



HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland **Improving Policing across Scotland**

Friday, December 8, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

Strategic overview of British Transport Police in Scotland including proposed transfer to Police Scotland published

A report published today identifies issues which need to be addressed to ensure the transfer of railway policing in Scotland is successfully delivered and meets the needs of the travelling public.

The strategic overview of British Transport Police (BTP) by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland, which included its proposed transfer to Police Scotland, was carried out in early 2017.

It was done at the same time as the force-wide PEEL inspection of BTP which looked at the leadership, legitimacy and efficiency of the force across England, Wales and Scotland (see Footnotes).

Pending publication of the HMICS report by the Department for Transport, findings were shared with relevant stakeholders so that early action could be taken, and some progress has been made in the interim.

The report, which is in two parts – one looking at the performance of British Transport Police and the other at the transfer – also shows that BTP in Scotland is currently outperforming the organisation as a whole.

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, Derek Penman, points out that the unique structure of BTP means the transfer, which is scheduled for 1 April 2019, is very different from the amalgamation of the Scottish police forces which led to the formation of Police Scotland. However a number of the lessons learnt from the restructuring of Scottish policing are relevant.

Funded entirely by the rail industry, BTP has a commercial awareness quite distinct from other police forces and provides its service based on an understanding of the requirements and priorities of the rail network. One of its strategic objectives is to protect the public while minimising disruption to the rail network.

Mr Penman said: “The scope and scale of the challenges and complexity of the transfer should not be underestimated. It is not a merger of one complete organisation with another, but the partial extraction of a function from one organisation and its integration into another organisation.

“While both organisations provide a policing service, there are fundamental differences in the way they operate. And throughout the transfer process, both police forces must continue to provide an effective service.

“This report contains a number of key findings which, if considered and acted upon by all those responsible for the transfer, should support its successful delivery.”

Mr Penman commends the officers and staff of BTP who continue to look after the travelling public despite being uncertain about their own futures and he urges they be kept informed about developments and given clarity about their terms and conditions as soon as practicable.

Mr Penman said: "The officers and staff have been living with uncertainty regarding their futures for some time but have nonetheless remained committed to providing an effective service throughout. Issues relating to their terms and conditions and pension arrangements must be resolved at the earliest opportunity so as to provide them with information on which to base decisions about their future. Until those issues are settled, regular updates must be provided as to the progress being made."

As the decision to transfer BTP's functions in Scotland to Police Scotland was a Ministerial decision, no single, detailed and authoritative business case which articulates the benefits, disadvantages or costs of the transfer to Police Scotland was developed.

HMICS believes that detailed analysis of the benefits, disbenefits and risk is necessary and should be undertaken by the Joint Programme Board (JPB) which has been set up to manage the transfer. The JPB also needs to look at the costs of the merger as there is uncertainty among stakeholders as to where the responsibility for them lies.

In addition, interested parties such as the rail operators are seeking reassurance their current good relationship with BTP in Scotland will continue after 2019. Post integration, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) will assume oversight for the governance of BTP and Mr Penman suggests the Authority considers developing knowledge of, and recruiting someone with a background in, the rail industry.

The report identifies that rail operators are keen that the distinct nature of training undertaken by BTP officers is continued and extended to Police Scotland personnel who will be supporting the delivery of railway policing. This, the amount charged to each rail operator for the policing service and other service level issues will be addressed in Railway Policing Agreements between the operators and the SPA.

The manner in which each organisation's contact, command and control systems work together in the future has been identified as an area of risk.

Evidence for the review was gathered over a three month period at the start of 2017. The data collected shows that while the Scottish Division is outperforming the rest of BTP and has high levels of passenger confidence and user satisfaction, it is not meeting its own local targets. BTP is currently moving away from monitoring performance by numerical targets, a shift which is supported by HMICS.

Ends

Footnotes:

BTP differs from geographic police forces in that it covers the whole of Great Britain and works with two legal systems; its service users are those who work or travel on the railway; and it falls under the remit of the Secretary of State for Transport, rather than the Home Secretary or Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

The HMICS role in inspecting BTP in Scotland is outlined in the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003. This places a duty on HMICS to inspect BTP and report, following an inspection, on the efficiency and effectiveness of its Scotland Division to the Secretary of State.

PEEL refers to police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and leadership and is the programme under which HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in England and Wales assesses police forces. HMICFRS and HMICS will work together to assess the effectiveness of BTP using the PEEL methodology.

The role of British Transport Police is to police the rail network in England, Wales and Scotland. BTP provides a national service to rail operators, their staff and passengers which, in Scotland, also includes the Glasgow Subway.

In 2016-17, BTP received nearly £300m from the rail industry for its policing budget across Great Britain.

In its Scotland Division (known as D Division), BTP has 213 officers, 38 police staff and 26 special officers. They are led by a Chief Superintendent, based in Glasgow, with a command team and centralised services in London.

Around 93 million rail passenger journeys are made in Scotland each year with D Division having responsibility for policing around 2800km of track and 358 rail stations.

Endsnotes

NOTES TO EDITORS

The HMICS Strategic overview of British Transport Police in Scotland is available to download at the HMICS website www.hmics.scot from around 1000hrs, 8 December 2017.

The HMICFRS/HMICS PEEL inspection of British Transport Police is also available from www.hmics.scot

For any media enquiries please contact:

Susan Lumsden
HMICS Communications
07927 440 094
susan.lumsden@gov.scot
Twitter: [@hmics](https://twitter.com/hmics)

ENDS