

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL**

**“A New Framework for the Professional Development  
and  
Performance Management of Probationary Constables”**

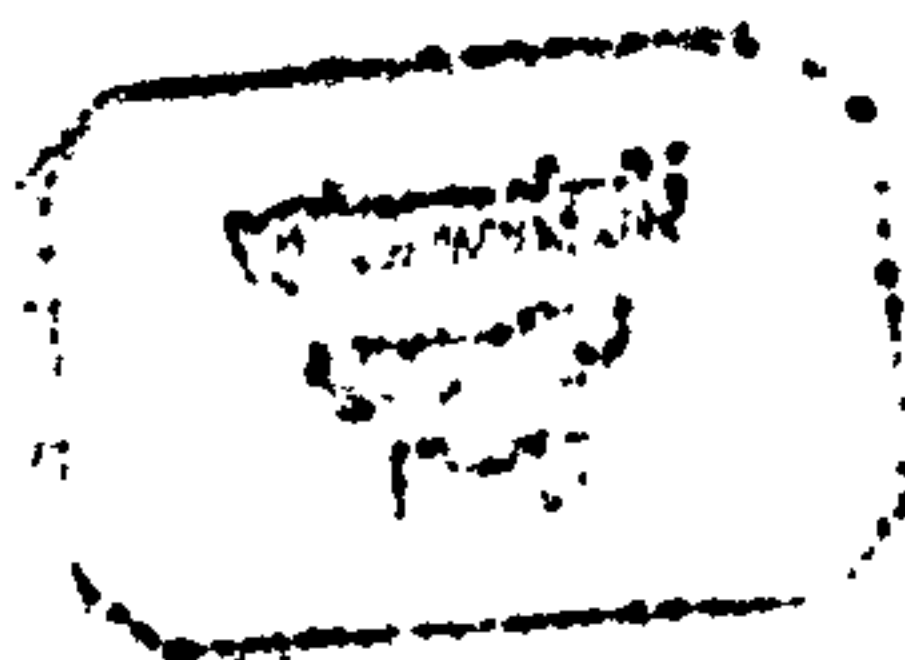
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by

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## **Abstract**

Policing, the enforcement of law and the keeping of order within society, is continually and increasingly under the public microscope. There are many varied and conflicting work doctrines, the control of which is partly directed by the chief officers that lead the police forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For the police service, the assessment of the work that is carried out has to be justified before an increasingly large and critical audience. Within England and Wales, a relatively recent change in Government has itself led to a change of focus on policing issues and political examination from hitherto unknown quarters.

Whilst policing in an environment of change and increasing political influence, individual police forces and their members are being increasingly held to account, not only for their performance but their actions leading to that performance. This research examines the problematic nature of measuring and developing performance within a police service that not only expects, but demands personal development and individual growth in an occupation seeking to become revered as a profession.

The performance of the individual during the two year probation period is closely examined and has been re-designed within this research. It is suggested that during this period the focus of any police officer should be on the needs of the individual within a relevant policing context, not on the performance requirements of the policing environment that officer serves.

The concepts of competency, competence, behaviour, skills and performance related tasks are all closely scrutinised and reviewed with a focal aim of increasing the effectiveness of police assessment. The links between these standard setting processes and performance assessment are

examined. This will also assist the service members to become proclaimed as the professional police officers they seek to be.

This work has remained iterative and qualitative throughout the research. Members of all police forces have been consulted and data is drawn from them all. Within national policing, each of the recommendations that have stemmed from the research have been tested and found to be agreeable. This agreement was drawn from members of the federated ranks (those lower and perhaps more pragmatic in the organisation), members of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), and the leaders and members of the strategic boards of the organisations concerned. It is recognised that for some, the recommendations are too progressive and could be viewed as ‘revolutionary’ and a step too far. The findings that emerge from this research involve at a strategic level recommending an additional role for the HMIC (Training) as a clearing house for police training research functions, the analysis of the role of the forthcoming police National Training Organisation. At a tactical level the research outlines a three dimensional model of police assessment to be used within any emerging police assessment/competency framework models as well as outlining how appraisals should embrace the advantages of including European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) processes within the structure of police officer assessment. This research recognises the link between organisational competence and the competence of individual employees and make these explicit within the overall umbrella of ‘performance management’.



## **Acknowledgements**

This thesis, the competency frameworks and the subsequent probationers' development portfolios are the results of inputs, toils and labours from a number of important people. The least important in the long list is the researcher, for without the loyalty and support of family, friends and colleagues, this research that bares my name would not have been possible.

Should anyone embarking on a research programme choose to read these acknowledgements I ask them to take note of one small fact, if I had attempted this work alone I would not and could not have succeeded. Invest in your supporters, trust their judgement, and more importantly, take advice when it is offered, as inevitably observers see beyond the spectrum that limits our own research.

To this end I am in debt to a number of people. Dr Ghazzali my academic supervisor has become a mentor of my studies and my whole perspective on life, his support has gone beyond my academic work, crossed many boundaries and guided where others feared to tread. Some colleagues stand out from the crowd as assisting and supporting me throughout this study. To Chief Inspector Andy Clarkson (South Wales Police) and Sergeant Ian Symons (Metropolitan Police Service) I have a huge debt to pay for the many hours spent debating competence, competency and the need for contextualisation of those important aspects of assessment.

There have been many police officers who have assisted me in my research. To those in Sussex, West Midlands, Hampshire and Lancashire, thank you for your patience and honesty. Throughout life some colleagues often turn out to be more than peers and take a position in ones career that others just cannot emulate. Inspector Paul Welding (Metropolitan Police) has such a place in my career. Paul has been a rock for me to lean on and at the initial stages of this research he was undoubtedly the guide that cleared a lot of corporate mist for me.

