

**To:** Joint Audit Committee  
**From:** Sergeant Lucy Hancock  
**Date:** July 2025  
**Subject:** HMICFRS updates and overview of publications

## **HMICFRS Activity Report**

### **1. Purpose**

**1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the work HMICFRS conduct and to provide an overview of inspection reports published by HMICFRS between May 2025 and July 2025.

### **2. Overview**

HMICFRS inspect all forces on behalf of the public through a number of inspections:

#### **2.1 PEEL assessments**

The police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Its main aim is to promote improvements in policing. HMICFRS provide graded judgments on aspects of forces' performance. They identify where forces need to improve and help the public understand how well their force is performing.

#### **2.2 National thematic inspections**

Thematic inspections are in-depth examinations of particular policing practices or processes, or of the policing approach to preventing and tackling specific offences. HMICFRS identify themes mainly through their continuous monitoring of forces and through consultations with key stakeholders.

Thematic inspections may be chosen for several reasons, including:

- current, acute problems in policing practice that are harming the public interest.
- inconsistencies in police performance across England and Wales, which force-level work can't adequately explain; or
- further improvement in practice that would benefit the most, or the most vulnerable, victims.

Expanding on the force-specific information from PEEL inspections and force management statements, HMICFRS aim to build a national picture of police efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy through a combination of:

- force data and document requests.
- interviews with national, regional, and local policing bodies, Government and other interested parties.
- case file audits; and
- testing the understanding and application of policies and procedures with officers and staff in forces.

While thematic inspections allow HMICFRS to identify areas of notable practice or specific concerns in specific forces, they will usually make recommendations that are relevant to the police service as a whole. These are published in the thematic report and all forces have to assess their performance and work against the recommendation to ensure the common themes HMICFRS have found in the thematic (normally about 6 forces are inspected, choosing a range of areas and sizes of forces to ensure commonality across the country) are addressed (if they feature) in every force in England and Wales.

### **2.3 Commissions from the Home Secretary and local policing bodies**

The Home Secretary may, at any time, require HMICFRS to carry out an inspection of a police force, part of a police force, or particular activities of one or more police forces. Similarly, local policing bodies may, at any time, ask them to carry out inspections or reviews of the police forces they oversee. An example of this has been the rapid review of policing public order after the summer riots.

### **2.4 Inspection of national bodies and other non-Home Office forces**

Additionally, HMICFRS also have a statutory responsibility to carry out inspections of the following national bodies and non-Home Office forces:

- the National Crime Agency.
- the Police Service of Northern Ireland.
- the British Transport Police.
- the Service Police – Royal Military Police, Royal Navy Police and Royal Air Force Police.

- the Ministry of Defence Police.
- the Civil Nuclear Constabulary; and
- HM Revenue & Customs.

At the request of the relevant dependency or overseas territory, they may also inspect forces in British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, such as Gibraltar, Jersey and Guernsey.

HMICFRS have similar voluntary inspection arrangements with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority.

## **2.5 Joint inspections**

HMICFRS work with other organisations to carry out joint inspections. These allow them to inspect the way in which the police approach and tackle a particular type of crime or problem as part of a wider assessment of the service provided by all relevant bodies and organisations. For example, they work with Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission to examine how local authorities, the police and health services work together to help protect children. These are the Joint Targeted Area Inspections. (JTAI).

HMICFRS also work with the other criminal justice inspectorates: HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons. This allows the assessment of police efficiency and effectiveness in both contributing to, and being affected by, the wider criminal justice system. The joint inspection work HMICFRS do with these inspectorates is detailed in the separate 'Criminal Justice Joint Inspection Business Plan 2023/25'.

## **2.6 State of Policing report**

Each year, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary will produce an annual State of Policing report, which reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of policing in England and Wales. This is to inform parliament of the issues within policing.

