

To: July Joint Audit Committee
From: Sergeant Lucy Hancock
Date: July 2026
Subject: HMICFRS updates and overview of publications

HMICFRS Activity Report

1. Purpose

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 February 2026 and July 2026.

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.

HMICFRS have moved to a more intelligence-led, continual assessment approach, rather than the annual PEEL inspections they used in previous years. They assess forces against the characteristics of good performance, set out in the PEEL assessment framework 2025–2027, and they more clearly link their judgments to causes of concern and areas for improvement. The first of the 2025-2027 PEEL assessments was published in April 2026.

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.

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.

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:

- 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 overview:

- A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in Durham Constabulary
- A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in Thames Valley Police
- PEEL 2025–2027: An inspection of Humberside Police
- PEEL 2025–2027: An inspection of Kent Police
- The policing response to the investigation of online child sexual abuse and the management of registered sex offenders
- PEEL 2025–2027: An inspection of North Yorkshire Police
- PEEL 2025–2027: An inspection of Wiltshire Police
- PEEL 2025–27: An inspection of Surrey Police
- Durham Constabulary: National child protection inspection
- Terms of reference: Super-complaint about the length of police investigations into sexual offences
- PEEL 2025–27: An inspection of West Yorkshire Police
- PEEL 2025–27: An inspection of Northamptonshire Police
- PEEL 2025–27: An inspection of Devon and Cornwall Police
- Cumbria Constabulary: National child protection inspection
- An inspection of the Southern Wales regional response to serious and organised crime

- The Police Service of Northern Ireland: An inspection of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy
- PEEL 2025–27: An inspection of Merseyside Police
- PEEL 2025–2027: An inspection of Staffordshire Police
- PEEL 2025–2027: An inspection of Thames Valley Police
- Cambridgeshire Constabulary: closure of causes of concern
- Lincolnshire Police: National child protection inspection
- A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in the Metropolitan Police Service

3.3.1 A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in Durham Constabulary

Background

On 26th February 2026 HMICFRS published their report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in Durham Constabulary. This is in relation to their integrity inspection program where all Police forces they inspect within the programme will receive separate graded judgements for vetting, professional standards and counter-corruption.

HMICFRS judgements:

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

3.3.2 A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in Thames Valley Police

Background

On 26th February 2026 HMICFRS published their report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in Thames Valley Police. This is in relation to their integrity inspection program where all Police forces they inspect within the programme will

receive separate graded judgements for vetting, professional standards and counter-corruption.

HMICFRS judgements:

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

3.3.3 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Humberside Police

On 9th April 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Preventing and deterring crime	Responding to the public	Leadership and force management	Safeguarding children and adults	
		Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce		
		Police powers and public treatment		
		Investigating crime		
		Managing fraud		
		Providing a safe custody environment		

3.3.4 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Kent Police

On 9th April 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Leadership and force management	Police powers and public treatment		
	Preventing and deterring crime	Responding to the public		
		Investigating crime		
		Safeguarding children and adults		
		Managing fraud		

3.3.5 The policing response to the investigation of online child sexual abuse and the management of registered sex offenders

Background

On 15th April 2026 HMICFRS published the spotlight report which highlights how police forces and national bodies must work together to make sure forces can meet the demand faced by online child sexual abuse and exploitation teams and management of sexual offenders and violent offenders teams.

HMICFRS have reviewed the findings related to the work done by these teams from our 2021/22 and 2023–25 police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy inspections, and identified where police forces could further improve, as well as examples of good practice and innovation.

They have identified where police forces could further improve, as well as examples of good practice and innovation. HMICFRS have identified opportunities for the National Police Chiefs' Council, College of Policing and the Home Office to work with forces to improve the system. Their report makes 16 recommendations to support this aim.

3.3.6 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of North Yorkshire Police

On 22nd April 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Leadership and force management	Responding to the public	Providing a safe custody environment	
	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Investigating crime		
	Police powers and public treatment			
	Preventing and deterring crime			
	Safeguarding children and adults			
	Managing fraud			

3.3.7 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Wiltshire

On 22nd April 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Police powers and public treatment	Leadership and force management	Investigating crime	
	Preventing and deterring crime	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Safeguarding children and adults	
		Responding to the public		
		Managing fraud		

3.3.8 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Surrey

On 22nd April 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Police powers and public treatment	Responding to the public	Leadership and force management	
	Preventing and deterring crime	Safeguarding children and adults	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	
			Investigating crime	
			Managing fraud	

3.3.9 Durham Constabulary: National Child Protection Inspection

On 15th May 2026, HMICFRS published a report setting out their findings of their 2026 inspection of child protection services in Durham Constabulary.

Background

In February 2024, HMICFRS introduced a new child protection rolling inspection programme. For each police force in England and Wales, they make five judgments on how effectively the force safeguards children at risk.

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

HMICFRS judgements

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

3.3.10 Terms of Reference: Super-complaint about the length of police investigations into sexual offences

On 28th May 2026 the terms of reference have been published and are available on the GOV.UK website.