Finally, and most importantly, my heartfelt thanks go to Clare my long suffering partner in life. Quite how Clare has put up with my long periods away from home, the endless proof reading, and the loneliness of being a PhD student's wife, I have no idea. Without Clare there would be none of this, and without Clare I would therefore be incomplete.

Phil Anderton, Lancashire, March 2001.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

“If you compare British policemen and women with their counterparts abroad, the major distinction is that he or she is **approachable**, ready to help anyone, whatever problem they bring - a stark contrast to the forbidding, remote, armed figures found in some countries”.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis was initially concerned with the assessment of probationer constables. However, as it progressed it became clear from research findings that the assessment requirements for trainee police officers were so very different to those for other officers. This fact is either ignored or passed over by senior police officers and I concluded that to research one aspect to the exclusion of the other would be an opportunity missed. This premise is in direct contrast to the work of Dale (1991)<sup>2</sup> who held the belief that all assessment techniques would be equally relevant to all ‘uniformed’ police officers at whatever stage of service.

The research commenced by examining the then current probationer development system. This included the Personal Development Portfolio (PDP), introduced into policing in the immediate post Scarman years. A national evaluation (1995)<sup>3</sup> of this portfolio, carried out on behalf of National Police Training, concluded that within this PDP, entries were repetitive and lacking in structure and any development work that took place was generally in the document to satisfy the needs of that document, not as a record of achievement or a record of developmental issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Clark, K. (1991) Home Secretaries Speech to Police Foundation. London. ACPO.

<sup>2</sup> Dale, A. (1991) The Problem of Assessment in Police Work. University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Dept of Management and Accounting.

<sup>3</sup> Bray, A. et al . (1995) The Probationer Training Review 1995. Harrogate. National Police Training.

The evaluation recommended that future police probationer assessment and development work could consider the use of the rapidly expanding National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) format. This style of assessment, possibly underestimated and misunderstood by the evaluators, would create a movement away from traditional police assessment techniques into an outcome based process. In making this shift of approach there was a considerable danger of policing becoming locked into a bureaucratic assessment process that would become so cumbersome that it would fail to achieve any of its original goals (Anderton, 1997).<sup>4</sup> This style of assessment was therefore considered within this research and within certain guidelines, approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority; some best practice from the NVQ processes has been adopted within probationer training.

From this point the research began to centre on the requirements of police assessment for non-probationer police officers and indeed non-sworn staff. 1999 became a breakthrough year for policing when a number of high profile reports into policing were published. Not least of these was the MacPherson Inquiry into the tragic death of Stephen Lawrence, a poorly investigated, racially motivated murder, the examination of which is having serious repercussions on policing across England and Wales. Bhikhu Parekh, the chairman of the Commission on the Future of Multi Racial Britain stated at the time of the report being published that: -

“I hope and believe that this report can create the right kind of climate for change.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Anderton, P. (1997) Competence Based Assessment and its Effects. University of Hull.

<sup>5</sup> Parekh, B. (1999) as reported within Britain - A Tragedy and a Shame The Economist 27/2/99. London.



Other reports included thematic inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabularies (HMIC) into minority police training, police ethics and police training. The findings of all these reports have been borne in mind within this research and are discussed in chapter three.

In the early 1990s the Conservative Government required police forces to publish performance results against set performance targets. The Audit Commission originally drew up these targets as a complete suite of performance measures. Not unexpectedly therefore, these performance indicators (PIs) were entirely quantitative, having sole regard for issues such as the time taken to attend an incident, or the time taken for a police employee to answer a telephone. These PIs were seen by ACPO to have large performance gaps in them, especially within the area of service quality. To this end ACPO added to the suite of PIs and included customer satisfaction within the national set of performance measurement targets. It was the aim of ACPO to raise the "consciousness of quality in the day to day activity of the organisation" and to make it "critical that people believed in the idea of service."<sup>6</sup>

Individual officers were expected to work with these PIs in mind and by the middle 1990s police forces were actively planning policing activities, on an annual basis, in a bid to control the policing function, thus satisfying these performance indicators. Within policing plans, forces would agree (with their Police Authority) and set performance targets for the forthcoming year. Examples of these targets included higher arrests for specific offences and road casualty accident reduction. Chapter three examines the performance culture and looks at the steps taken by police forces to ensure that performance targets were published and acknowledged by police staff within their

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<sup>6</sup> ACPO Quality of Service Seminar (1991). Report of Proceedings. London. Home Office.

respective policing area.

Many exponents of police culture would state that examination of the police is at best difficult and often fails to establish the “ways in which police culture is self sustaining even in the face of calls for social change.”<sup>7</sup> This research centres and focuses on police assessment and development, yet within the findings some noticeable examples of changing culture have manifested; these are examined within chapter four. In light of increasing public pressure, the Government amended police discipline regulations and in doing so shifted the burden of proof required within discipline cases from ‘beyond all reasonable doubt’ to that of ‘within the balance of probabilities’. This change and the newly created provisions for dismissal due to poor performance, a first for British police officers, have also impacted upon the inherent culture of the ‘British bobby’. The effects and requirements of this legislation upon assessment and development are also examined within chapter three.

Chapter four examines the particular performance requirements put into place for individual police staff. In doing so, the research examines performance cultures and critically assesses the ‘top down’ processes that commenced in most police forces at the end of 1997/8. This particular process was implemented as a result of Home Office Circular (HOC) 43/96, which introduced a link between the performance of the individual and the performance of the organisation into the police for the first time. In doing so, HOC 43/96 claimed, “the appraisal process [as outlined within the circular] should provide a clear link between individual and team performance and the overall

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<sup>7</sup> Young, M. (1991) An Inside Job. Oxford. Oxford University Press.



strategic direction of the organisation.”<sup>8</sup>

All police forces were consulted regarding this process as part of the research and some of the research findings, found in chapters eleven and twelve, arise as a direct result of this close and detailed examination.