## **2.7 Rolling programmes.**

HMICFRS carry out a number of rolling programmes. These are to assess specific issues in areas of higher risk. These are deeper and narrower inspection into specific areas. These include:

- Custody

- Integrity (Vetting, Counter corruption and Professional Standards)
- Child Protection
- Serious and Organised Crime

### **3. Publications**

**3.1** All HMICFRS publications are available through this link: [Publications - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

**3.2** Reports of note:

#### **3.2.1 'Joint child protection inspection of victims of domestic abuse in Reading'**

On 6<sup>th</sup> May a letter was published summarising the findings of a joint inspection which took place between 10 and 14 March 2025. Ofsted, HMICRS, the Care Quality Commission and HM Inspectorate of Probation carried out a joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse in **Reading**.

#### **Context**

The inspections examined the arrangements and services for children who are victims of domestic abuse and in need of help and protection in local authority areas in England.

#### **Headline Findings**

This inspection identified significant weaknesses in the multi-agency approach to prevention, help and support for children and their families who are victims of domestic abuse in **Reading**.

#### **Areas for Priority Action**

Shortfalls in the multi-agency strategic safeguarding partnership leading to systemic weaknesses in multi-agency safeguarding practice. Including inconsistent

information-sharing resulting in delays, poor-quality risk assessments and often weak decision-making for children.

### **3.2.2 ‘An inspection of the Police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024: Tranche 2’**

#### **Background**

On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024, the Home Secretary wrote to HMICFRS under section 54(2B) of the Police Act 1996 to carry out a rapid review into the events following the attacks in Southport.

On 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024, HMICFRS published their report, ‘An inspection of the police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024: Tranche 1’. This examined capacity and capability, co-ordination and mobilisation, and well-being.

On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025, HMICFRS published their report, ‘An inspection of the Police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024: Tranche 2’. This examined:

- use of an intelligence-led approach
- arrangements for tackling online content and social media
- crime investigations

#### **HMICFRS Response**

*Disappointingly, we found that the police service didn’t sufficiently prioritise intelligence on disorder, even though the Strategic Policing Requirement includes it as one of the most significant threats to public safety. We also found that forces didn’t always monitor, collect, classify or use disorder-related intelligence effectively. This inhibits their ability to identify disorder-related risk at local, regional and national levels. And it is part of the reason the police service didn’t react to changes in public sentiments before the disorder in Southport.*

#### **Forces involved in Tranche 2 review:**

- Greater Manchester Police
- Leicestershire Police
- Nottinghamshire Police

- South Wales Police
- West Yorkshire Police

**Within the report HMICRS have given 3 recommendations:**

- With immediate effect, the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) and chief constables should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service collects, analyses and communicates [intelligence](#) about disorder
- With immediate effect, the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) and chief constables, working with the Home Office, should create a plan and begin work to better understand and respond to the risk associated with online content.
- With immediate effect, the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) and chief constables, working with the [College of Policing](#), should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service investigates offences associated with large-scale disorder

**3.2.3 PEEL 2023–2025: An inspection of Essex Police**

On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025, HMICFRS published their report of **Essex Police** PEEL inspection. HMICFRS awarded the below gradings:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Recording data about crime	Police powers and public treatment	Protecting vulnerable people	
	Developing a positive workplace	Preventing crime		
		Responding to the public		
		Investigating crime		
		Managing offenders		
		Leadership and force management		

Overall, HMICFRS wrote: *I am pleased with some aspects of the performance of Essex Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service. I am satisfied with most other aspects of the force’s performance, but there are areas in which it needs to improve.*

Within the report HMICFRS have given **Essex Constabulary** 15 areas for improvement.

### 3.2.4 PEEL 2023–2025: An inspection of Lincolnshire Police

On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025, HMICFRS published their report of **Lincolnshire Police** PEEL inspection. HMICFRS awarded the below gradings:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
			Police powers and public treatment	Responding to the public
			Preventing crime	Investigating crime
			Protecting vulnerable people	Managing offenders
			Developing a positive workplace	Leadership and force management

Overall, HMICFRS wrote: *I have concerns about the performance of Lincolnshire Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service. In particular, I have serious concerns about how well the force investigates crime. In addition to this, I have serious concerns that the force isn’t attending incidents resulting from calls to service as quickly as it should.*

Within the report HMICFRS have given **Lincolnshire Constabulary** 5 causes of concern and 20 areas for improvement.

