the work that remains to be done. Linking the start date with that of the parallel organisation in England and Wales remains a sensible approach, even if that means delaying the start date of the Scottish operation.

(para 5.13)

HMIC suggests that User Support Bureau personnel and all other staff be kept fully informed of likely changes to their employment status as a result of the implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997.

(para 6.10)

HMIC suggests that the IT Bureau make greater use of project management methodology (shortened versions where appropriate).

(para 6.17)

HMIC suggests that the IT Bureau implement a process to record and analyse the time devoted by personnel to work activities.

(para 6.17)

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Executive Summary

SCRO was established by means of a statutory instrument on 1 April 1960. SCRO is a common police service in terms of section 36 of the Police (Scotland) Act 1967, which means that it is funded and managed in a co-operative way by the 8 Scottish forces, the 8 police authorities and the Scottish Executive. It is a central, computerised repository of criminal records, fingerprints and images which is accessible on-line by all Scottish police forces. SCRO provides a 24 hour, 7 days a week operational service to the Scottish police forces and the wider criminal justice system. The primary functions of SCRO are to provide and monitor for the 8 Scottish police forces a fingerprint verification and identification facility and a computerised criminal record system. Within the wider criminal justice community SCRO provides a service central to all the partners involved in the Integration of the Scottish Criminal Justice Information System (ISCJIS).

The primary inspection of SCRO as a whole was scheduled to take place in December 2000. Following a request by the SCRO Executive Committee the inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau was brought forward and conducted on 22 and 23 May 2000. In the fingerprint Bureau primary inspection HMIC recommended that the SCRO management oversight structure be reformed as part of re positioning SCRO within a new Common Police Services arrangement. The Deputy first Minister and Minister for Justice has announced that there will be a review of Common Police Services. Although the detail and timing of the review is not known HMIC anticipates the review will address inter alia the roles of HMIC and the Scottish Executive in the governance of SCRO.

The confidence and morale of SCRO staff was adversely affected by the criticism of the HMIC Fingerprint Bureau Inspection. In particular, the view of HMIC that the organisation was not "fully efficient and effective" was difficult to accept. In part this was due to the belief that many of the issues identified by HMIC were outside the direct control of SCRO staff and a result of insufficient resources.

While recognising the validity of these views and the commitment of individual members of staff and management the HMIC report identified a number of important areas where improvement was needed. A number of these improvements impacted SCRO as a whole and was not limited to the Fingerprint Bureau.

This inspection has shown that significant progress has been made and that provided the momentum for securing the necessary improvements is maintained then the outlook is positive. The areas where HMIC makes comment with a view to securing improvement include the following:

- need for detailed action plans and objectives specific to issues identified in the Corporate Plan
- development of outcome performance measures
- development of an absence management policy

- review of the account structure within the Scottish Executive's corporate accounting system
- maximisation of the crime prevention and detection potential of the Criminal History System
- greater exchange between forces and SCRO of management information

HMIC notes in particular the progress on the fingerprint inspection and recognises the limiting factors that remain in position until the review of, and change to, Common Police Services. Taking into account the performance of SCRO as a whole HMIC considers that in terms of Section 33(3) of the Police (Scotland) Act 1967 SCRO is efficient and effective.

Introduction

1. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC) Mr William Taylor undertook a primary inspection of the Scottish Criminal Records Office (SCRO) between 5 and 6 December 2000. HMCIC appreciates the constructive assistance provided throughout the inspection process by the Director of SCRO, Detective Chief Superintendent Harry Bell and all staff.
2. This inspection is the first primary inspection of a central service to be conducted after a review of the inspection process in Scotland. The result is a report structured on the "Business Excellence Model". This inspection was different in a number of ways from those previously conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). Under the new process, an informed assessment is applied to determine the focus of the inspection to ensure it is specifically focussed on areas deemed to be of greatest priority. This follows an assessment of SCRO plans and other documentation and took into consideration matters raised in the primary inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau published on 29 August 2000. The primary inspection of SCRO as a whole was scheduled to take place in December 2000. Following a request by the SCRO Executive Committee the inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau was brought forward and conducted on 22 and 23 May 2000. (That report is available on the HMIC website www.scotland.gov.uk/hmic). The last primary inspection of SCRO by HMIC took place in 1995.
3. In response to HMIC's findings from the primary inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) established a Presidential Review Group (APRG), comprising Mr Rae (Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary), Mr Robertson (Northern Constabulary), Mr Hamilton (Fife Constabulary) and Sir Roy Cameron (Lothian and Borders Police) to coordinate the Scottish Police Service's response. Part of the ACPOS response was the creation of a Change Management Review Team (CMRT), led by Mr McInnes (Deputy Chief Constable of Fife Constabulary) to undertake, between July and October 2000, a 90 day scrutiny of the SCRO fingerprint Bureau and the structure of the Scottish Fingerprint Service. On 6 October 2000 the CMRT presented a report to the APRG, suggesting how to progress matters. In recognition of the need to maintain a momentum the APRG approved the establishment of a full time ACPOS Project Management Team. Following dissolution of the CMRT the ACPOS Project Management Team was established with the remit to coordinate and progress the response to the HMIC Inspection and the CMRT findings. The ACPOS Project Management Team report to the Scottish Fingerprint Service Project Board, established under the auspices of the APRG to provide overview management responsibility for the development of the Scottish Fingerprint Service (see paragraph 6.1).
4. This structure and reporting mechanism can appear somewhat clumsy, particularly as the present authority for managing SCRO is the Executive Committee. However, HMIC recognises that it is an expedient temporary structure designed to facilitate quick decision making and implementation, with the authority of both the Executive Committee and ACPOS Council. Through this mechanism, it has been possible to take

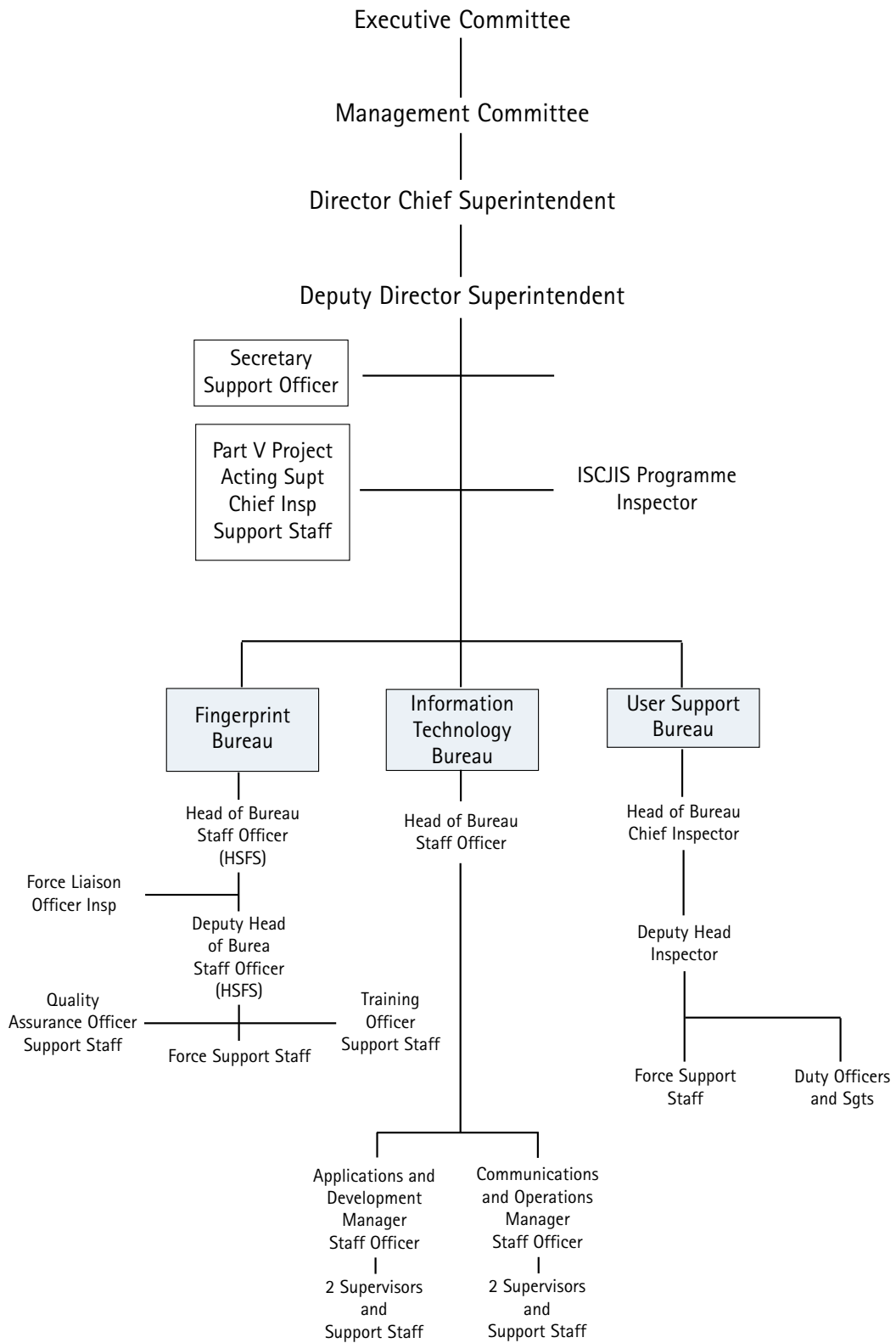
forward many of the key recommendations from HMIC and the CMRT without the need to revert to the full committee or Council. It is important that clarity of purpose, decisions and implementation is not slowed by the 'unwieldy' structures. The ACPOS President, who chairs the Executive Committee, is fully aware of the importance attached to making progress. The review of Common Police Services will cause changes to be made in representatives and structures to include the way in which the development of ISJCIS is changing functional responsibilities.

5. Part V of the Police Act 1997 provides for the extension of public access to criminal records. There will be 3 levels of checks: criminal conviction certificates available to individuals on payment of a fee; criminal record certificates for those being considered for positions which are exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, e.g. solicitors, nurses and doctors. Enhanced criminal record certificates will be available for those being considered for positions which are exceptions under the 1974 Act and which will involve regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children (under the age of 18). Part V allows for regulations to be made to extend the enhanced certificates to those working with vulnerable adults. The scheme is to be self-financing with those requesting a certificate paying a fee. The certificates will be available throughout Britain. In England and Wales a Criminal Record Bureau has been set up in Merseyside and operated by the United Kingdom Passport Agency. In Scotland SCRO will assume responsibility for the provision of certificates. The accuracy of the data is a key issue.
6. Although SCRO is already recognised as a disclosure authority it was acknowledged that a project team would be necessary to implement the new Part V arrangements (see paragraphs 5.9 to 5.13) and that a full examination of the accommodation needs of SCRO would be required. This resulted in the identification of No. 1 Pacific Quay, Glasgow and lease for a 25 year period. SCRO relocated from Strathclyde Police Headquarters to Pacific Quay on 9 October 2000.
7. The inspection methodology included examination of a wide range of documents and responses by SCRO, to specific HMIC questions, followed by pre-inspection work by a staff officer using protocols and software covering the areas to be examined. The aim of the combined use of protocols and software is to achieve a more effective and focussed inspection, consistent in approach and with an emphasis on outcomes and performance.
8. During the course of the inspection evidence was gathered from documentation provided by SCRO, including specific plans. In addition to this, staff at all levels of the organisation provided important contributions. Views on SCRO's performance were also obtained from the 8 Scottish forces, the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency, the Scottish Prison Service, the Crown Office and the Scottish Executive.
9. As explained in other primary inspection reports on Scottish forces, the aggregation of items labelled 'good practice' into an appendix, as in previous reports has been under review. This review is not a reflection on the organisation under inspection. HMIC now records good practice which is defined as follows. The good practice can be a process or practice which HMIC regards as having made a contribution to continuous improvement. As such it is noted in order that other forces or police organisations can consider whether it is appropriate to adopt the practice. It is recognised by HMIC that not all good practice is transferrable. The good practice is a judgement made by HMIC and may not have included a full scale evaluation.