HOC 43/96 also introduced the language and concept of competency into the police service nationally. Chapter five examines these concepts; the language and nuances that have arisen since ‘competence’ became a policing issue. The differences between behaviour, performance outcomes and organisational performance would seem on face value to be straightforward to ordain, yet when the language of competence, competency and competencies are introduced the issues are not straight forward, and they seem to have been compounded by a lack of definitional rigour. Of this subject Williams wrote (1998) that this “confusion seems to have been there right from the early days.”<sup>9</sup>

The research therefore leads to determining a glossary of terms, which settles some semantic issues once and for all.

The requirements of modern organisations with regard to employee relations are of a high profile and often determine organisational progress. Failures in relation to equal opportunities and dealings with ethnic minorities are often costly both in financial terms and due to the negative publicity that such cases inevitably attract. The police forces of Britain are considered by many to be at the forefront of equality issues, yet within the service it is acknowledged that there is still plenty of

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<sup>8</sup> Home Office (Police Personnel and Training Unit). (1996) Circular 43/96 - Staff Appraisal: The Performance and Development Review System. London. Home Office.

ground to break in this area. In his submission to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (1997), Dr Robin Oakley, a leading specialist in policing and such issues stated: -

“the police service still has a considerable way to go before it can be said to have fully implemented a system of training on community and race relations that accords with principles set out in the 1983 Police Training Council Working Party Report. Despite the passage of time, these principles remain firmly valid.”<sup>10</sup>

With individual employees being required to set performance targets at appraisal time, it is still unclear what possible effect domestic circumstances have upon employees. With women still being regarded as primary child care providers, those organisations that truly embrace equality are likely to achieve greater results, both in terms of reduced industrial relations conflict and in actual measured performance achievements. This research examines the effects of individual circumstances upon performance and places such matters at the front of any performance dialogue. The current move towards business excellence, as espoused by The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), is examined. EFQM as a business excellence model is described by ACPO as providing “clear links and a coherent framework for use of all other standards and quality tools.”<sup>11</sup>

The research suggests that performance of an individual, and thus the organisation served, can be enhanced if the philosophies of the EFQM model are also placed at the front of any appraisal processes. In doing so, the research challenges the perceived right of an individual police force to

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<sup>10</sup> Oakley, R (1998) Submission to the Stephen Lawrence Murder Inquiry Part Two - Police Training and Racially Motivated Incidents. London.

<sup>11</sup> ACPO. (1998) Guide to the Business Excellence Model. London. ACPO Performance Management Committee.



ignore both its own circumstances and those of its employees when determining performance targets for forthcoming appraisal periods.

Chapter six brings together the previous discussions and suggests a process for the development of probationary police constables. In doing so the research suggests the style and structure of such processes and clearly determines the focus of that enterprise. These are not just desirable characteristics; they can be shown to follow clear and logical steps towards providing quality police officers of the future. The chapter examines the problems surrounding the police service in adopting this approach and offers examples of best practice that have sought to alleviate such issues. Within the findings from trials of this new approach, now referred to as 'The Professional Development Portfolio' (PDP),<sup>12</sup> there have been a number of case studies which amplify the successes of the new procedure. Some of these are considered and reported on within this text. The final aspect of this part of the research focuses on appraisal. This is discussed in chapter seven and in doing this the work recommends clear structures for the use of the new PDP and offers guidance to tutor constables and first line supervisors within the service.

Policing, as highlighted earlier, requires clear and separate assessment and development procedures for officers in their probation period and those who are not. Furthermore, the procedures need to cater for non-sworn police staff. If the service acknowledges that equality of opportunity is a policing ethos, then all staff should be offered comparable, if not identical development and assessment opportunities. Having reviewed the existing assessment processes, and examined the guidance from the Home Office, the research recommends, in chapter eight, the future format for a generic assessment framework. Within this recommendation the links are clearly made between

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<sup>12</sup> NPT. (1998) The Professional Development Portfolio Harrogate. National Police Training.

individual, team and organisational performance and the development of skills and personal attributes.

Within the areas researched, it is clear that there are a number of influences that lead towards a truly 'professional' police force. These are acknowledged and examined, and the learning from the scrutiny of the relevant areas is drawn together to discuss the future for the 'profession' of policing. The roles of the staff associations and particular forums, such as ACPO committees, are discussed, as is the role of National Police Training. Within this discussion, team morale and autonomy are examined and the relationship between these emotional states and sector policing are considered.

In concluding this research, the notion of three dimensional assessment and development is offered in the format of the new probationer PDP. Within this conclusion, the benefits of this system to policing are made clear and highlighted by the use of case examples and further qualitative research findings. For other police employees, conclusions are made which draw upon other national work that is due to commence within the field of police assessment. The aim of this work has been to explore the problems that surround assessment of police activities and to develop frameworks which will assist in the practical development of assessment accuracy and benefit. This work challenges some of the current structures and philosophies of the police service and recommends sweeping developmental changes, not superficial revision of already flawed processes. In making these recommendations, particular attention has been focused on the simple question often asked during the fieldwork phases of the research. That question, frequently asked by 'career constables' who were performing to an adequate level to satisfy the needs of their employer was:-

This work provides an answer to that very salient question; in doing so the findings resolve other issues, which to some observers are of extreme importance. All of the recommendations in this work have been field tested and with regard to probationer constables the recommended processes have been adopted by all the police forces in England and Wales with effect from September 1998. It is the aim of this research to provide a systematic process whereby all staff within the police service can have their own energy, skill and ability harnessed to provide the future for the service that will continue to meet the previously reported requirements stated by the Home Secretary in 1991.