### 3.2.5 PEEL 2023–2025: An inspection of Northumbria Police

On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025, HMICFRS published their report of **Northumbria Police** PEEL inspection. HMICFRS awarded the below gradings:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Preventing crime	Police powers and public treatment		
		Responding to the public		
		Investigating crime		
		Protecting vulnerable people		
		Managing offenders		
		Developing a positive workplace		
		Leadership and force management		

Overall, HMICFRS wrote: *I am pleased with some aspects of the performance of Northumbria Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service. I am satisfied with most other aspects of the force's performance, but there are areas in which it needs to improve.*

Within the report HMICFRS have given **Northumbria Constabulary** 9 areas for improvement.

### 3.2.6 PEEL 2023–2025: An inspection of West Mercia Police

On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024, HMICFRS published their report of **West Mercia Police** PEEL inspection. HMICFRS awarded the below gradings:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Recording data about crime	Police powers and public treatment	Responding to the public	
		Preventing crime	Protecting vulnerable people	
		Investigating crime	Developing a positive workplace	
		Managing offenders	Leadership and force management	

Overall, HMICFRS wrote: *I am satisfied with some aspects of the performance of West Mercia Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service, but there are areas in which the force needs to improve.*

Within the report HMICFRS have given **West Mercia Constabulary** 23 areas for improvement.

### 3.2.7 'Improving the response to organised immigration crime'

#### Background

In January 2024, the then Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to inspect how effectively the Police and NCA tackled Organised Crime in England and Wales.

On 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024, HMICFRS published their report, 'Improving the response to organised immigration crime'.

#### Inspection

During their inspection they examined:

- how the response of law enforcement agencies to OIC was led;
- the initial response to suspected immigration crime incidents;
- the management of information and intelligence;
- how OIC groups were targeted by law enforcement; and
- organisational learning and training for officers and staff

## **HMICFRS wrote:**

*During this inspection we heard that OIC hadn't always been a priority for police forces in England and Wales, largely because they saw it as the responsibility of Home Office Immigration Enforcement. That is changing. Police forces are now more likely to prioritise OIC.*

## **Recommendations**

In the report they made 10 recommendations, 4 of which were specific to the Police:

- By 30 April 2026, chief constables should make sure that every time a member of their force reports a case to Immigration Enforcement's National Command and Control Unit, the reporting officer completes and submits the required intelligence document.
- By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure they have clear plans to collect, analyse and share information related to organised immigration crime.
- By 30 April 2026, chief constables, working with the Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Crime Unit, should make sure that relevant personnel in all Home Office police forces complete the Hydra training package on organised immigration crime.
- By 30 April 2026, chief constables, working with the Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Crime Unit and the College of Policing, should make sure that relevant personnel in all Home Office police forces complete the four modules of the organised immigration crime e-learning package

### **3.2.8 Gloucestershire Constabulary: National child protection inspection**

#### **Background**

As part of HMICFRS's child protection rolling inspection programme which was introduced in February 2024, **Gloucestershire** was inspected and a report published on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

In the inspection, they focus on the experiences of children who come into contact with the police when there are concerns about their safety or well-being.

## HMICFRS graded judgements:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Working with safeguarding partners	Risk assessment and referrals	Leadership of child protection arrangements
				Responding to children at risk of harm
				Investigating child abuse, neglect and exploitation

### HMICFRS wrote:

*The constabulary doesn't have effective governance arrangements for child protection across its area. Leaders aren't clear as to how the constabulary is improving its performance on child protection. Nor are they clear on their strategic work on improving outcomes for children.*

Gloucestershire Constabulary were given 3 causes of concern about the performance in safeguarding children at risk:

- the constabulary's leadership of child protection.
- how the constabulary records incidents when children are missing; and
- how the constabulary investigates incidents involving children.