On 15 December 2025, His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services received a super-complaint from the Centre for Women’s Justice. It is about what the Centre for Women’s Justice describes as ‘excessively lengthy police investigations into sexual offences’.

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct have assessed this super-complaint and decided it is eligible for investigation.

The investigative bodies will consider the extent of excessive delays in police investigations into sexual offences, including how this affects survivors and public safety.

3.3.11 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of West Yorkshire Police

On 3rd June 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Police powers and public treatment	Leadership and force management	
		Preventing and deterring crime	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	
		Responding to the public	Investigating crime	
			Safeguarding children and adults	
			Managing fraud	

3.3.12 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Northamptonshire Police

On 3rd June 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Police powers and public treatment	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Leadership and force management	Investigating crime
		Preventing and deterring crime	Responding to the public	
		Safeguarding children and adults		
		Managing fraud		
		Providing a safe custody environment		

3.3.13 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Devon and Cornwall Police

On 3rd June 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Police powers and public treatment	Leadership and force management	Investigating crime
		Preventing and deterring crime	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Safeguarding children and adults
			Responding to the public	
			Managing fraud	

3.3.14 Cumbria Constabulary Police: National Child Protection Inspection

On 5th June 2026, HMICFRS published a report setting out their findings of their 2025 inspection of child protection services in Cumbria Constabulary.

Background

In February 2024, HMICFRS introduced a new child protection rolling inspection programme. For each police force in England and Wales, they make five judgments on how effectively the force safeguards children at risk.

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

HMICFRS judgements:

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

3.3.15 An inspection of the Southern Wales regional response to serious and organised crime

Background

On 26th June 2026, HMICFRS published a report which describes their findings following an inspection of South Wales regional response to serious and organised crime. The forces in the report are Dyfed-Powys Police, Gwent Police and South Wales Police.

Background

As part of HMICFRS's overall police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy inspections, they inspected 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. This improves the understanding of how well forces and ROCUs work together to tackle SOC.

The report includes sections on the following:

- Regional findings – a summary of inspection evidence
- The ROCU and individual forces – the ROCU and each individual force are given a graded judgment

3.3.16 The Police Service of Northern Ireland: An inspection of Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

On 3rd July HMICFRS published a report. Section 41(2) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 requires HMICFRS to inspect and report to the Department of Justice (Northern Ireland) on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Police Service of Northern Ireland each year.

In 2025, the Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland commissioned HMICFRS to inspect the service in accordance with the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. They asked them to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of the service in relation to:

- attracting, developing and retaining the workforce and creating a diverse and inclusive workplace; and
- using its powers fairly, appropriately and with justification

HMICFRS judgements:

Area	Grade
Attracting, developing and retaining the workforce and creating a diverse and inclusive workplace	Adequate
Using powers fairly, appropriately and with justification	Adequate

3.3.17 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Merseyside Police

On 7th July 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Preventing and deterring crime	Leadership and force management	Responding to the public	Investigating crime	
	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Safeguarding children and adults		
	Police powers and public treatment	Managing fraud		
		Providing a safe custody environment		

3.3.18 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Staffordshire

On 8th July 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Leadership and force management	Responding to the public
		Police powers and public treatment	Investigating crime	
		Preventing and deterring crime	Managing fraud	
		Safeguarding children and adults		
		Providing a safe custody environment		

3.3.19 PEEL 2025-2027: An inspection of Thames Valley Police

On 8th July 2026 HMICFRS made graded judgements as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Police powers and public treatment	Leadership and force management	
	Preventing and deterring crime	Responding to the public	Investigating crime	
		Managing fraud	Safeguarding children and adults	

3.3.20 Cambridgeshire Constabulary: closure of causes of concern

On 9th July 2026 HMICFRS published a letter detailing the closure of Cambridgeshire Police's cause of concern. During HMICFRS's 2023–25 police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary, they identified two causes of concern related to:

1. how quickly the constabulary answers emergency and non emergency calls;
and

2. how quickly it attends incidents.

During their reinspection work in June 2026, we reviewed the progress the force had made against the causes of concern.

HMICFRS were pleased to see the significant steps the constabulary had taken in response to the causes of concern they issued. As a result, they have closed these causes of concern.

3.3.21 Lincolnshire Police: National child protection inspection

On 10th July 2026, HMICFRS published a report setting out their findings of their 2025 inspection of child protection services in Lincolnshire Police.

Background

In February 2024, HMICFRS introduced a new child protection rolling inspection programme. For each police force in England and Wales, they make five judgments on how effectively the force safeguards children at risk.

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

HMICFRS judgements:

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

3.3.22 A report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in the Metropolitan Police Service

Background

On 22nd July 2026 HMICFRS published their report into the effectiveness of integrity arrangements in the Metropolitan Police Service. This is in relation to their integrity inspection program where all Police forces they inspect within the programme will receive separate graded judgements for vetting, professional standards and counter-corruption.

HMICFRS judgements:

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