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<sup>13</sup> Royal Ulster Constabulary Constable. (1999) Quoted from an interview whilst patrolling West Belfast. Not published.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to research, identify and design an original programme for performance measurement and personal development within the police services of England and Wales. The research focuses on a) the macro position of policing and assessment and from b) the micro position of police assessment and employee development. The participants in the research were taken from many diverse backgrounds including both police and non-police organisations. Within the study, once an emerging model and framework was identified, a longitudinal study commenced with a group of police officers in Hampshire whose specific progress through their police probationary period was monitored for eighteen months. The nature of the subject is too subtle and complex to be researched solely by a questionnaire programme, instead a qualitative study based on focus groups and interviews began in 1997.

#### **Design**

The research took place over a three year period, from the summer of 1997 to the spring of 2000. The combination of different research techniques led to the outcomes of this work being focused and relevant. The research methods employed have included an anthropological approach to working in the police service, qualitative data capture from focus groups and interviews, desk top research of existing materials, telephone surveys and, where appropriate, questionnaires were used for quantitative multiple response data.

In using qualitative research the fine line between the academic researcher and management consultant often becomes blurred, especially as within the police service the role of consultants



provide opportunities for intensive inquiries into the behaviour of the organisation. Inevitably, as the researcher was a member of staff working within National Police Training, and latterly working for the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), there was a perception amongst more junior workers within the police that this research had a certain level of credibility. To some, the work may have appeared to be being undertaken by a management appointed 'consultant'. Within the higher echelons of the police, the fact that an employed consultant did not undertake this research may sometimes have served to devalue its status. To overcome these contrasting viewpoints, which are discussed later within the cultural analysis, the research methods employed had to be robust, rigorous and as far as possible transparent and thoroughly visible to allow credibility and respectability to be developed alongside the primary reason for the work. For the reasons outlined, and those to be discussed, qualitative methodologies were employed almost exclusively throughout this research. Gummesson (1991) found that "qualitative research provides powerful tools for research in management and business administration."<sup>14</sup> The chosen approach also served to reinforce the messages required regarding cultural validity.

It was vital, therefore, that the researcher remained fully aware of the decisions that were made during this research and that those decisions were informed and strategic rather than ad hoc and reactive to the data being produced. Mason (1997)<sup>15</sup> stated that qualitative researchers need have a capability to think and act in strategic ways that combine intellectual, philosophical, technical and practical concerns rather than compartmentalising these into separate inappropriate boxes.

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<sup>14</sup> Gummesson, E. (1991) Qualitative Methods in Management Research. London. Sage.

<sup>15</sup> Mason, J. (1997) Qualitative Researching. London. Sage.

Qualitative research does not represent a unified set of research techniques or philosophies (Mason 1997)<sup>16</sup> and as a tool for gathering research data it is more readily associated with interpretivist sociological tradition (Schutz, 1976).<sup>17</sup> In more recent times there has been a greater interest in empirical research and qualitative methods (Dickens and Fontana, 1994)<sup>18</sup> however there has also been a long tradition of anthropological approach to qualitative research and this is recognised as a valid research instrument within this work.

### **Anthropological approaches**

Mair defines anthropology as “talking about man.”<sup>19</sup> In the context of this research ‘man’ is defined as police employees, regardless of gender, position in the organisation and of all ranks and grades. The particular focus of the anthropological studies within this research is the officers and civilian employees of the police service nationally and it is judicious to observe that the researcher is himself serving within the police service. Consequently, all observations and the development of this research have an anthropological status. This approach challenges typical social science discipline by not providing the ‘detachment’ required for a true observational role. However as Young observed (1991) social science not only recognises “the influence of the self but has urged that we use it as scientific construction.”<sup>20</sup> In anthropological terms Mair (1972)<sup>21</sup> defines culture as the commonality between a body of people who are sharing traditions and therefore a society. The society for this research is the police service generally and the relevant body of people are those staff within that service that are subject to, or managers of, appraisal and staff development processes.

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<sup>16</sup> Mason, J. (1997) Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Schutz, A. (1976) The Phenomenology of the Social World. London. Heinemann.

<sup>18</sup> Dickens, D, and Fontana, A. (1994) Postmodernism and Social Inquiry. in Mason, J. (1997) Op. Cit.

<sup>19</sup> Mair, L. (1972) An introduction to social anthropology. London. Oxford University Press.

<sup>20</sup> Young, M. (1991) Op. Cit

<sup>21</sup> Mair, L. (1972) Op. Cit.



## **Focus groups**

Focus groups have formed a major part of this research. Krueger (1994)<sup>22</sup> defines a focus group as typically a special type of group, characteristically composed of between 7 and 10 participants who are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group. This research tended to use between 12 and 16 participants in focus groups to maximise on the learning opportunities available. The agenda for the focus group was led by the research in hand, however the style of work within that group was open ended and allowed all the participants to take an active part in the session. Rice (1931) commented on the failings of such work when the lead was taken by the researcher not the participating attendees. He stated that when the interviewer/researcher took the lead the results obtained “are likely to embody the preconceived ideas of the interviewer as the attitudes of the subject interviewed.”<sup>23</sup> Care was taken regarding this research advice and at all focus groups there was a third party present to monitor the possibility of lead and bias. At the conclusion of each event participants were asked to give their views on the level of input they had given, this was typically positive feedback and all participants felt they had been involved in a meaningful process.