1. Organisation

- 1.1 SCRO was established by means of a statutory instrument on 1 April 1960. SCRO is a common police service in terms of section 36 of the Police (Scotland) Act 1967, which means that it is funded and managed in a co-operative way by the 8 Scottish forces, the 8 police authorities and the Scottish Executive. It is a central, computerised repository of criminal records, fingerprints and images which is accessible on-line by all Scottish police forces.
- 1.2 SCRO pioneered the use of Automatic Fingerprint Recognition (AFR) in the UK and the automation of the fingerprinting of individuals detained at police stations using 'Livescan' terminals. 'Livescan' technology provides operational police officers with a quick clean mechanism for taking fingerprints of individuals who are in custody. SCRO provides a 24 hour, 7 days a week operational service to the Scottish police forces and the wider criminal justice system.
- 1.3 The primary functions of SCRO are to provide and monitor, for the 8 Scottish police forces a fingerprint verification and identification facility and a computerised criminal record system. As the Fingerprint Bureau was subject to a Primary Inspection in May 2000 and a report published on 29 August 2000 this inspection has focussed on the computerised criminal record system aspects of its service provision.
- 1.4 Figure 1 depicts the SCRO organisational structure, the lines of reporting and responsibility.

Figure 1 – SCRO Organisational Chart



2. Leadership

How the behaviour and actions of the executive team and all other leaders inspire, support and promote excellence as the best way to achieve the organisation's objectives.

Committee Structure

- 2.1 The committee structure existing prior to change in 1999 consisted of the SCRO Controlling Committee, the Development Standing Committee and the SCRO Fingerprint Standing Committee. The former comprised the chief constables of the 8 Scottish forces, representatives from SCRO and the Scottish Executive. By convention it was chaired by the chief constable holding office as President of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS). It follows that the chair rotated each year with the Presidency. Chief officers, or deputies at a senior level, from the 8 Scottish forces attended the Fingerprint Standing Committee as did representatives from SCRO and the Scottish Executive. The Standing Committee was chaired by a chief constable.
- 2.2 The review by the independent management consultants conducted in 1998/99 resulted in ACPOS commissioning a Strategic Review Team who reported that both the head of SCRO and the service provided by SCRO, were inhibited by the reporting and decision making process existing at that time. The report recommended that the process be streamlined.
- 2.3 Two new committees were recommended. First, an Executive Committee to be chaired by the President of ACPOS and comprising the 8 chief constables, HMIC, the Director at SCRO and representatives from the Scottish Executive and COSLA. Second, a Management Committee to be chaired by the Scottish Executive comprising ACPOS representatives from the eight Scottish forces and the Director and Deputy Director of SCRO. These recommendations were agreed and implemented. Although the original proposal regarding the Management Committee anticipated representation of forces at Chief Officer level, this has been relaxed to allow representation at a senior level. In the Fingerprint Bureau Primary Inspection report HMIC expressed the view that the new SCRO Executive and Management Committees offer only limited improvement on the former committees in that they remain an unwieldy and top-heavy structure, which inhibits speed of response and fails to focus accountability. HMIC recommended that the SCRO management oversight structure be reformed as part of re positioning SCRO within a new Common Police Services arrangement. **It follows that the recommendation is applicable for this report too.** The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Justice announced (14 September 2000) that there would be a review of Common Police Services. At the point of reporting the detail and timing of that review is not known.

Role of the Scottish Executive

- 2.4 Because of the status of SCRO as a common police service, the Scottish Executive has a key role in relation to the funding and management of the organisation and for that reason has always been represented within the SCRO committee structure. Previously this involved representation on the (then) SCRO Controlling Committee, the Development Standing Committee and Fingerprint Standing Committee. Under the present structure, a senior official from the Justice Department represents the Scottish Executive on the SCRO Executive Committee. The same representative chairs the SCRO Management Committee.
- 2.5 Despite this key management role, SCRO is not required to provide management information to the Scottish Executive on a regular basis. Scottish Executive officials do not routinely visit SCRO beyond the meetings schedule and to date have mostly adopted a "hands off" approach to the organisation's management. The perception of the Scottish Executive as the "paymaster" as opposed to a key player in the management structure is detrimental to what could be a strong and supportive management influence. The review of Common Police Services will also address this issue.

Role of HMIC

- 2.6 HMIC had a seat at the former SCRO Controlling Committee in an advisory capacity and this role continued with the SCRO Executive Committee. The Assistant Inspector (a Deputy Chief Constable on secondment to HMIC) normally undertakes attendance from HMIC. The present Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC) does not support the continuation of the present arrangements involving HMIC. The principal advisory role undertaken by HMCIC is as an adviser to Scottish Ministers and while attendance in that capacity may be appropriate, it must, to preserve the independence of HMIC, exclude any appearance of direct management responsibility. This position will be addressed with the review of Common Police Services.

Relationship with Strathclyde Police

- 2.7 While Strathclyde Police has no more management responsibility for SCRO than any other force, the relationship between SCRO and Strathclyde Police has traditionally been a close one. This is due to a number of reasons including the past physical location of SCRO within Strathclyde Police Headquarters and the fact that the support staff working for SCRO are employees of Strathclyde Joint Police Board. However, the role of the Board is a facilitative one in respect of employment and personnel issues only. The Board has no day to day operational control. SCRO relocation to Number 1 Pacific Quay, Glasgow on 9 October 2000 will assist in more clearly identifying the independence of SCRO.
- 2.8 The other main factor, which leads to close working relations with the force, is that a high proportion of the fingerprint work undertaken by the SCRO Fingerprint Bureau involves Strathclyde Police cases. *De facto*, SCRO acts as the fingerprint bureau for Strathclyde Police, Northern Constabulary and Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary. The ACPOS Project Management Team is addressing this issue following the recommendation of HMIC that a national fingerprint service should be considered. On 27 October 2000 the SCRO Executive Committee decided to move to a system of centralised management for the fingerprint service in Scotland.

Senior Management Post

- 2.9 The most senior management posts within SCRO are currently held by police officers. The Director and Deputy Director are both seconded from Strathclyde Police holding the ranks of chief superintendent and superintendent respectively. Formerly the Director reported to the Assistant Chief Constable (Crime), Strathclyde Police, on a daily basis and that postholder completed the Director's annual performance review form. Now that daily contact with the Assistant Chief Constable (Crime) has been discontinued (following HMIC Inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau) there are no current arrangements in place for the completion of the Director's performance review form.

Recommendation 1

HMIC recommends that the SCRO Executive Committee determine arrangements to ensure that the Director, Deputy Director and other senior staff of SCRO are subject to an annual performance review.

At the time of inspection the Executive Committee were in the process of drafting a scheme of delegation for the Director. The scheme of delegation will enable the Director direct access to the Strathclyde Joint Police Board in relation to personnel matters.

Recommendation 2

HMIC recommends that the Director of SCRO's scheme of delegation be considered as part of the repositioning of SCRO within a new Common Police Services arrangement.

3. Policy and Strategy

How the organisation formulates, deploys, reviews and turns policy and strategy into plans and actions.

- 3.1 The Director of SCRO can formulate internal policy without seeking the approval of the Executive or Management Committees. However if the policy impacts significantly upon the Scottish forces the approval of the Executive Committee is required.
- 3.2 In October 2000 the Executive Committee approved SCRO's Corporate Plan 2000/2003 and the 1999/2000 Annual Report. The Corporate Plan framework was developed over a 2 day seminar in January 2000 involving the Director, Deputy Director, Heads of Bureaux and their Deputies and outside consultants. The Annual Report and Corporate Plan describe the SCRO mission and strategy. The Corporate Plan details activities, actions to be taken, measurements of activity and which post has responsibility for co-ordinating the activity. Each SCRO Bureau has a statement of intent and planning statement published within the Annual Report intended to focus work activity for the forthcoming year. Progress towards the achievement of actions within the Corporate Plan and activity within the Bureaux planning statements is reported to the Director at the SCRO Office Management Meetings attended by the Deputy Director and the Heads of Bureaux.
- 3.3 HMIC recognises that one of the activities within the Corporate Plan is the development of performance measures and that the Plan was only recently approved. However, HMIC found that the issues identified within the Corporate Plan are not supported by detailed internal action plans specific to these issues and designed to achieve the desired outcomes.

Recommendation 3

HMIC recommends that the issues identified within the Corporate Plan are supported by detailed action plans, with SMART objectives, specific to these issues and designed to achieve the desired outcomes.

During the inspection HMIC found that management information on the operation of computer systems is available but that this information is not widely used to gauge performance of processes and activities conducted by SCRO.

Recommendation 4

HMIC recommends that outcome performance measures be developed for each of the Bureaux to reflect activities within the Corporate Plan and the statements of intent and planning statements published in the Annual Report.

- 3.4 SCRO does not regularly benchmark its work processes with other organisations to assess effectiveness, quality and seek improvement. HMIC appreciates that the specialist nature of the work at SCRO militates against straightforward benchmarking but there are a variety of possibilities to be explored.

Recommendation 5

HMIC recommends that where possible benchmarking of processes be employed to gauge effectiveness and secure Best Value.

- 3.5 Service Level Agreements exist, detailing disclosure and access to information, between British Transport Police, Stirling Council, non-police agencies (e.g. the General Teaching Council) and SCRO. No formal agreements exist between SCRO and the Scottish forces and the other criminal justice agencies (Scottish executive, Crown Office and Scottish Prison Service). However through the Integration of Scottish Criminal Justice Information Systems (ISCJIS) Project Service Level Agreements with the criminal justice agencies will be developed and HMIC recognises this as **good practice**.
- 3.6 In order to discuss management issues within SCRO Heads of Bureau and their deputies meet monthly with the Director and Deputy Director. These meetings are minuted and afford the management team the opportunity to learn of new developments and provide updates on projects. Although SCRO does not employ a Team Briefing system HMIC noted that Heads of Bureau hold frequent meetings with their staff to impart and receive information. Staff interviewed during the inspection expressed the view that they are able to make suggestions to changes in working practices and that their ideas are listened to by management. SCRO memoranda, Bureau memoranda and procedure documents are also used to communicate decisions and inform staff of new information. Generally, communication was good but see paragraph 6.10 regarding information on Part V plans.
- 3.7 SCRO has a responsibility to support the police service and the Crown via the Procurator Fiscal Service. This has been extended by Scottish Office Circulars to include the disclosure of information to local authorities in the relation to employment involving substantial access to children. Part V of the Police Act 1997 further extends the disclosure access to individuals on a payment basis. Senior management involvement with SCRO customers is by direct dialogue and attendance at informal and pre-arranged meetings. Customer satisfaction is gauged, informally, by letters of appreciation/complaint, from responses from the Executive Committee and Scottish Executive as well as the SCRO Management Committee. SCRO acknowledge the value of quality of service surveys, however the reality is that current resourcing has not allowed for proper circulation, collation and evaluation to be undertaken and intends to address this as soon as resources permit. **HMIC suggests that SCRO develop and implement regular customer satisfaction surveys at the earliest opportunity.**

4. People Management

How the organisation releases the full potential of its people

Human Resources

- 4.1 Despite having its own budget and accountability mechanisms, SCRO does not have the legal capacity to be an employer. Consequently, the solution of convenience is for Strathclyde Joint Police Board to be the employer of the SCRO support staff. A charge of 4.4% of the pay bill is levied on SCRO as an administration charge for the use of Strathclyde Police's finance and personnel and training services. No service level agreement exists between SCRO and Strathclyde Police regarding the provision of these services. This relationship, while convenient, is not without its tensions, not least of these being the timescales to recruit additional staff. SCRO may have made a case for and obtained approval for additional or changed posts from the Executive Committee responsible for the governance of SCRO. While it has secured funding from its own budget, recruitment, which is undertaken by Strathclyde Police, cannot commence until a suitable report on the application is submitted by Strathclyde Police for approval to the Joint Police Board. While the propriety of the processes required by the Board is recognised, the time taken for this additional layer of scrutiny can be frustrating to an organisation trying to respond to business pressures in an extremely competitive employment market. It can be seen as an impediment to the effective and efficient management of the organisation. Because SCRO's civilian support staff are all employees of the Strathclyde Joint Police Board their terms and conditions including salary, training and welfare are all managed by Strathclyde Police Personnel Department.
- 4.2 This description is not an implied criticism of the action of the Strathclyde Joint Police Board and pending the review of Common Police Services the Board has agreed to changes in the processes, consistent with current legal and procedural requirements, in order to secure improvement.
- 4.3 Recruitment of staff is via the Personnel Department of Strathclyde Police for force support staff. Adverts for key posts are advertised nationally in magazines such as the Police Review and use made of Scottish National Newspapers as well as the 8 Scottish force publications. SCRO has an internet site where certain posts are advertised. Core competencies are identified for each post within the person specification and job description. In some posts, eg trainee fingerprint officer, tenprint identification officer and IT posts, specific tests are used. In line with the recent HMIC recommendation (No. 22 in the Fingerprint Report), all SCRO adverts now identify SCRO as a separate organisation, with applications being forwarded to the recruitment section of Strathclyde Police on behalf of SCRO. All SCRO adverts contain a statement regarding equal opportunities and acknowledge an under representation in relation to ethnic minorities. The Personnel Department of Strathclyde Police, who at this time handle most recruiting requirements, undertakes short listing of applicants in the first instance. They also monitor the statistics in relation to the ethnic origin of applicants. SCRO interview all candidates put forward to them by the Personnel Department of Strathclyde Police. The recent recruitment process to appoint the Head of the Scottish

4. People Management

Fingerprint Service involved the Personnel Department of Strathclyde Police but was managed and facilitated by the ACPOS Project Team. Use was made of commercial recruitment and advertising specialists and the interview panel chaired by the Chairman of the SCRO Executive Committee, supported by the Secretary ACPOS Personnel and Training Committee and the Director of SCRO.