### 3.2.9 A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements

Three new style integrity inspection reports were published on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025 for **Surrey, Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Sussex Police**. These reports cover forces vetting, counter corruption and professional standards work.

### HMICFRS judgement:

**Surrey**

Area	Grade
Vetting police officers and staff	Requires improvement
Upholding the standards of professional behaviour	Requires improvement
Tackling potential corruption	Good

### **Hampshire and Isle of Wight**

Area	Grade
Vetting police officers and staff	Requires improvement
Upholding the standards of professional behaviour	Adequate
Tackling potential corruption	Adequate

### **Sussex**

Area	Grade
Vetting police officers and staff	Requires improvement
Upholding the standards of professional behaviour	Requires improvement
Tackling potential corruption	Requires improvement

### **3.2.10 Joint child protection inspection of victims of domestic abuse in Redcar and Cleveland**

On 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025 a letter was published summarising the findings of a joint inspection which took place between 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Ofsted, HMICRS, the Care Quality Commission and HM Inspectorate of Probation carried out a joint

targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse in **Redcar and Cleveland**.

**Context**

The inspections examined the arrangements and services for children who are victims of domestic abuse and in need of help and protection in local authority areas in England.

**Headline Findings:**

The absence of a specific domestic abuse strategy that focuses on children impedes South Tees Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (STSCP) leaders’ joint understanding of the quality of multi-agency practice for all children who are victims of domestic abuse in **Redcar & Cleveland**.

**Areas for improvement:**

Redcar and Cleveland were given 8 areas of improvement

**3.2.11 PEEL 2023–2025: An inspection of Warwickshire Police**

On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025, HMICFRS published their report of **Warwickshire Police** PEEL inspection. HMICFRS awarded the below gradings:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Recording data about crime	Police powers and public treatment	Protecting vulnerable people	Responding to the public
	Preventing crime	Investigating crime	Developing a positive workplace	
		Managing offenders	Leadership and force management	

Overall, HMICFRS wrote: *I have concerns about the performance of Warwickshire Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service. We found sustained improvements in both 999 and 101 call handling. The*

*force now answers most calls quickly. I commend the force for making these improvements*

Within the report HMICFRS have given **Warwickshire Constabulary** 1 cause of concern and 19 areas for improvement.

### **3.2.12 An inspection of the south-west regional response to serious and organised crime**

As part HMICFRS's PEEL inspections, they inspect how well police forces tackle serious and organised crime (SOC).

In 2022, they changed how we inspect this aspect of policing, to incorporate inspections of the ten regions, as well as the nine regional organised crime units (ROCU) throughout England and Wales, and the 43 police forces.

On 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 HMICFRS published their report 'An inspection of the south-west regional response to serious and organised crime' which included the forces Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

#### **Findings**

- The South West Regional Organised Crime Unit (SWROCU) were given 3 areas for improvement
- Avon and Somerset were given 2 areas for improvement
- Devon and Cornwall were given 2 areas for improvement
- Gloucestershire were given 1 cause of concern and 2 areas for improvement
- Wiltshire were given 3 areas for improvement

### **3.2.13 Joint child protection inspection of abuse and neglect in Pembrokeshire**

#### **Background**

Between 17 and 21 March 2025, Care Inspectorate Wales, HMICFRS, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales and His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in

Wales carried out a joint inspection of the multi-agency response to abuse and neglect of children in Pembrokeshire.

These inspections assess how local authorities, police and health services in Wales work together to help and protect children. The report was published on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

### **Areas of review**

- Response to allegations of abuse and neglect at the point of identification
- Quality and impact of assessment, planning and decision-making in response to notifications and referrals
- Protection of children aged 11 and under at risk of abuse and neglect
- Leadership and management of this work
- Effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding partner arrangements in relation to this work

### **Summary**

Overall, children are protected and safeguarded from abuse, neglect, and other types of harm through an adequate multi-agency response. They experience reasonable involvement in their care and support and most people achieve sufficient outcomes.