Although focus groups have great potential as a research instrument some observers remain critical of this approach. Prime Minister Tony Blair famously declared that: -

“.. there is no one more powerful than a member of a focus group.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Krueger, R. (1994) Focus Groups - A Practical Guide for Applied Research. London. Sage.

<sup>23</sup> Rice, S. (1931) Methods in Social Science. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

<sup>24</sup> Blair, A. (1996) as cited in Ferguson, E. (1996) Sceptics Corner: Focus Groups Distort Reality. Observer. 8 September.

Focus group methodology should be defined as group discussions exploring specific sets of issues. They are 'focused' in that they involve some form of collective activity, e.g. debating a series of questions, (Barbour, 1999).<sup>25</sup> Whereas focus groups can be utilised merely to reflect or monitor change, it is widely recognised that there is always the potential for the focus group process itself to initiate changes in participants thinking or understanding. Johnson (1996)<sup>26</sup> referred to this as the sociological imaginative approach to focus group research. Focus groups were chosen as the preferred methodology as they typically tap into human tendencies. The inherent flexibility of focus groups means that they can include different exercises as appropriate at the various stages of the research process. Thus initial focus groups within this work concentrated on macro issues such as the purpose of the material in question, later groups determined the micro detail of the new PDP content.

Attitudes and perceptions are developed in part by the social interaction with other people and it was found that participants often listened to the views of others, formed their own opinion and then offered that to the research. In one to one interviews and other forms of research, this opportunity to cognitively process ideas and feed off colleagues does not present itself. Within the cultural surroundings of the police service, employees are often unsure of their true ability to speak out against the systems and processes that the organisation employs. In a focus group setting, the relaxed and informal environment engenders self-disclosure and encourages honesty to be displayed. As Dey (1993) offers this system of collecting data also depersonalises the data gathered as "the results tend to be categorised as from a group or groups."<sup>27</sup> This was particularly relevant

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<sup>25</sup> Barbour, R. and Kitzinger, J. (1999) Developing Focus group research. London. Sage.

<sup>26</sup> Johnson, A. (1996) It's good to talk: the Focus Group and the Sociological Imagination. *The Sociological Review*, 44 (3).

<sup>27</sup> Dey, I. (1993) Qualitative Data Analysis. London. Routledge



to police officers who often have a suspicion of all fact-finding missions and research projects. One constable in Leicester described such work “management rubbish forced upon us to make things better, it never does make it any better at all, why are we wasting our time.”<sup>28</sup>

Access to participants was normally progressed via a police headquarters function, such as the personnel department or training department. Access was normally granted due to the support given to the research by National Police Training and ACPO. Although this did open doors, allow access to police employees and provide facilities for this to take place, it had the unfortunate side effect of therefore resembling a headquarters function to be jeered at if not despised. It was important in focus groups to remove this block to any learning and progress, this was often accomplished by declarations of honest intent by myself and a cathartic start to any work that explored the existence of such feelings amongst delegates.

Whereas in most field studies the researcher does not have the opportunity to bring about change and study its immediate effects (Brandt 1972)<sup>29</sup>, by employing so many focus groups within this work the effect was quite the opposite. Participants were retained within their culturally secure surroundings, as opposed to attending an NPT site, and the effect of the proposed assessment changes were not only placed in front of them for comment or design, but in the closing de-brief of the day, their reactions could be monitored and included within this research. Focus groups also served to gain maximum benefit from the use of the researcher’s time. This methodology proved to be less demanding than perhaps other methodologies, such as participant observations, and was economical as they ensured that the research agenda was addressed. To assist in the necessary focus on a pre-set research agenda a ‘ghost’ researcher attended all the focus groups that were

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<sup>28</sup> Interview with a police constable, field trip, Leicester. 1997

<sup>29</sup> Brandt, R. (1972) Studying Behaviour in Natural Settings. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.. USA.

undertaken. This also served to avoid the common trap amongst researchers of selective perception. Krueger (1994) explores this phenomenon and insists that there are critical steps taken to safeguard the reliability of focus group data. The presence of an independent researcher, drawn from a pool of colleagues, has provided that safeguard. Barbour and Kitzinger(1999)<sup>30</sup> conclude: -

“that focus groups can be used to carry out descriptive research, to evaluate programmes, to explore the adequacy of theoretical models, or to carry out action research.”

Within the research undertaken it is assumed that in carrying out focus groups most of these dimensions became an integral element of the overall and final product. However, the researcher remained cognisant of his own limitations and the needs of the police service and in recognising where individual skill ends other forms of research instrument were also deployed within this study.

### **Questionnaires and surveys**

Questionnaires were used in this research, but only minimally. The nature of the exploration into police assessment called for a qualitative process, only when quantitative details were required or every police force was to be consulted, for instance the nation-wide survey on the use of HOC 43/96 as an assessment protocol, were questionnaires used. An example of such a questionnaire is found in the appendices, Appendix 1. The results from these questionnaires although valuable provided mainly quantitative data that supplemented the qualitative results from either focus groups or anthropological observations.

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<sup>30</sup> Barbour, R. and Kitzinger, J. (1999) Op. Cit.