- 4.4 Police staff are seconded from their home force for a period of 3 years. Secondments can be extended by mutual agreement on a year by year basis. Each Force Personnel Department who have seconded officers at SCRO manages their officers' personnel issues. A comprehensive induction pack, which HMIC recognises as **good practice**, outlining policy and procedures is given to all new staff on their arrival at SCRO.
- 4.5 A part of the Deputy Director's role in human resource management is to identify the police and support staff posts required in the organisation, prepare person specifications and job descriptions, and forward these to Strathclyde Police Personnel Department for them to advertise. Applications are sifted by the Strathclyde Police Personnel Department and SCRO managers interview candidates. The Deputy Director is the endorsing officer for support staff personal development review forms and the police performance review forms. The Deputy Director liaises with the Strathclyde Police Occupational Health Unit who provide occupational health services and advice to SCRO management and personnel. The Deputy Director deals with disciplinary matters should the need arise. For seconded police staff the ultimate responsibility rests with the seconding force. For support staff the ultimate authority is the Strathclyde Joint Police Board.
- 4.6 The only plan in relation to personnel rotation is that for Police staff who are seconded on a 3 year tenure basis. Each year, as part of the financial bid, posts which require to be filled or new bids for additional posts are presented to the Executive Committee for approval. A personnel plan to recruit fingerprint experts has been prepared. A review of the Computer and Research and Development departments has been undertaken and was implemented with effect from 1 April 2000 (see paragraph 6.12). As a component of the Part V Project a review of the staffing of the User Support Bureau Disclosure Unit will be undertaken.
- 4.7 All police personnel are subject to the national performance review process. Police officer training needs are identified through a job requirement/personal development plan by either the appraiser or appraisee. Support staff have an annual personal development review at which training needs are addressed. Such needs are routinely identified during the working year. For fingerprint staff certain courses are required for qualifications towards expert or Tenprint Identification Officer status. A significant number of support staff interviewed during the inspection described the personal development review process as "ritualistic" and stated that they would prefer to be the subject of a performance review process similar to that for police officers. This issue should be monitored by management.
- 4.8 SCRO considered consultants to assist with an examination of their personnel system. While the advice they offered was of assistance, the cost to employ them was judged to be too great and they were not engaged. However consultants were used to facilitate an SCRO corporate meeting at the Scottish Police College. SCRO are investigating the purchase of a computer based personnel management system.

- 4.9 SCRO was scheduled to appoint a new Human Resources Officer in January 2001. At the time of reporting 40 applications had been received and were being processed. Initial responsibilities for the postholder will be focused upon the recruitment of staff in line with the requirements of Part V of the Police Act 1997. Thereafter the Human Resources Officer will develop working practices including absence management procedures for the whole of SCRO. HMIC recognises the appointment of the Human Resources Officer as good practice.

Absence Management

- 4.10 The Sickness Absence Policy Statement is contained within the SCRO Induction Pack which is given to all new staff. The policy does not include detail concerning how sickness absence will be managed, the review triggers, or the effect upon the employee of prolonged sickness. The policy does not overtly state what the effect of sickness has on SCRO as an organisation.
- 4.11 SCRO operate a computerised personnel database which is recognised as being of limited value and as per recommendation 9 of the Primary Inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau a replacement system is being progressed. From initial investigations the system being considered also has a personnel management information facility in addition to an absence management capability.
- 4.12 Currently, details of staff absence are forwarded to the Strathclyde Police Personnel Department for formal recording. The Personnel Department highlights to SCRO the requirement for either a return to work form or a self-certification form. Details of the absence of police officers on secondment are reported to the officers' parent force. Within SCRO the secretary to the Director updates details of absence on the personnel database which automatically generates a memorandum to the relevant Head of Bureau detailing the number of periods of sickness in the last 12 months. The Head of Bureau can thereafter request sickness monitoring information from the secretary.
- 4.13 In relation to support staff SCRO complete a Strathclyde Police employee attendance record detailing days at work, sickness, and annual leave. Strathclyde Police, but not SCRO, use information from this card. This is a practice that serves no apparent SCRO purpose. As most staff are Strathclyde Joint Board employees, absence monitoring is in line with Strathclyde Police's policy and if necessary interviews for staff have been arranged with the Strathclyde Police Occupational Health Unit and welfare officers. Return to work interviews are carried out where welfare issues and, if necessary, re-familiarisation facilities are given (ie in relation to Fingerprint Experts). It is important for SCRO management to have a clear and unambiguous responsibility for absence management.

Recommendation 6

HMIC recommends that SCRO develop an absence management policy detailing the effects employee absence has on SCRO, the function of return to work interviews, the consequences to the member of staff of repeated absence and put in place robust absence management monitoring arrangements.

Equal Opportunities

- 4.14 SCRO recently produced an equal opportunities policy having previously followed the policy of Strathclyde Police. This policy is contained within the Induction Pack given to new members of staff and key extracts are prominently displayed at the entrance to SCRO. In respect of a policy covering part-time working, maternity leave, career breaks and exit interviews, these fall within the general conditions of service of the employee. Therefore, in the case of support staff, the policies of Strathclyde Police apply and in relation to police officers, the seconding officer's force policy applies.
- 4.15 All new support staff attend a 2 day induction course with Strathclyde Police and a one day induction course with SCRO. On both these courses input on equal opportunities is given. Police staff receive equal opportunities training as prescribed by their own Forces.
- 4.16 There is a Grievance Policy in existence, it is part of the Induction Pack and is readily available to all staff. Since the last Primary Inspection there has been one grievance relating to work attendance that was resolved by reconciliation.

Health and Safety

- 4.17 The Head of the User Support Bureau (USB) is the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Health and safety issues are highlighted to her. She organises the bi-monthly Health and Safety meetings chaired by the Deputy Director. Each Bureau is represented at meetings and health and safety is a standing item on the agenda of management meetings. All reports of injury are recorded in an accident book at SCRO and notified to the Strathclyde Police Health and Safety Advisor. Any liaison, if it were required, with the Health and Safety Executive would be conducted by the Strathclyde Police Health and Safety Advisor. There have been no Health and Safety Executive inspections since the last primary inspection.

5. Partnership & Resources

How effective is partnership working and does the organisation manage resources effectively and efficiently.

- 5.1 SCRO's partnership approach involves linking at executive and senior management level with all Scottish Forces, the Scottish Police College, Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency, British Transport Police and the Ministry of Defence Police principally via the SCRO Executive and Management Committees. Within the wider criminal justice community, SCRO provides a service central to all the partners involved in the Integration of the Scottish Criminal Justice Information System (ISCJIS). This involves attendance at numerous ISCJIS Groups ranging from local force liaison to the National Project Board.
- 5.2 Commitment to this partnership approach is illustrated by the linkages with the following organisations and projects:
 - The Scottish Police IS/IT Strategy (SPIS)
 - Police Information and Technology Organisation (PITO)
 - Eight Force Standard Group (a group established in 1999 to discuss national issues affecting the fingerprint service in Scotland and re-vitalised following HMIC inspection of fingerprints)
 - SAGEM (supplier of automatic fingerprint recognition technology) - User and Business Continuity Groups
 - Bull (supplier of the Criminal History System, Police National Computer and Phoenix Interfaces)
 - Police Act 1997 - Part V Project Team
- 5.3 SCRO undertake roadshows, seminars, and lectures and compiles a newsletter ('On the Record') to inform partners and customers of their business activities.

Integration of Scottish Criminal Justice Information Systems

- 5.4 The Integration of Scottish Criminal Justice Information Systems (ISCJIS) programme aims to bring benefits to the Scottish criminal justice system by automating the sharing and exchange of information between the various agencies within the system. The project is a joint initiative of the major agencies - the Scottish Executive, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, Scottish Court Service (SCS), Scottish Police Forces (and the British Transport Police), Scottish Prison Service (SPS), District Courts, Scottish Children's Reporters Agency, Scottish Legal Aid Board, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and SCRO.
- 5.5 Almost all of the organisations involved already have their own computer systems, to hold and manage the information and documents required for their work. For example, the Crown Office has a "Standard Office System" which is in use in all Procurators Fiscal Offices and is being developed further. The Scottish Court Service's "COP"

system stores information on cases in all Sheriff Courts. These separate systems are already linked to some extent. For example, at 19 sites, information is transferred on diskette between local Procurator Fiscal offices and the Sheriff Clerks. The link between the Scottish police forces and the Scottish Criminal Record Office is fully computerised. In police forces standard police reports are prepared and transmitted electronically to Procurator Fiscal offices.

- 5.6 The ISCJIS 'Primary Loop' is a series of IT linkages between the various existing computer systems of the Scottish criminal justice organisations. It will bring benefits of speed and accuracy and at the same time reduce administrative costs.
- 5.7 The SCRO Corporate Plan 2000/03 identifies as an issue the continued management of the Integration of the Scottish Criminal Justice Information Systems (ISCJIS). As an aim SCRO seeks to ensure it is committed to the phased implementation of the programme, and to endeavour to provide the highest quality service. SCRO has demonstrated commitment to the project by the appointment of an inspector to the post of ISCJIS Co-ordinator, within SCRO, chairing the ISCJIS Data Standards Change Control Group. The ISCJIS Co-ordinator's role includes ensuring that regular dialogue is maintained between SCRO and all ISCJIS partners, that appropriate representation is maintained on all committees and at all meetings within the ISCJIS community. These arrangements may need adjustment as part of the Review of Common Police Services.

Figure 2 – The ISCJIS Primary Loop



- 5.8 At the point of reporting all Sheriff Courts in the Fife Constabulary, Grampian Police, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, Northern Constabulary and Central Scotland Police areas are fully ISCJIS compliant. Courts within the Tayside Police and Lothian and Borders Police areas are working towards being ISCJIS compliant. SCRO is to host a Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) pilot scheme in order that the Paisley and Dumfries Procurator Fiscal's offices can have access to the DVLA data base to improve efficiency in the courts when DVLA printouts are required.

Part V of the Police Act 1997

- 5.9 In December 1998 Mr Henry McLeish, the now First Minister but then Home Affairs Minister, announced that extended access to criminal record checks in terms of Part V of the Police Act 1997 would be provided in Scotland by SCRO and that it would take approximately two years to put the necessary resources and procedures in place to take on the additional workload. For England and Wales a Criminal Record Bureau has been set up in Merseyside and run by the UK Passport Agency. It was originally intended that SCRO would issue certificates on a phased basis, starting in December 2000 with the Enhanced Criminal Record Certificates for positions dealing with children. Scottish Ministers subsequently decided that the introduction of Part V in Scotland should come into line with England and Wales, as the two operations have to be developed in parallel to allow for as much integration as possible. The target date for commencement of the service in Scotland at the point of inspection was July 2001. There was delay of the project in England and Wales.
- 5.10 The strategy for implementation of Part V is in place based on Project in controlled Environment (PRINCE) project management methodology. A Project Board is responsible for setting policy, directing the progress of the work of the Project, and for ensuring the availability of the necessary resources. The Board is chaired by the Scottish Executive and comprises representatives of the Executive, ACPOS and Central Computer Telecommunication Agency. The Project Assurance Team (PAT) is responsible for ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the Project Team. The PAT comprises representatives of the Scottish Executive and ACPOS. The Director of SCRO is the chairman of the Project Management Team (PMT), which is responsible for ensuring that the work on the project is delivered to the planned timetable. In addition to the chairman, the PMT comprises the Deputy Director of SCRO; the Head of SCRO/IT services; the Part V Project Manager; and the Part V Deputy Project Manager.
- 5.11 The Project Team is established within SCRO, headed by an acting superintendent, to procure and develop the required resources, accommodation and procedures for Part V. As well as the Project Manager the Project Team comprises a Deputy Project Manager; an IT Development Officer; a Policy Development Officer (seconded from the Scottish Executive); and an Administrative Assistant. At the time of the inspection a Financial Systems Officer had been recently appointed to the Team. Arrangements are currently being put in hand to appoint a Human Resources Officer, with two additional IT staff. Until the implementation of Part V the Financial Systems Officer and the Human Resources Officer will concentrate on Part V work but thereafter these posts will assume broader responsibilities within SCRO as a whole. HMIC acknowledges the introduction of the Financial Systems Officer and Human Resources Officer posts as **good practice**. The Project Team reports to the Director of SCRO, and ultimately to the

Part V Project Board. In addition, the Project Team has access to various consultancy services (e.g. CCTA, Scottish Executive Procurement Division) as required.