However, inconsistencies in safeguarding arrangements, ranging from excellent contribution by agencies at child protection case conference to insufficient quality assurance and inadequate communication in other aspects of the partnership.

Improved local authority corporate support, including additional funding for children's services, provides opportunity to take forward required improvements.

### **3.2.14 PEEL 2023–2025: An inspection of Gwent Police**

On 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025, HMICFRS published their report of **Gwent Police** PEEL inspection. HMICFRS awarded the below gradings:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Recording data about crime		Police powers and public treatment	Investigating crime	
		Preventing crime	Protecting vulnerable people	
		Responding to the public	Leadership and force management	
		Managing offenders		
		Developing a positive workplace		

Overall, HMICFRS wrote: *I am satisfied with some aspects of the performance of Gwent Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service, but there are areas in which the force needs to improve.*

Within the report HMICFRS have given **Gwent Constabulary** 17 areas for improvement.

### **3.2.15 Inspection of Greater Manchester Police and its safeguarding partners' approach to investigating allegations of child criminal and sexual exploitation**

In July 2024, following the publication of an independent review of the effectiveness of multi-agency responses to child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester, the Greater Manchester mayor commissioned HMICFRS to inspect GMP and its safeguarding partners' approach to investigating allegations of child criminal and sexual exploitation.

The inspection focused on the current and ongoing provision for investigating allegations of child criminal and sexual exploitation. The inspection report was published on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025.

## **HMICFRS wrote:**

*Reflecting on our findings from this commission, we can't help but be encouraged by how the force has improved its practice. The improvements have been secured by the hard work and contribution of various parties.*

*The peer review programme, introduced by GMCA in 2018, aimed to reassure leaders about multi-agency responses to child exploitation.*

*We have clearly seen that the Greater Manchester complex safeguarding peer review programme contributes positively to multi-agency practice to reduce the risk of child exploitation.*

## **Areas for improvement**

During HMICFRS's inspection they found 4 areas for improvement along with 4 areas of innovative practice.

### **3.2.16 Joint case building by the Police and Crown Prosecution Service**

On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025 HMICFRS published their report:

HMCPSP (His Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate) and HMICFRS carried out a joint thematic inspection of the building of prosecution cases by the Police and CPS. The interim findings report was published in January 2024 after phase 1 of the inspection.

Phase 1 saw Cambridgeshire included in the fieldwork along with Essex for the CPS East of England.

In the final report the themes were explored in further detail. The final phase of inspection focused on the strategic oversight and development of the working relationship between the police and the CPS. Inspection activity identified increasing tensions and frustrations between policing and prosecutors, a lack of strategic governance and co-ordination and complicated multiple IT systems.

The report made 18 recommendations, 3 of which were for the Police.

### **3.2.18 Joint child protection inspection of identification of initial need and risk in Southampton**

Between 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025, Ofsted, HMICFRS and the Care Quality Commission carried out a joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk in Southampton.

These inspections examine the arrangements and services for children in need of help and protection in local authority areas in England. A letter was published on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 summarising the findings of the joint inspection.

#### **Headline findings**

Leaders across the multi-agency safeguarding partnership are ambitious for children and families in Southampton, resulting in services that meet children's level of need. A determined leadership approach has led to a child-centred and caring culture across services. Leaders implement effective multi-agency working at earliest opportunity. They positively recognise the diversity of families' needs and the impact of deprivation. A caring approach can be seen, resulting in high-quality practice.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The timeliness of high-risk referrals by the police to the children's resource service (CRS)
- The capacity of the health navigator role to respond to all requests for information
- Arrangements to share written records of strategy meetings and the outcomes of assessments with partners involved with the child and family

#### **4. Conclusion**

The Organisational Improvement Centre and relevant strategic leads will review the report to identify learning opportunities.

#### **5. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Joint Audit Committee note the content of this report.