One of the important aspects of the work was to publicise its existence and seek support from all police forces within England and Wales. To facilitate this a telephone survey was used to open up dialogue regarding the generic service wide framework. All forces were contacted, usually the personnel manager, and as well as gaining valuable data regarding the use and understanding of competency frameworks, the creation of established points of contact served to make later research easier to continue. As a marketing exercise this telephone survey also guaranteed that the research would not be unnecessarily duplicated within forces without the national work being flagged up. By engaging in regular contact with practitioners throughout the nation the propensity to go off at a tangent to the original research specification was also reduced. Brandt (1972) observed that “without sufficient descriptive information, the wrong problems are selected for study, inappropriate hypotheses are tested, and erroneous inferences are made.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Personal constructs**

Kelly (1995)<sup>32</sup> developed the theory of personal constructs. He argues that people understand their own experiences through the constructions they use to analyse them, and use these constructs to anticipate future events. He states that constructs alter from individual to individual. To measure the constructs of individuals Kelly developed two techniques, the ‘repertory grid’ technique and ‘self characterisation’. Repertory grids are often used when an average opinion of the nature of a particular role would not suffice. It is a very time consuming approach and one that was felt would disrupt the processes and outcomes of this research. For this reason the methodology was not deployed in this study. Self-characterisation is a method where individuals give qualitative accounts of their own views of his or herself. The output of this activity gives an insight into what the job holder sees as the important and satisfying dimensions of the job under scrutiny. This

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<sup>31</sup> Brandt, R. (1972) Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Kelly, G. (1995) The Psychology of Personal Constructs. Morton. New York.

technique was used as an instrument, albeit in a secondary form, during some focus groups and interviews that were undertaken with police probationers during this research.

### **Functional analysis**

As a consequence of using an iterative approach to the research, and by retaining a mainly qualitative approach through focus groups and interviews, one of the frequently employed techniques for gathering data in relation to job descriptions was that of 'functional analysis'.

Essentially functional analysis involves asking questions such as 'what do you need to be able to do this.'

This process is then repeated until smaller tasks are identified that become useful in determining specific role specifications. The nature of the research allowed the resulting data to be 'tested' on colleagues and peers in subsequent focus groups, a process that Weightman (1994)<sup>33</sup> observes makes sense and allows for a reduction in the subjectivity that surfaces from individual perceptions.

It would appear that a more robust result will emerge from research if a variety of instruments are utilised. Weightman (1994)<sup>34</sup> suggests that despite deploying valid research tools: -

“..the emphasis remains on the respondents; only when they feel that they can trust and rely on the confidentiality of the interview or observation will insightful gems be revealed.”

This study research, like any other, required a level of credibility in order to succeed. Without such a level of acceptability the findings could have stood in isolation and not been examined by the

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<sup>33</sup> Weightman, J. (1994) Competencies in Action. IPD. London.

<sup>34</sup> Weightman, J. (1994) *Ibid.*



police service. To this end the frequent and regular contact with employees and decision-makers across the nation served to increase that acceptability. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) identified this research requirement and stated “the researcher develops an orientation towards his discipline and his research as a form of work, and creates an image of himself as selectively interested in, and competent to handle, the problems and research processes of his discipline.”<sup>35</sup> Within that context, and using the methodologies explained, the following research took place.

## **Employed methodologies and schedules**

### **Police Probationer Framework**

#### **Recognising previous work**

As early as 1993 work had taken place in the general arena of police competency and vocational qualifications. This work was sponsored by the now disbanded Police Lead Body and funded by moneys from the Department for Education and the Environment (DfEE). The product of that work became known as the EDMC Uniform Patrol Competency’s, after the firm of consultants who undertook the research. The work was a functional analysis of uniform police functions, which led to a set of draft competency standards broadly applicable to the uniformed officer. As this work was credible and had been costly in monetary terms, it seemed prudent to commence this particular research by examining these standards.

Desktop research revealed that the standards were for the complete uniformed policing role. This took the level and amount of competences far beyond what could, in the researcher’s opinion, be expected of the probationary constable. The standards were of a single level of competence, which was probably not best suited to police recruit development. Finally, the standards were written in a

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<sup>35</sup> Schatzman, A. (1993) Field Research. Prentice-Hall. New Jersey USA.

dated style, reminiscent of early National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's). Earlier research (Anderton 1997)<sup>36</sup> found that this style of presentation was confusing to non trained NVQ practitioners, especially in relation to the use of 'range statements'. Therefore, there was sufficient justification for more research into the 'EDMC Competences' and a more qualitative research method was necessary.

The EDMC Field Trials had taken place in a small number of representative police forces. Two of these were Thames Valley Police and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in Hammersmith. At Hammersmith a series of structured interviews took place with differing members of staff who had been involved in the trials. The purpose of the original EDMC trials had been to: -

- "Determine the assessability of the standards under normal working conditions
- Identify any shortcomings of the standards in respect of relevance, completeness and accuracy
- Review the overall process to identify key issues for the implementation of new vocational qualifications."<sup>37</sup>

Although the results of these trials had been made available to the Police Lead Body, the emerging issues and qualitative responses had not. This research commenced with semi-structured interviews of police officers who had taken part in the EDMC trials. The first of these interviews was at Hammersmith Police Station, London. These interviews took place, administered by the researcher with a colleague on hand to record findings and assist the processes. The interviews were tape recorded as a further backup process. A meeting was also held with one of the consultants who led the EDMC project and from him it proved possible to ascertain his views on the outcomes of his

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<sup>36</sup> Anderton, P. (1997) Op.Cit.

<sup>37</sup> EDMC (1997) Police Lead Body Field Trials Briefing Pack. EDMC. London.



work. This interview was totally unstructured, although undoubtedly both parties had pre-set agendas, which gave a bias to the proceedings. It was clear however, that within the published standards, there was an acceptance that although a project brief had been met, there were opportunities for the work to be continued and possibly improved.



From the findings of these interviews, which are discussed in greater detail later, it was clear that there was further work necessary to make any competency suite fully functional within the police service. NVQ style processes have a tendency to become overly bureaucratic and cumbersome, which would be unacceptable to police officers throughout the service. One of the aims of the project was to have a functional assessment/development process, not one that couldn't function due to its bureaucratic nature.