- 5.12 At the time of inspection HMIC found that the Project Team had developed a process model to facilitate the registration and application elements of the project. Although these processes have been mapped out extensive development work has still to be conducted and a third party organisation that would design and provide the necessary computer software and IT systems had yet to be identified, and approved by the Project Board. HMIC recognises that implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997 is of great importance to SCRO and will be the catalyst for changing the role of the User Support Bureau (see paragraphs 6.5 to 6.10).
- 5.13 The evidence of the inspection raised concerns about the intended commencement date of July 2001. There is no doubting the effort and determination of all concerned (project board, project team, police forces and Scottish Executive) to meet this original timescale. However HMIC considers that it is more important that the new service is fully effective from the inception rather than continue with (now) an unrealistic date. A number of factors have contributed to the present situation, including considerable delays in receiving legal advice on aspects of practice and procedures. HMIC suggests that careful consideration is given to establishing a new date for the implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997, given the work that remains to be done. Linking the start date with that of the parallel organisation in England and Wales remains a sensible approach, even if that means delaying the start date of the Scottish operation. Also see paragraph 6.11 regarding data quality.

Finance

Financial Policy Framework

- 5.14 SCRO is part of the Justice Department of the Scottish Executive and as such is governed by the financial controls and procedures as operated by the Scottish Executive through the Scottish Executive Finance Manual. A draft financial memorandum has been prepared for SCRO that establishes formally the financial framework and relationships within which SCRO operates and should comply.

Recommendation 7

HMIC recommends that the Financial Memorandum be completed and ratified as soon as possible.

The mechanisms that exist within SCRO relating to budget preparation, monitoring and control are integrated within SCRO's overall strategic and operational management processes.

Financial Monitoring (Revenue)

- 5.15 SCRO, as part of the Justice Department, hold their financial data on the Scottish Office Accounting Package (SCOAP) the Scottish Executive's corporate accounting system. Actual expenditure incurred by SCRO is paid in a number of ways. Payments

to police officers, seconded to SCRO from their home force, are paid by the Scottish Executive. Non uniformed staff are seconded from and paid by Strathclyde Joint Police Board. Other invoices are sent by SCRO to the Scottish Executive for processing/ payment. Local records are held relating to invoices passed to the Scottish Executive for payment with reconciliation carried out between local records and SCOAP.

- 5.16 The present coding arrangements within SCOAP do not assist the process of detailed budget monitoring within SCRO. This manifests itself in a number of ways. Firstly SCRO is held as a single cost centre and as such does not allow the holding of budgetary or actual expenditure data at bureau level within SCRO. The second issue is that of the account codes available for SCRO non-pay costs. At present a single code holds all non-pay costs. This situation hinders the extraction of detailed financial information from the corporate accounting system and necessitates duplication of effort. It is concluded therefore that the present ledger structure hinders effective financial control of resources allocated to SCRO.

Recommendation 8

HMIC recommends that SCRO in conjunction with the Scottish Executive review the account structure within the corporate accounting system in order to facilitate the direct extraction of meaningful monitoring information from the Scottish Office Accounting Package (SCOAP). (See para 5.22.)

- 5.17 The reconciliation of financial records is currently undertaken by one member of staff. Periods of annual and other leave, exposes SCRO to potential risk. The appointment of a Finance Officer in relation to Part V developments, whilst improving the financial skills within SCRO does not remove this risk entirely.

Recommendation 9

HMIC recommends that another support staff member within SCRO is identified and trained as cover to maintain financial records in the absence of the designated post holder.

- 5.18 Monitoring is undertaken and reported at a global level for SCRO. The level of information provided in monitoring reports is clear, concise and easily understood although manual intervention is required to data extracted from SCOAP.

Internal Audit

- 5.19 As part of the Justice Department, SCRO falls within the remit of the Scottish Executive Audit Unit (SEAU). Given that SCRO is using staff and services from Strathclyde Joint Police Board, SCRO also indirectly accesses the internal audit activity of the Joint Board on those areas of service provided to SCRO. The audit plan prepared by SEAU for coverage of the Justice Department is not subject to specific discussion with SCRO but is dealt with on a departmental basis.

Processing of Creditors

5.20 At present creditors invoices are passed to the Scottish Executive in Edinburgh for batch processing. The amount of invoices generated by SCRO has typically been approximately 850 per annum. With the development of structures and processes to support Part V activity future estimates are in the order of 1,000 invoices per annum. The present arrangements require a reconciliation of local records and the corporate financial system, as well as time consuming follow up on queries from suppliers. Direct processing of invoices would be possible through SCOAP and facilitate the updating of ledger data and extraction of up to date management information from SCOAP.

Recommendation 10

HMIC recommends that SCRO investigate, in conjunction with Justice Department Police Division, the resource and technical requirements to enable direct payment of creditors.

Devolved Budgeting

5.21 Devolved budgeting has not been adopted within SCRO. The prime reason given is the lack of flexibility at bureau level and the difficulty in responding to emerging pressures within the budget. The Deputy Director did indicate that bureau heads are in a position to authorise some purchases on minor items of equipment. Formal rules of delegation are not in place.

Recommendation 11

HMIC recommends that a framework be established which identifies the nature and level of delegated responsibility for expenditure within SCRO.

5.22 The present financial systems do not support devolved budgeting in the sense that bureau costs are not directly identifiable and management information not easily extracted from the accounting systems operated within the Scottish Executive.

Recommendation 12

HMIC recommends that the cost centre structure within SCOAP be revised to enable the direct identification of costs at bureau level. (See para 5.16.)

Provision of Support Services

5.23 SCRO and the Scottish Executive provide financial services with Strathclyde Joint Police Board providing some support services (including personnel and training). A management fee is charged the basis of which is a percentage of the SCRO budget. There is no formal Service Level Agreement in place and no basis on which to judge whether the present arrangements with Strathclyde provide value for money as the fee is all encompassing and levels of service are not specified.

Recommendation 13

HMIC recommends that a service level agreement be established between SCRO and Strathclyde Joint Police Board detailing the services to be provided, the costs of such services, with monitoring arrangements and payment mechanisms and that such an agreement should be subject to regular review.

Bank Account

- 5.24 A bank account is operated by Strathclyde on behalf of SCRO which is in effect an imprest account. This was established because SCRO is not a legal entity and could not therefore open its own bank account. Both miscellaneous payments and a small amount of receipts are handled through this account. Arrangements exist within the Scottish Executive where local bank accounts can be operated. This mechanism is in place for some other Common Police Services whose legal status is akin to SCRO.

Recommendation 14

HMIC recommends that a bank account be established consistent with the procedures operated within the Scottish Executive for the operation of local bank accounts and that all receipts and payments be accounted for in accordance with Government Accounting.

Revenue Budgeting

- 5.25 The revenue budget process within SCRO is structured and is usually based on incremental budgeting approach. The budget preparation process for 2001-02 was conducted with the assistance of finance staff from Strathclyde Police Finance Department with a full examination of the base budget built from a zero base. This approach was taken as a consequence of the move to new premises and the resultant change in cost base, as well as the anticipated impact of Part V in July 2001. SCRO are aware of the budget processes within the Scottish Executive and submissions are made to the Justice Department (Police Division) for budget changes as and when required.

Best Value

- 5.26 SCRO produced their Best Value submission in May 2000 and a number of references to finance are made within the document. With regard to the basic financial processes within SCRO a number of developments can be linked to the best value submission. The budget process for 2001-02 re-appraised the base budget in line with operational requirements and developments. This is evidence of the linking of operational and financial planning which was not supported by the application of a traditional incremental budgeting approach. The establishment of a three-year baseline as a result of spending review 2000 (SR2000) should enhance this process and facilitate the development of medium term financial planning which until now has been an annual process. The approach taken requires to be continually applied given the imminent and significant changes in SCRO's operating environment and the requirement to update both financial and operational plans.

- 5.27 HMIC examined the procurement processes within SCRO and established that Value for Money is sought through the application of Scottish Executive procurement guidance.
- 5.28 Reference is made in Section 5 of the best value submission to quality and the establishment of a Quality Management System (QMS) to support the business objectives of SCRO. Such a system should, as well as identifying the desired outputs by SCRO link these to the costs of delivery. Whilst there is an overt requirement to identify the costs of Part V for the recharging of costs to some customers, there is also a requirement to cost all functions to establish the benchmarks against which quality/cost improvements can be measured.
- 5.29 Underlying these processes is the requirement to collect and extract financial data in a meaningful form. This requirement further supports the recommendations made for the restructuring of the ledger system (SCOAP) to support the extraction of meaningful financial data.

Part V of the Police Act 1997

- 5.30 The financial arrangements surrounding the introduction of Part V have been discussed over the past 18 months. Given the complexity of issues surrounding both the potential demand and the charging policy to be adopted for the issue of certificates, financial planning has been difficult. The basic processes applied to date have been sound. To support the implementation of Part V a Finance Officer has been seconded from Central Scotland Police for one year. The post holder is a qualified accountant and the addition of technical expertise will assist SCRO both in terms of Part V and the general development of financial systems. Detailed budget profiles have been prepared for a number of possible scenarios in anticipated demand for certificates. Given outstanding policy matters outwith the direct control of SCRO on the basis of charging, a best estimate has been incorporated within the 2001-02 budget. The financial arrangements associated with Part V will be fully reviewed as part of the review inspection in December 2001.

6. Processes

The Management of all value-adding activities within the organisation.

Fingerprint Bureau

- 6.1 Following publication of the of the recommendations and suggestions in the Fingerprint Bureau primary inspection report on 29 August 2000 the ACPOS Project Management Team have been co-ordinating and assisting progress of the SCRO response to HMIC's recommendations and the CMRT findings. A chronology of events is described within this report's introduction. The CMRT response to the recommendations and suggestions is reproduced at Annexe 'A'. HMIC is satisfied that a structured programme is in place to address the recommendations and suggestions, that the task is being approached enthusiastically and vigorously and that much has been done to make progress. On 7 December 2000 the Bureau was accredited with the 'ISO 9002' standard.
- 6.2 HMIC Inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau published on 29 August 2000 was critical of a number of aspects of its efficiency and effectiveness. Much of the concern derived from a lack of resources, inappropriate working practices, the lengthy timescales to secure change and the clarity of responsibilities. A number of the issues giving rise to these concerns were outside the direct control of SCRO management.
- 6.3 The action since the HMIC Inspection has been positive and wide ranging. A number of points can be made to demonstrate improvement:
- The move to the new premises has provided a more obvious independence and a better working environment where procedures and processes can be more readily operated and monitored.
 - The production and publication of the report by the ACPOS Review Group (see Annexe 'A') and the creation of a dedicated project group to take issues forward.
 - The allocation of responsibilities and the creation of time scales to produce specific work to secure improvements.
 - The independent checking of the fingerprint product (required by the Lord Advocate and announced in Parliament on 22 June 2000) has confirmed the quality and accuracy of the work of SCRO. Over 1,400 cases have been examined containing over 4,300 marks with in excess of 6,600 impressions, all of which have been verified. In view of the results of this verification process HMIC queries whether this is still appropriate and an effective use of resources.
 - The strengthening of the SCRO management team by the introduction of key posts.
 - The effort to recruit additional staff.
 - The agreement of the SCRO Executive Committee to adopt a system of central management for the fingerprint service in Scotland.
 - The appointment of a Head of the Scottish Fingerprint Service to develop and lead the system of centralised management.

- 6.4 HMIC is satisfied that the responses so far have been speedy and robust. There is a clear need for this process to be pursued with vigour and regular oversight to avoid any slide backward to the pre-inspection position. HMIC will re-visit the issues identified by the Inspection of the Fingerprint Bureau and this Inspection of the remainder SCRO at the Review Inspection in December 2001.

User Support Bureau

- 6.5 The need for the User Support Bureau was recognised in 1989 as part of the project to computerise the Criminal History System networked throughout the Scottish Forces. At this time SCRO's role within the Scottish Police Service was evolving at pace as was the need to provide support and guidance to the operational officers and end users of the various systems. From this the User Support Bureau (initially Administration Department) was established. Its role has expanded in line with the demands of the Service and the development of IT provision.
- 6.6 The purpose of the Bureau as it exists now is to provide a link between the facilities offered by SCRO and the client groups which it services. The Bureau's core functions are to provide authorised police users with access to the Criminal History System and Police National Computer via an Interface, the provision of advice and assistance via a 24 hour help desk facility, recording and search facilities on the national Stolen Property Database and criminal history information to authorised agencies in relation to their vetting processes. Tables 2 and 3 in the Results Section describe the levels of activity undertaken by the Bureau.
- 6.7 During the inspection User Support Bureau personnel expressed the view that forces are not maximising their use of the facilities afforded by the Criminal History System. Examination of the number of Criminal History System and Stolen Property Search transactions and the percentage share of transaction types illustrate that the numbers of searches are in decline (see Tables 3, 5 and 6 in the Results Section).

Recommendation 15

HMIC recommends that ACPOS in consultation with SCRO maximise the crime prevention and detection potential of the Criminal History System.

- 6.8 The Disclosure Unit within the Bureau processes criminal conviction disclosure enquiries from non-police agencies in terms of Scottish Office Home Department Police (CC) Circular No. 4/1989 in relation to prospective employees who may have opportunities for substantial access to children. The total number of disclosure enquiries dealt with by the Bureau has risen annually, and in 1999/00 had risen by nearly a quarter (23.3%) on the previous two year average. Details of the types of disclosure enquiries are described in Table 2 of the Results Section. SCRO have service level agreements which require disclosure enquiries to be processed within 10 working days of receipt by the Bureau. HMIC found that although Bureau personnel were aware of the amount of work in-hand no management information is routinely collated on the achievement of the turnaround target.

- 6.9 Although ownership of the data contained within the Criminal History System rests with the Scottish police forces the Bureau has a monitoring function to ensure the integrity of the system. This includes the prevention of unauthorised user access, deletion of information, compliance by forces of the procedures and protocols concerning the recording and the weeding of information. System security and integrity audits are conducted nightly by the Duty Sergeants monitoring data input and output, and transaction searches based on the record, terminal and user access. If a record is removed manually a print off is generated automatically and the Duty Sergeant seeks clarification from the force concerned.
- 6.10 Post implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997 (see paragraph 5.9) the role of the Bureau will be transformed and an opportunity will be afforded to review the Bureau's function, staffing arrangements, and the role of the sergeants. At the time of the inspection the future role of the Bureau had not been crystallised and Bureau personnel expressed concern that they had not been provided with sufficient information about their futures. **HMIC suggests that User Support Bureau personnel and all other staff be kept fully informed of likely changes to their employment status as a result of the implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997.**
- 6.11 HMIC is aware of a review of Scottish Police Record Offices initiated in August 2000 by the ACPOS Technical and Research Committee. The Review was not complete at the point of Inspection. This is a timely study given the importance of data accuracy for the Criminal History System as a whole. It is clear from the inspection of SCRO and forces that their interdependence could be enhanced by the greater routine exchange of management information.

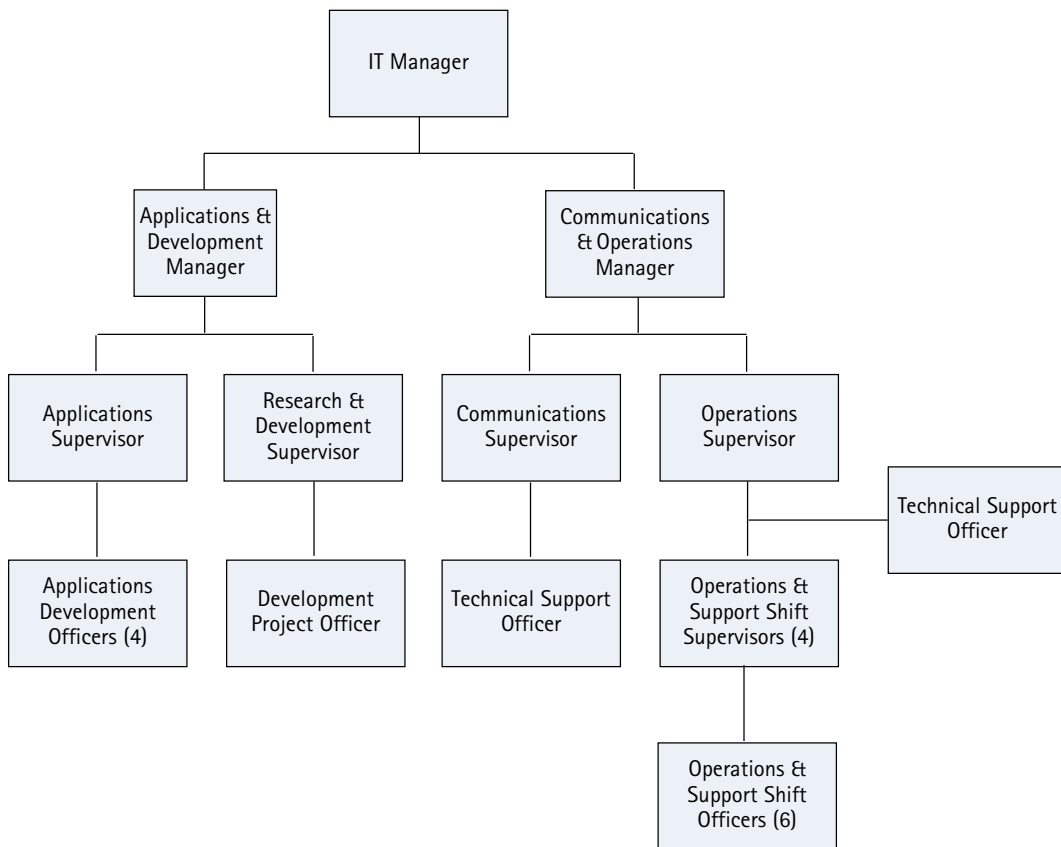
Recommendation 16

HMIC recommends that ACPOS and SCRO (and where appropriate the Police National Computer (PNC)) further develop standards, measures and management information in order to secure maximum efficiency of the Criminal History System.

Information Technology (IT) Bureau

- 6.12 A review of the Computer Section was initiated in November 1997. This was subsequently widened in November 1998 to include the Research & Development Section. The review concluded that the structure depicted below will provide a better structure to meet the present and future strategic needs of the Scottish forces and associated external agencies.

Figure 3 – IT Bureau Structure



- 6.13 At the time of the inspection the Applications Supervisor, Research and Development Supervisor, Communications Supervisor and Operations Supervisor posts were vacant and the process of recruitment to these posts was underway.
- 6.14 The IT Bureau exists to provide a service covering the following systems; Criminal History, PNC Interface, PHOENIX Interface, Automatic Fingerprint Recognition, Livescan, Stolen Property, SCRO office systems and local area network, and stolen MOT certificates. Also included are the data communications networks associated with these systems. The service relates to the support of, and enhancements to, existing systems and to the development of new facilities. Research is undertaken not only on behalf of SCRO but also the Scottish Police Service and other agencies, e.g. development work for the ISCJS project and automated handwriting analysis systems.
- 6.15 IT Bureau performance is measured against system availability figures published in Annual Reports. System availability figures are shown in the results section in Figures 17, 18 and 19. Examination of the figures shows that the IT Bureau maintain an almost constant availability of the Criminal History, AFR and PNCL systems. The needs and requirements of customers are identified through liaison groups, committees and system change requests. Feedback is provided in a number of ways including, force liaison meetings, reviews of resources, performance measurement and staff meetings.

Suggestions for improvements and shortfall in performance are analysed and changes made where appropriate. The IT Bureau have the capability to extract a myriad of performance information and it is vitally important that in addressing Recommendations 14, 15 and 16 (development of performance measures, maximisation of the crime prevention and detection potential of the Criminal History System and enhanced management information) cognisance is taken of this. Although forces are provided with individual terminal transaction histories HMIC (and SCRO) is not clear what the usefulness of this information is to the recipients and how it is used routinely to improve performance in forces.

- 6.16 HMIC noted that at the time of inspection an Information Security and Data Protection Handbook is being drafted to supplement the information in the SCRO Induction Pack. HMIC recognises the production of an Information and Security Data Protection Handbook as good practice. At the time of inspection SCRO were seeking authorisation for the new post of Information Security / Data Protection Officer. The Livescan Manager currently assumes the role of information security officer and SCRO recognise that this situation is not desirable. HMIC did not find evidence of an IT security policy encompassing the ISCJIS Data Protection & Security Baseline Security Requirements.

Recommendation 17

HMIC recommends that SCRO review and define their IT security policies ensuring that they encompass the requirements of the ISCJIS Data Protection and Security Baseline Security Requirements.

- 6.17 HMIC found that the IT Bureau were not making use of project management methodology for all projects. **HMIC suggests that the IT Bureau make greater use of project management methodology (shortened versions where appropriate).** HMIC established that Bureau personnel complete a weekly summary of what work tasks they have been involved in but that no record is kept of staff time devoted to particular work activities and therefore no analysis of work activity. **HMIC suggests that the IT Bureau implement a process to record and analyse the time devoted by personnel to work activities.** This information can then be used to secure improvements.

7. Results

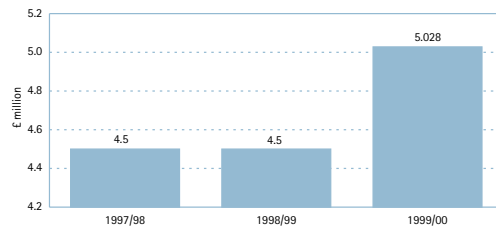
What the organisation is achieving in relation to its planned objectives and in satisfying the needs and expectations of everyone with an interest or stake in the organisation.

- 7.1 This section examines a range of data gathered by SCRO that reflects the activities undertaken by the organisation. HMIC is looking for evidence of continuous improvement, normally measured by comparing the organisation's current performance against its own record. In some instances benchmarking with other organisations will be appropriate. Where appropriate adoption of good practice from others can be a key factor in developing improvement. HMIC anticipates that SCRO will have set a standard against which its performance can be judged. The information presented will assist in focussing SCRO's achievements and act as a pointer as to where some improvement is needed. The information presented below is structured around a number of key indicators of performance likely to be of interest and value to all stakeholders. HMIC will generally take a 5 year view where that is meaningful and the data is available. Trends rather than year on year comparison is presented. HMIC considers the following worthy of particular note.
- 7.2 Table 3 and Figure 9 highlight that the number of speculative and extended speculative searches have declined by nearly 10% and 13% respectively over the previous 3 year average.
- 7.3 Table 5 illustrates that the number of stolen property searches conducted has been in decline since 1997 and in 1999/2000 was down by over a quarter on the previous 3 year average. Subsequent identifications have declined more than 40% over the same period. The number of searches per item on the database is extremely low suggesting limited use of this system.
- 7.4 Table 6 indicates that the number of searches on the stolen MOT and Vehicle Excise License database is down by 87% on the previous 2 year average and that the number of identifications is down by 85%. These results indicate an under-utilisation of the system.

Budget

- The approved budget for SCRO remained constant at £4.5 million for the financial years 1997/98 and 1998/99.
- However the latest year, 1999/00, saw a rise of nearly 12%.

Figure 4: Approved Budget for SCRO



Personnel

- The total strength of the Scottish Criminal Records Office for 1999/00 stood at 116 members of police and civilian staff. This is a rise of nearly one fifth (+19%) on the average of the previous two years.
- Nevertheless this total continues to fall short of the authorised establishment of SCRO, down by seven staff in 1999/00.
- The recent addition of two police officers in 1999/00 meant that police numbers were up an eighth (+12.5%) on the previous two year average.
- However a more marked rise has occurred for civilian staff - up over one fifth (+20.2%) over this same time period.
- The number of police officers per section has remained stable throughout the three years examined here, the differences in proportions in 1999/00 being accounted for by two additional officers working on a project relating to Part V of the Police Act 1997.
- Sergeants continue to make up the majority of police posts within SCRO. The proportions of ranks changed in 1999/00 with the addition of one acting Superintendent and one Chief Inspector working on the Part V Police Act 1997 project.
- With regard to support staff, three of the four sections have experienced increases in staff numbers. The highest percentage rise has occurred within the Fingerprint Bureau, up +31.1% on the previous two year average - this section now accounts for over three-fifths of all SCRO support staff.
- Indeed, combining police and support staff, personnel within the Fingerprint Bureau has risen +28.6% over the same time period, raising its proportion of all SCRO staff from 50.5% in 1997/98 to 54.3% in 1999/00.
- Figure 3 shows the breakdown of total staff in 1999/00 by section.
- Despite recent increases in staff numbers for both the User Support Bureau and the Computer Section, their percentage shares of total staff have fallen slightly as a result of the greater increases experienced by the Fingerprint Bureau.