In 1996 the Home Office had published its circular 43, known throughout police circles as HOC 43/96. This circular, as previously mentioned, introduced core skills into policing for all officers regardless of rank and position. The circular also recommended and introduced forms and systems to be used by the service at the time of appraisal. The work to put together HOC 43/96 had been undertaken by PA Consulting, working on behalf of the central Government when Performance Related Pay (PRP) was being considered by the service. PRP was not introduced into policing; however, the appraisal process that would have supported this system of reward was included within HOC 43/96. It seemed prudent to research by desktop analysis and by more active means, the degree of take up of this appraisal method, and if it was deemed prudent, to ensure that any process for police probationers followed similar disciplines. This would cater for, and allow an officer to migrate to the process of appraisal espoused by the circular upon completion of the probationary period. Initially interviews were held with key staff who had implemented the process under HOC 43/96, known as Performance Development Review (PDR). It was found that most

forces were working towards a PDR implementation following the advice of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabularies. In light of the high degree of take up of HOC 43/96 it was confirmed that there was a need for the new probationer system to dovetail into PDR as seamlessly as possible.

The original concept for the probationer competency portfolio included an outcome based, NVQ style process. As mentioned earlier, this recommendation was probably made with some level of ignorance in the originating team. Although this may read as a sweeping judgement, it is quite the opposite. At the time of these recommendations, NVQs were in their infancy within the police service. Although there were high numbers of 'students' and people taking up NVQs elsewhere, there were a commensurate number of people with misgivings about the style of assessment. Not least of these concerns was the amount of bureaucracy that NVQs entailed and some doubts about the prescribed style of writing that was insisted upon by the controlling body, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) later to become QCA. Therefore, the issues surrounding NVQs were also worthy of research. This took the form of meeting with key staff members within the NCVQ and references to previous work in this arena (Beaumont 1995)<sup>38</sup> and (Anderton 1997).<sup>39</sup>

#### **Focus groups regarding portfolio structure.**

The findings of the desktop research were clearly pointing towards a number of key issues. It was apparent that to serve the police as a development and assessment tool, and provide for the needs of the organisation in terms of unsuitable officers' dismissal, the structure and layout of the portfolio was of extraordinary importance. To this end focus groups were held to highlight and answer some of the emerging issues.

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<sup>38</sup> Beaumont, G. (1995) Review of 100 NVQs and SVQs. London. DfEE.

<sup>39</sup> Anderton, P. (1997) Op. Cit.



Typically, police research concentrates on the needs and views of the MPS and forces in the Home Counties, presumably to reduce research costing and retain the focus near to the capital. There was an ideal opportunity to embrace the views of other forces within this research and in doing so obtain differing views from the normally held 'representative' samples of police officers. To this end the first focus group was held in the Exeter Training Headquarters of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. All participants were within the uniformed side of the organisation with the exception of a civilian trainer who had experience of NVQs. To make the sample representative of those police officers who would be actually working with the new probationer system, none of the participants were above the rank of sergeant. In fact most participants were in the rank of constable, and there was an adequate spread of service length that included probationers, tutor constables and operational officers performing the uniform policing function in the Devon area. The focus group was structured and were observed by a fellow researcher to allow the proceedings to be undertaken without the need to frustrate the exercises by having to make research notes. In the subsequent de-brief, this two-handed approach also gave an opportunity for bias to be diminished. The demographics and approach to the research staff numbers became the norm for all subsequent focus group events.

Shortly after this focus group, another was held in West Mercia Constabulary. This was procedurally similar to the event in Devon and Cornwall, although the learning outcomes of the initial focus group were taken into account at the outset.

The detailed de-brief of this event involved another observer who was in place to provide further objectivity to the process. It was the intention to have a skeleton structure for the portfolio prior to any further work regarding its content. This de-brief took place off site after all the participants had formulated their own independent views on the outcomes for the day.

### **Focus groups regarding the layout of the standards.**

As outlined previously, the actual layout and design of standards was at the time being dictated by the NCVQ. Although the police probationers' standards would not become a national vocational qualification, it was deemed judicious to follow the approved national style for vocational qualifications as far as was practical. Focus groups were held to examine this issue. Again, the participants were drawn from the lower ranks of the service, and consisted of constables and sergeants. The focus groups led the parties involved through a series of structured exercises whereby they examined different styles of layout and differing forms of content, e.g. whether to include range statements or a contextual paragraph, and allowed the groups to suggest their preferred format for the portfolio. The common agreement was for the standards to include an NVQ style unit/element/performance criteria style, but for range statements to be forsaken in favour of a simple contextual paragraph at the beginning of the individual elements. It was further decided that all references to NVQs should be removed from the portfolio and supporting documentation as this could serve to engender negativity within an already suspicious police culture.