Figure 5: SCRO Personnel – 1999/00

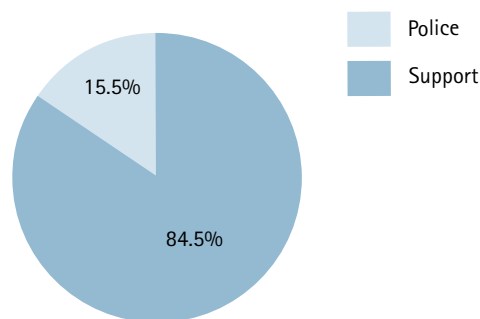
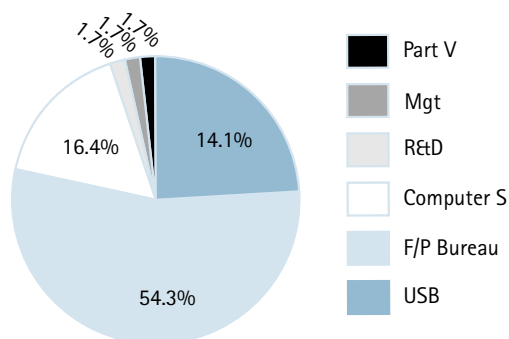


Table 1: Breakdown of staff by Section

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00
Total Staff	99	96	116
No. of police officers	16	16	18
% total staff	16.2	16.7	15.5
(Numbers in brackets)			
% SCRO Directorate	12.5 (2)	12.5 (2)	11.1 (2)
% User Support Bureau	62.5 (10)	62.5 (10)	55.6 (10)
% Fingerprint Bureau	25.0 (4)	25.0 (4)	22.2 (4)
% Computer Section	0.0	0.0	0.0
% R&D	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Part V			11.1 (2)
% Sergeants	62.5 (10)	62.5 (10)	55.6 (10)
% Inspectors	12.5 (2)	12.4 (2)	11.1 (2)
% Chief Inspectors	12.5 (2)	12.5 (2)	16.7 (3)
% Superintendents	6.25(1)	6.25 (1)	11.1 (2)
% Chief Superintendents	6.25 (1)	6.25 (1)	5.6 (1)
No of support staff	83	80	98
% total staff	83.8	83.3	84.5
(Numbers in brackets)			
% User Support Bureau	20.5 (17)	21.3 (17)	18.4 (18)
% Fingerprint Bureau	55.4 (46)	55.0 (44)	60.2 (59)
% Computer Section	21.7 (18)	21.3 (17)	19.4 (19)
% R&D	2.4 (2)	2.5 (2)	2.0 (2)

Figure 6: Breakdown of Total Staff by Division – 1999/00



Criminal History System

- The Criminal History database held a total of 789,000 records in 1999/00 – an increase of +2.6% on the previous three year average.
- A small and declining proportion of these records serves as a non-criminal national firearms and explosive certificate holders register – down from just under one tenth of all records in 1996/97 (9.6%) to a share of 8.5% in 1999/00.
- The number of records within the 'other' category – containing criminal records – has risen +3.2% on the previous three year average. This database also contains long term missing persons records, which in 1999/00 numbered 282 (compared with 249 in 1998/99).
- The total number of criminal history disclosure enquiries dealt with by the User Support Bureau has risen annually, and in 1999/00 had risen by nearly a quarter (+23.3%) on the previous two year average.
- In spite of this growth in enquiries, the USB has maintained its Service Level Agreement to provide a written response within ten working days of receipt.
- Both police and non-police disclosure enquiries have contributed to the rise – each having increased on the previous two year average, by +67.3% and +16.7% respectively. (Trends over the last three years separately are illustrated in Figure 5.)
- Although the majority of enquiries continue to be Non-Police disclosures, the steeper rise in the number of Police enquiries has enabled its share of all enquiries to extend from 12% in 1997/98 to 17.8% in 1999/00.
- This is in spite of the fact that the inclusion of the voluntary sector within the Criminal Information Scheme in September 1998 resulted in the additional admission of several voluntary childcare organisations.
- For police disclosures, non-Scottish telephone enquiries and enquiries from the MOD have fallen quite sharply over the last three years.
- Education and Social Work continue to account for the greatest number of non-police enquiries, the former continuing to grow strongly – up just over a fifth on the previous two year average.

Fig 7: Criminal History System Database

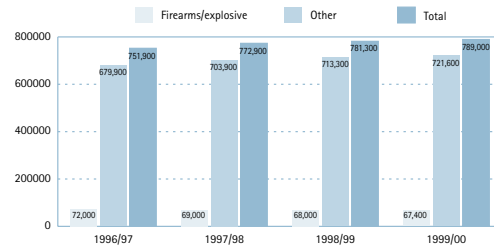


Table 2: Types of Disclosure Enquiries

	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	99/00vs 2 yr av.
Police + Non-Police	109763	131659	148857	23.3
Police				
National Ident. (NIS)		10520	18713	
Non-Scottish	6463	6160	6524	3.4
Non-Scottish (telephone)	1209	968	697	-36.0
MOD	1050	830	567	-39.7
Miscellaneous	4481	4	4	
Total	13203	18482	26505	67.3
Non-Police				
Social Work	29741	31362	31332	2.6
Education	33665	38948	43690	20.3
Health	12906	11886	12883	3.9
Private Indep. Schools	10903	12480	13405	14.7
Gen. Teaching Council		4338	4247	
Scottish Prison Service	1162	2248	1638	-3.9
Traffic/Licensing	221	220	177	-19.7
UKAEA	995	893	1847	95.7
NCH	72	312	273	42.2
CICB	0			
DAFS	7			
Fire Masters	440	498	345	-26.4
Scottish Office	4536	5262	6545	33.6
Crown Office		242	227	
Scottish Nursing		2006	2571	
British Nursing Agency		1025	1210	
Scot. Ambulance Serv.		376	308	
Quarries		351	625	
Aberlour Child Care Trust		214	302	
Barnardos		105	231	
MEDAC		26	25	
Voluntary Service		62	107	
Others	1912	323	364	
Total	96560	113177	122352	16.7

Fig 8: Criminal History Disclosures (indexed on 1997/98)

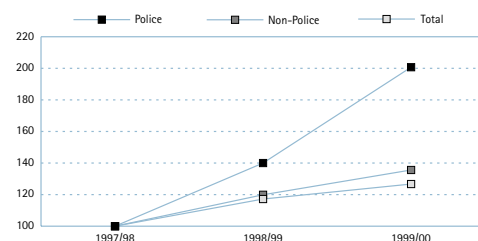


Table 3: Criminal History System Transactions

	1996/7	1997/8	1998.9	1999/00	99/00 vs 3 yr ave.
Ref/nominal	3128883	3406800	3756030	4136405	20.5
Speculative	169211	168609	166705	147270	-9.9
Ext. speculative	162	178	246	176	-12.6
Ext. as % spec	0.10	0.10	0.15	0.12	
Create records	64798	64531	58971	58713	-6.5
Update records	325149	348630	399625	374101	4.6
Extra facilities	12025	11915	10887	11417	-1.7
Total	3729614	4001663	4392464	4727082	17.0
No. trans'ns per criminal record	5.5	5.7	6.2	6.6	

Fig 9: % Share of Transaction Types

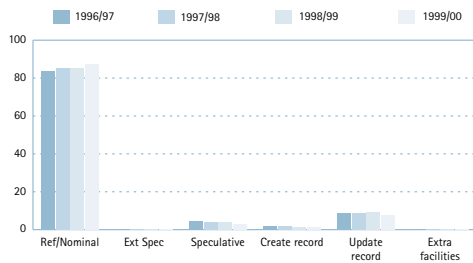
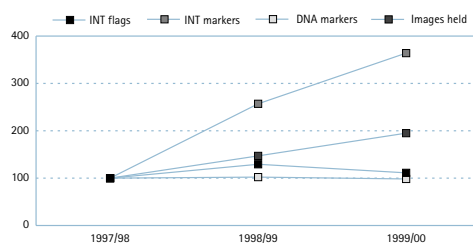


Table 4: Additional Information held on database

	1997/8	1998.9	1999/00	9/00 vs 2 yr ave.
INT Flags	376	486	418	-3.0
INT Markers	53450	54631	52528	-2.8
DNA Markers/samples	14468	37201	52625	103.7
Images Held	78989	115952	154163	58.2
Reg. Sex offenders		866	1174	
Unreg Sex offenders		13	6	
Data protection markers		65	65	

Fig 10: Additional database information (indexed on 1997/98)



- The total number of Criminal History transactions has increased yearly, with 1999/00 up +17% on the previous three year average. So too, has the average number of transactions per criminal record.
- This rise is mainly due to a growth by over a fifth in the number of reference/nominal transactions.
- Record updates are the only other transaction type to show an increase over this same time period.
- Extended speculative enquiries necessitate User Support Bureau expertise and therefore numbers of these transactions will tend to be low, accounting for around 1% of all speculative searches. Other speculative searches can however be performed at any terminal, but nevertheless these continue to decline, accounting for around 3% only of all transactions in 1999/00.
- The increase in the number of reference /nominal transactions has pushed their share of total transactions from 83.9% in 1996/97 to 87.5% in 1999/00.
- Shares for all other transaction types have declined, with those for extended speculative and extra facilities transactions remaining lower than 1%.
- Marker or Flag facilities allow Criminal Intelligence Officers to indicate their interest in particular records. Flagged records ensure that the enquirer is not aware of this interest.
- Both INT flags and markers show declines on the previous two year average. Examination of the data per year shows that these declines are the result of a drop in INT flags/markers in the latest year alone.
- The number of DNA Markers held on the database in 1999/00 was more than double the average of the previous two years. These markers refer to records where samples have been taken for the purposes of DNA profiling and where the criminal has subsequently been convicted. In cases where a conviction is not secured, the marker is weeded from the system automatically.
- The number of photographic images of persons held on criminal records has also been increasing over this time period – up over +53%. It is the responsibility of each force to scan these images onto the system.
- Other markers or warning signals contained within the system include identifiers of registered and unregistered sex offenders, and data protection markers.

Stolen Property

- In 1999/00 the number of stolen items held on the Stolen Property database stood at over 153,000 - down -22.6% on the previous three year average.
- Since 1997/98, when the database approached capacity, a weeding policy has been adopted whereby records are retained for a maximum of six years only. (The exception is firearms records which are kept on file for an indefinite period.) Hence the recent declines in item numbers.
- Items are allocated to one of five categories: art objects, bank and other documents, serial numbers and marks, inscriptions and jewellery, and firearms. Bank and other documents and serial numbers tend to make up the majority of items on the database.
- The number of searches conducted on this system has been in decline, and in 1999/00 was down by just over a quarter on the previous three year average.
- Subsequent identifications fell even more sharply - down more than two fifths over the same time period - thus producing a reduced rate of success for searches.
- Success rates have fluctuated from a high of one identification in 12.6 searches in 1997/98 to a recent low of one in seventeen in 1999/00.
- On average the number of searches per item on the database remains extremely low, suggesting limited usage of this system.
- Separate to the above is the Stolen MOT database. This has recently been extended to include details of all blank motor Vehicle Excise Licenses stolen from Post Office premises throughout the UK.
- The number of searches conducted on this database in 1999/00 is down by -87% on the previous two year average. Most of this decline has occurred in the latest year alone, again suggesting an under-utilised system.
- A similarly dramatic downturn, of -85%, is noted for resulting identifications.
- 1997/98 has seen the highest rate of success in recent years, with one in nine searches yielding an identification. This slipped to a low of one in 27 in 1998/99 but has since improved to one in twelve in 1999/00.

Fig 11: Stolen Property Database

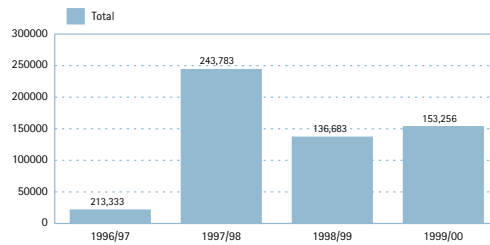


Table 5: Stolen Property Searches

	1996/7	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	99/00vs yr ave.
Searches	2330	2767	2456	1875	-25.5
Identifications	162	220	173	110	-40.5
% Success	6.95	7.95	7.04	5.87	
Searches per database item	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	

Table 6: Stolen MOT and Vehicle Excise License database

	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	99/00vs 2 yr ave.
Searches	466	460	60	-87.0
Identifications	52	17	5	-85.5
% Success	11.16	3.70	8.33	

Fingerprint Bureau

Figure 12: AFR Database – Fingerprints

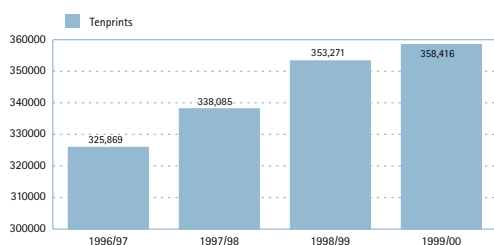


Figure 13: AFR Database – Outstanding scenes of crime marks

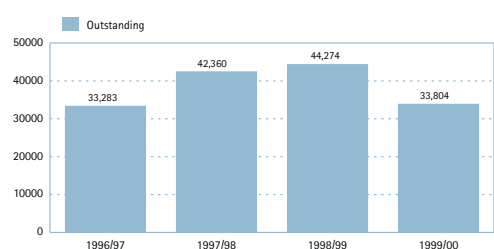


Figure 14: Prints Received

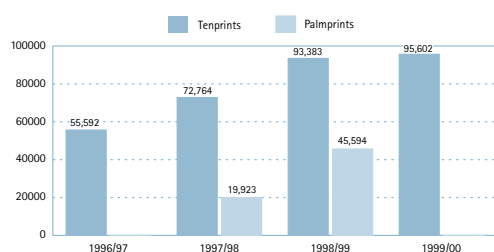


Table 7: Livescan Service

	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	9/00 vs 2 yr ave.
% of all fingerprint forms	47.5	75.0	72.0	
False name identification	294	492	521	32.6
Wrong record identification	331	698	677	31.6

- At 31 March 2000, the total number of tenprints or fingerprint forms for offenders held on the AFR (Automatic Fingerprint Recognition) database reached over 358,000. This is a rise of +5.7% on the previous three year average.
- (The 1999/00 figure also represents a +10% increase on that recorded in 1996/97 – the year immediately prior to the introduction of the Livescan system.)
- Outstanding scenes of crime marks fell in 1999/00, by -15.4% on the previous three year average – this downturn was due primarily to a drop by just under a quarter over the latest year alone.
- SCRO's Crime mark retention policy directs that serious crime marks are retained on the system indefinitely while non-serious crime marks are held on the manual system and AFR computer database for five and three years respectively. In 1999/00 this policy resulted in a year on year reduction of 22% of outstanding marks.
- Since 1996/97 at least, the number of tenprints received by SCRO has increased yearly. The total for 1999/00 was up +29.3% on the previous three year average, with much of this growth occurring in the earlier years examined here.
- With the introduction of an electronic palm capture device still to be finalised, the processing of inked palm prints continues to add to the workload of SCRO.
- Palmprint data for 1999/00 was not recorded, rather than there having been no palm prints received that year.
- Since its introduction in April 1997, Livescan's assistance in the identification of false names and wrong records has increased – up nearly one third on the previous two year average in both instances.

- The number of scenes of crime cases received by SCRO has fallen annually - down in 1999/00 by over a fifth on the previous two year average. These reductions are the result of some forces searching their own cases via newly installed satellite AFR terminals, and of falls in the number of cases received by SCRO from other forces.
- In addition, the proportion of cases identified has risen, by ten percentage points in the last year alone to stand at 31% in 1999/00.
- The number of searches being performed via the AFR system is back on the increase after resource difficulties in 1998/99 led to reduced usage. Those conducted via Suspect Comparisons and Manual searches are in decline.
- Because of the increasingly higher number of AFR identifications compared with those for Compared Suspects and Manual Searches, the share of successful identifications achieved via the AFR system continues to grow - as illustrated in Figure 11.
- In 1999/00 AFR identifications were categorised into those achieved as a direct result of an AFR search, and those achieved additionally and indirectly, as a result of the initial AFR search/identification.
- Because of the likelihood that some cases are searched by more than one method, it is not possible to gauge the relative success of one search method over another.
- The number of scenes of crime marks received by SCRO has also fallen annually, for the same reasons given above. And again, the proportion then identified has been rising - up over six percentage points since 1997/98, to stand at 16.5%.
- As mentioned above, resource difficulties in 1998/99 led to a reduced AFR service, but 1999/00 saw AFR searches on the rise again.
- The majority of identifications are achieved via the AFR system (responsible for just under 55% of all identifications in 1997/98 rising to nearly 63% in 1999/00).
- Finally, Figure 12 shows the percentage of eliminated scene of crime marks. Although this shows a clear increase, the increase over the last year is in fact due to only two major murder enquiries, from which 1,500 prints were eliminated.

Table 8: Scenes of Crime Cases

	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	99/00vs 2 yr ave.
Cases examined	14233	11410	10150	-20.8
Total cases identified	3378	2391	3145	
% identified	23.8	21.0	31.0	
Searched AFR	7084	4359	6365	11.2
Identified AFR	1771	1340	1416	
Identified AFR indirect	-	-	472	
Compared suspects	4285	3384	2773	-27.7
Identified suspects	1303	899	1081	
Searched manually	203	1848	23	-97.8
Identified manually	304	152	176	

Figure 15: % share of Each Method of Case Identification

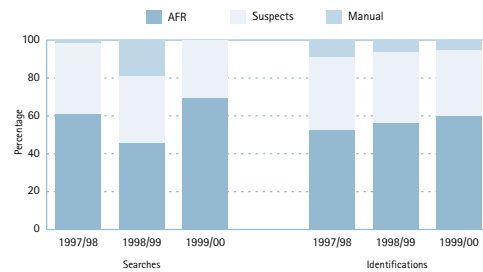
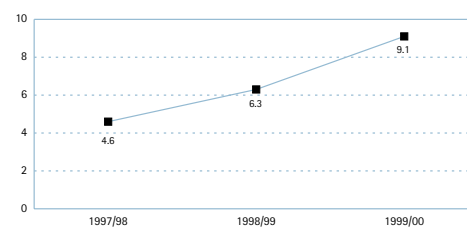


Table 9: Scenes of Crime Marks

	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	99/00vs 2 yr ave.
Marks examined	57340	42192	33928	-31.8
Total marks identified	5759	4761	5582	
% identified	10.0	11.3	16.5	
Searched AFR	14455	8876	14133	21.2
Identified AFR	3160	2765	2075	
Identified AFR - Indirect	-	-	1429	
Compared suspects	15232	11743	9203	-31.8
Identified suspects	2166	1723	1860	
Searched manually	277	1910	57	-94.8
Identified manually	433	273	218	

Figure 16: % Elimination Prints



System Availability

Figure 17: SCRO Availability

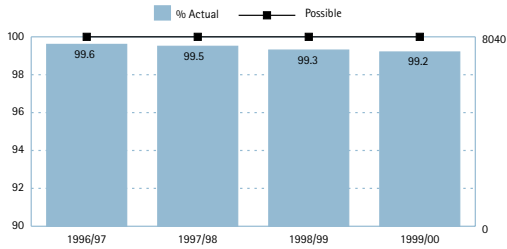


Figure 18: AFR Availability

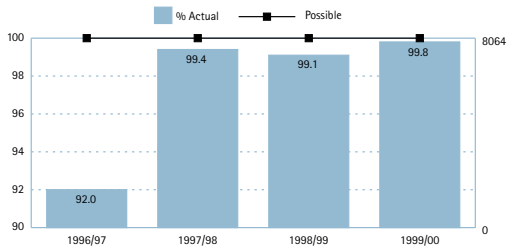


Figure 19: PNCI Availability

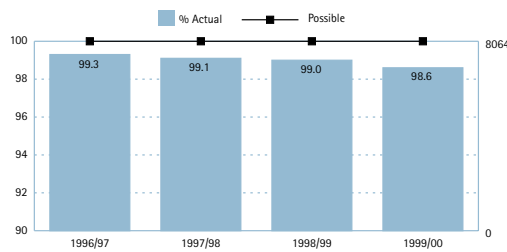
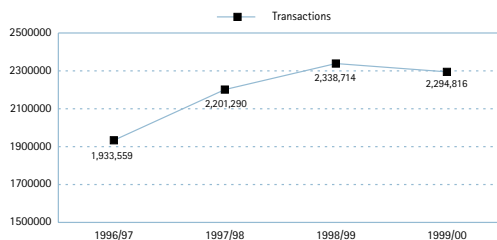


Figure 20: Number of PNCI transactions



- SCRO (Criminal History System) is scheduled to be available 24 hours a day between Tuesday and Sunday, and 23.5 hours every Monday. This equates to a total of 670 hours per month or 8,040 hours per year.
- Figure 13 shows the annual percentages achieved over the last four years against scheduled total annual hours. Although system availability has clearly declined with each year shown here, the proportion of time during which the system should be available but is not, has remained at less than 1%.
- The AFR system (along with Livescan services) is scheduled to be available to users 24 hours a day without exception. This equates to 672 hours per month or 8,064 hours per year.
- Figure 14 illustrates actual system availability plotted against scheduled availability. Since a low of 92% in 1996/97, the AFR system has maintained a high level of availability, with 1999/00 just 0.2 percentage points below the maximum.
- PNCI scheduled availability operates within the same timescale as that for the AFR system, i.e. it should be available to users on a 24 hour basis, without exception.
- The last four years have seen PNCI availability fall with each successive year. In 1999/00 the shortfall in the percentage of hours during which the system was actually operational for users dropped to over 2% of scheduled availability.
- In spite of the consistent decline in availability, overall use of the PNCI system, in terms of number of transactions, had been increasing. Indeed the number of such transactions in 1999/00 represents a +6.3% rise on the previous three year average.
- As illustrated in Figure 16, 1999/00 however has seen a slight downturn in the number of PNCI transactions.

Annexe A

Change Management Review Team – Response to the SCRO Fingerprint Bureau Primary Inspection 2000

	HMIC Recommendation	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
1	HMIC recommends that the SCRO oversight management structure be reformed as part of repositioning SCRO within a new Common Police Services arrangement. (paragraph 2.7.5)	The CMRT supports the reform of the oversight management structure and suggests a suitable arrangement as part of a revised model for the fingerprint service in Scotland and as an interim measure.	SCRO Executive Committee	Early consideration of structural options submitted by CMRT.
2	HMIC recommends that the post and role of quality assurance officer and training officer be separated. (paragraph 2.12.1)	Recognised by SCRO and approval given to recruit Training Officer, which is now in progress (Section 13.7)	SCRO	December 2000
3	HMIC recommends that a centralised model for a national fingerprint service be considered. (paragraph 2.15.11)	CMRT have provided different models for delivering a fingerprint service for Scotland. The Review Team's favoured option would also be the most challenging to deliver (Chapter 15)	SCRO Executive Committee	Early decision required as to preferred model required and period of implementation
4	HMIC recommends that the APRT scope the demands now and into the near future to determine the staff levels required. This exercise should include maximising the value that fingerprint evidence has for the prevention and detection of crime and taking full account of available and emerging technological advances. (paragraph 3.1.8)	Scoping exercises carried out by CMRT using scientifically based formula related to crime levels.	APRG SCRO Executive Committee	Complete Scoping study contained within CMRT Report
5	HMIC supports the move towards a competency-based standard for expert qualification, and recommends early progress towards this goal. (paragraph 3.5.3)	CMRT supports a review of the criteria for registration as an expert based on evidenced competencies.(Section 13.7)	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee The Scottish Executive	April 2001
6	HMIC recommends that the concept of "authorisation" needs further consideration. (paragraph 3.5.5)	CMRT supports a review of the criteria for registration as an expert based on evidenced competencies.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee The Scottish Executive	April 2001
7	HMIC recommends that a protocol is agreed between SCRO and forces to ensure that due consideration is given during the planning stages of operations and initiatives, to managing the impact these can have on SCRO. (paragraph 3.10.1)	CMRT supports the agreement of such a protocol. In correspondence the President of ACPOS has asked the Crime Standing Committee to progress this matter.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Early implementation.

	HMIC Recommendation	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
8	HMIC recommends a review of current locations of AFR terminals in Scotland with a view to securing improved access. (paragraph 3.12.2)	Long term location is dependent on structure adopted. In the interim period CMRT favour a workstation being available in each bureaux.	SCRO Executive Committee	Early decision on CMRT's findings with a view to implementation by April 2001
9	HMIC recommends that action is taken to secure data which informs management of sickness absence levels in a manner which can be used to monitor trends, set targets and manage sickness absence. (paragraph 4.7.8)	SCRO is utilising the monitoring system of Strathclyde Police to secure this information (Section 13.6). Future provision of this support is a matter for ongoing review.	SCRO	Partially addressed
10	HMIC recommends that a strategy is introduced for staff within all fingerprint bureaux and identification branches to offer staff support and to assist in the detection and prevention of stress related illness resulting in absence from work. (paragraph 4.8.2)	SCRO will make full use of the facilities of Strathclyde Police's Occupational Health and Welfare Unit. Future provision of this support is a matter for ongoing review. All forces require to ensure this recommendation is addressed.	SCRO ACPOS	Partially completed Early attention.
11	HMIC repeats the recommendation made by consultants in June 1999, that an improved automated system of case tracking should be introduced as part of a new office management system at SCRO. (paragraph 5.8.11)	SCRO are investigating suitable packages with an understanding of the necessary criteria.	SCRO	System specified and selected by December 2000 Implementation by April 2001
12	HMIC recommends the production of a national Guidance Manual on Fingerprint Standards and Procedures to be issued to all fingerprint staff. (paragraph 5.11.3)	Work by 8FSG underway.	8FSG	Completed by October 2001
13	HMIC recommends the establishment of a national policy which encapsulates an independent review process to deal with all erroneous and disputed fingerprint identifications. (paragraph 5.20.4)	Matter to be developed by 8FSG.	8FSG	April 2001
14	HMIC recommends that the external provision and management of competency testing for experts is an aspect that the APRT needs to pursue with vigour to seek an early, sustainable and defensible programme. (paragraph 6.5.3)	CMRT supports the external provision of competency testing. SCRO have already contracted to have testing undertaken in January 2001. Issue is supported by all force representatives on the 8FSG.	SCRO Executive Committee ACPOS	Completed by January 2001 Commitment by December 2000

	HMIC Recommendation	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
15	HMIC recommends that managing the change to a non-numeric standard should be addressed at a very early point by the APRT (paragraph 6.9.3)	CMRT supports the move towards a non-numeric standard. This is a significant change which would require a project management approach to implementation.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Early consideration being given by 8FSG. Implementation date to be determined following initial work of a Project Board
16	HMIC recommends that the important area of court presentation skills be given a new impetus. (paragraph 6.9.3)	Early consideration by the 8FSG. Detailed development to be undertaken by creation of a Training Forum of the 8FSG.	8FSG	Develop Best Practise document by October 2001
17	HMIC recommends that regular refresher training should be incorporated into a national training standard for fingerprint experts to ensure that expertise is maintained at the highest level taking account of developments in theory and technology. (paragraph 7.5.4)	Early consideration by the 8FSG. Detailed development to be undertaken by the Training Forum of the 8FSG.	8FSG	Develop Best Practise document by October 2001
18	HMIC recommends that a specific effort be made to bring the weeding up to date. (paragraph 8.4.2)	SCRO have been given authority to employ 6 temporary clerical staff to specifically address this issue.	SCRO	Completion by October 2002
19	HMIC recommends that all fingerprint experts within the SCRO Fingerprint Bureau should undergo competency testing provided and managed by an external provider as soon as possible. (paragraph 8.8.3)	SCRO have already contracted to have testing undertaken in January 2001.	SCRO Executive Committee	Completed by January 2001
20	HMIC recommends that a common procedure, subject to validation by an external body, be put in place in all fingerprint bureaux to deal with failure in the course of competency testing. (paragraph 8.9.1)	Priority consideration by the 8FSG to address this matter.	8FSG	December 2000
21	HMIC recommends that a review is undertaken of the current authorisation process with a view to establishing a competency based qualification for expert status. (paragraph 8.11.5)	CMRT supports a review of the criteria for registration as an expert based on evidenced competencies.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee The Scottish Executive	April 2001

	HMIC Recommendation	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
22	<p>HMIC recommends that the APRT give early attention to establishing a corporate identity for SCRO. (paragraph 8.12.4)</p>	<p>The relocation of SCRO to Pacific Quay begins a process of separation and independence. The national structure which emerges will be the determining factor in the establishment of a corporate identity, and will inform deliberations on a change of name for the organisation.</p>	<p>SCRO Executive Committee</p>	<p>In line with decisions on structure</p>
23	<p>HMIC recommends that practices be reviewed with a view to introducing a system which increases the independence within the identification/verification process. (paragraph 8.15.2)</p>	<p>CMRT supports this approach and provides a basis for new practices to be developed by the 8FSG as a priority.</p>	<p>8FSG</p>	<p>April 2001</p>
24	<p>HMIC recommends that the SCRO fingerprint bureau liaises with the ACPOS working group on ECHR, particularly in relation to its development of a manual on standards and procedures. (paragraph 8.17.2)</p>	<p>SCRO have consulted with this group and have developed self assessment package used by all Scottish forces.</p>	<p>SCRO</p>	<p>Partially Complete</p>
25	<p>HMIC recommends that the APRT look closely at the development of the National Council for Registration of Forensic Practitioners and give consideration as to how Scotland can capitalise on this new Council. (paragraph 8.19.5)</p>	<p>CMRT supports the view that CRFP registration should be pursued as a matter of urgency by all fingerprint bureaux when it becomes available.</p>	<p>ACPOS Crime Standing Committee</p>	<p>December 2000</p>

HMIC Recommendation	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
<p>1 HMIC recognises that the recommendations and suggestions in this report go beyond the remit of SCRO Executive Committee and, if accepted, impact on all Police Forces, The Scottish Executive and other areas of the criminal justice system. It would be helpful if a single reference point had the responsibility to consider the issues in the first instance and as the APRT has been established HMIC, mindful of the responsibility of other stakeholders, suggests that this group is uniquely placed to undertake that role. (paragraph xvi)</p>	<p>Change Management Review Team formed to conduct scrutiny and provide this report.</p> <p>Project Board and Project Management Team established to co-ordinate and develop the response of the SCRO Executive Committee.</p>	<p>SCRO Executive Committee</p>	<p>Partially completed by compilation of this report</p> <p>The Project Management Team should have made significant progress on all recommendations and suggestions by April 2001</p>
<p>2 In essence the job description (Director, SCRO) does not reflect the legal position and requires emendation and HMIC suggests this be done. (paragraph 2.5.7)</p>	<p>Already addressed by the Director of SCRO.</p>	<p>SCRO</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>3 HMIC suggests that new service level agreements between SCRO and the eight Scottish forces are progressed by the APRT. (paragraph 2.6.6)</p>	<p>For early consideration by the 8FSG</p>	<p>8FSG</p>	<p>To allow for movement towards a new structure October 2001</p>
<p>4 HMIC suggests that the number of training staff required be addressed by the APRT, taking account of the structures and functionality put in place. (paragraph 2.12.1)</p>	<p>Outcome depends on chosen structural model. Training Forum of 8FSG to give early consideration of training needs of all fingerprint bureaux.</p>	<p>8FSG</p>	<p>October 2001</p>
<p>5 There is a need to debate the appropriateness of the dual role of some fingerprint experts. HMIC suggests this issue should be part of the APRT review. As part of that review the issue of whether police officers, into the future, should be trained as fingerprint experts or the whole cadre of experts be comprised wholly from support staff should be addressed. (paragraph 2.15.6)</p>	<p>CMRT believes that the appropriateness of the dual role is significantly linked to structure. Consequently, its future use is dependant on the structure adopted.</p> <p>CMRT suggests that the training of police officers as fingerprint experts is no longer appropriate.</p>	<p>SCRO Executive Committee ACPOS</p>	<p>Early consideration of CMRT views</p>

	HMIC Suggestion	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
6	HMIC suggests that a resource audit is undertaken to determine the appropriate number of AFR terminals for Scotland. (paragraph 3.12.2)	Appropriateness of number and location is dependent on the structure adopted. In the interim period CMRT favour a workstation being available in each bureaux.	SCRO Executive Committee	Interim development by April 2001
7	HMIC suggests that the Crown Office guidance on who can take fingerprints receives renewed attention by all Forces. (paragraph 3.14.4)	CMRT recognises the need for forces to reflect on the views of HMIC.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Early consideration of HMIC's views
8	HMIC suggests that mark to mark searching on AFR is an issue that the APRT needs to consider in scoping the resources and equipment needed to provide an efficient and effective service. (paragraph 5.3.12)	CMRT have incorporated this issue in the structural modelling exercise and would support the full use of AFR facilities. In the interim, progress could be made by locating an AFR workstation in each fingerprint bureau.	SCRO Executive Committee ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	SCRO with suitable structural progress October 2001
9	HMIC suggests that the policy of taking fingerprints from all persons where the law allows be pursued with vigour as this offers a singular opportunity to prevent and detect crime. (paragraph 5.4.7)	CMRT supports this policy.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	October 2001 subject to progress on chosen structure
10	HMIC would support SCRO in highlighting the importance of submitting elimination prints as a matter of routine and suggests that the setting of targets in this respect may assist. (paragraph 5.15.3)	CMRT supports the practice of submitting the fullest possible number of elimination prints. 8FSG should consider the matter of target setting as part of a wider review of performance indicators.	8FSG ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Revised policy to be based on targets set by 8FSG Implementation by April 2001
11	HMIC suggests that all staff involved in fingerprinting in Scotland require greater awareness of Section 19 to eliminate the confusion which currently exists in this area. (paragraph 5.18.6)	CMRT research has identified this is a wider issue requiring the co-operation of Crown Office and the Procurator Fiscal Service to progress. It is suggested that ACPOS (Crime) seeks the support of the Crown Agent while forces raise the issue as part of their routine liaison with Procurators Fiscal.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee ACPOS	Early consideration of these matters
12	HMIC suggests that the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners may provide a suitable reference point for benchmarking the policy and the independent review process to deal with disputed and erroneous fingerprint identifications. (paragraph 5.20.5)	While CRFP have indicated this is not a role they consider appropriate for themselves at this time, CMRT supports the need for a clear policy on this matter which will be developed by the 8FSG.	8FSG	April 2001

	HMIC Suggestion	CMRT Response	Action by	Target Timescale
13	HMIC suggests that all bureaux agree common Quality Assurance processes using the co-ordinating influence of the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners (paragraph 6.3.4)	While this is not a role considered appropriate by CRFP, the CMRT supports the view that there is a need for the development of national processes. Current development of ISO9002 by SCRO will lead to accreditation by December 2000	8FSG	October 2001
14	HMIC suggests that "blind trials" are another tool that is worthy of consideration. (paragraph 6.6.1)	CMRT accepts that blind trials can be a useful quality assurance tool, however, considers that the range of other quality assurance measures proposed should be given priority.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Early consideration of HMIC's suggestion and CMRT view.
15	HMIC suggests that the APRT give the issue of gathering common statistical performance information early attention. (paragraph 6.7.5)	Early consideration by 8FSG. SCRO to consider in terms of OMS specification.	8FSG	Implemented by April 2001
16	HMIC suggests a strategic re-assessment of how training is delivered is necessary and should be undertaken by the APRT. (paragraph 7.2.8)	SCRO now procuring all national training from NTC Durham Training Forum of 8FSG to review training needs for all bureaux.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Detailed proposals by October 2001
17	MIC suggests that where the exigencies of workloads permit, liaison and networking with staff from other bureaux should be encouraged among all fingerprint staff. (paragraph 8.13.4)	Move of all SCRO national training to NTC Durham is of value as is the development of the 8FSG. 8FSG to consider development of the process.	ACPOS Crime Standing Committee	Ongoing review
18	HMIC suggests that SCRO, in the development of its corporate identity, address the need for a more open and transparent culture within the organisation as a whole. (paragraph 8.14.2)	Move to Pacific Quay is an important first step. Development will depend on structural model chosen, and thereafter consideration of a change of name.	8FSG SCRO Executive Committee	Ongoing review
19	HMIC suggests that the adoption of a code of ethics should be an integral part of the change proposed for SCRO. (paragraph 8.18.1)	Early consideration by 8FSG as a priority issue.	8FSG	December 2000
20	HMIC suggests that SCRO develops a general media policy and appoints a media liaison officer as part of the corporate identity project recommended in paragraph 8.12.4. (paragraph 8.20.1)	The role of the media requires to be embraced by all organisations. The involvement of SCRO is comparatively rare and it is suggested that such advice and assistance is outsourced as appropriate to the chosen structure.	SCRO Executive Committee SCRO	October 2001