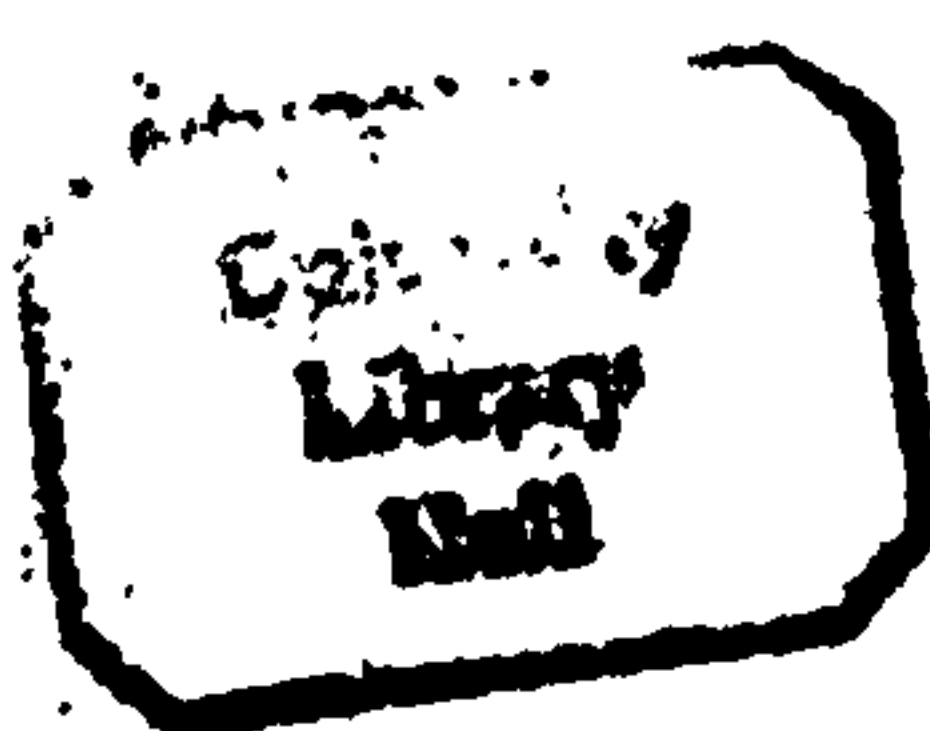
### **Focus groups regarding portfolio content**

The work undertaken by EDMC included a full and detailed functional analysis of the role of a uniform constable and provided units and elements of standards across that wide range of activities. It was felt that this range was too wide for probationers to embrace and focus groups were held to either confirm or challenge that premise. These focus groups took place in Lincolnshire and Leicester. Again, these forces were used to provide alternative views as they have differing cultures and deal with different policing problems. Leicester was re-used, as the training manager there was a key member of the project steering group whose support was becoming invaluable.



A major issue for these focus groups was to ensure that the suite of outcomes that came from the work were not a 'wish list' of what other serving officers would want the new recruit to be able to undertake. The outcomes had to be realistic and manageable within the timescales available. Probationary constables have to achieve two major milestones during their 104 weeks of training. Under the previous assessment system those milestones were referred to as levels. To be deemed fit to patrol independently the probationer had to achieve a level of competence which was measured against a five point Likert scale (level two). To be confirmed in their appointment as a constable the probationer would later be assessed against the same scalar but would be expected to reach a higher level (level four). The evaluation of this process found the subjectivity of the method to be extreme, in truth officers making the assessment decisions were deciding suitability against their own individual standards and then 'fitting the evidence' to suit the appropriate scalar evidence requirements. This process could not possibly satisfy the drive for fairness and objectivity within the service and was not included within the portfolio under design. In place of this process, the probationer has the list of outcomes split into two key areas. Section one, those more simple tasks that the probationer would need to be able to complete competently in order to patrol alone, section two, a list of more complicated tasks that would deem the officer fit for confirmation of appointment. Thus, returning to the work of the focus groups, these two sections had to contain policing tasks that were critical to the two decisions, independent patrol and confirmation of appointment. As both decisions had inferences on the probationers' future and immediate pay and conditions of service, these decisions had to be made on the basis of a firm and robust set of criteria, not the aforementioned wish list.

To improve on the strength of focus group work, further focus groups were held in the Thames Valley Police area. In these groups officers were asked to take the complete list of standards and



prioritise them into the two decision making critical areas. This exercise promoted a great deal of debate and served to reinforce the previous research.

As a result of this detailed focus group work, the emerging portfolio contained a structurally rigid framework of outcomes in the form of tasks for police officers to achieve during their probationary period. When these standards were placed into the portfolio design from previous research, the new PDP began to take shape.

### **Inputs and outcomes**

The outcomes discussed above were the tasks that were capable of being measured by any trained assessor. Earlier in the training period, the probationer would have had a period of inputs at a Police Training Centre (PTC). This fact introduced new variables into the research. Could the new PDP be utilised at the PTC stage? And did the long list of measurable outcomes (tasks) match the inputs of knowledge given during classroom training?

A focus group was held at Harrogate, which was attended by NPT training staff. The focal point of this work was to answer the first question, suitability for the PTCs and if so, design the portfolio paperwork to meet the trainers' needs. The group were clear that the portfolio was suitable for PTCs and it was found that the use of skills from HOC 43/96 and tasks sat well with the training ethos at the PTCs. Discussions were held regarding the practicality of 'signing off' officers as competent (against the emerging standards) whilst in the training phase. It was decided that although evidence of competence from simulated exercises met the needs of the NVQ processes, it would not be suitable for assessing police officers, and therefore the evidence in the portfolio at the PTC stage would be purely for developmental requirements.



The lessons at PTCs were under review whilst this research took place. The outcome of this review was a complete overhaul of the teaching process, which led to every lesson having clear aims, and objectives, which would be monitored, on a national basis. It was therefore a practical, if not drawn out, exercise to ensure that the outcomes in the portfolio measured from the inputs (lesson aims and objectives from PTC). This exercise took place over a number of days at Harrogate and involved staff from the lesson design team. Without exception the entire lesson aims and objectives were capable of being measured in the new portfolio.

### **Equality of opportunity**

The design of a wholly new police probationer assessment process attracted a great deal of attention across the policing estate. Not least of which was from observers and practitioners in the arena of equal opportunities (EO) and Community and Race Relations (CRR). Although these matters had a high profile during the portfolio design, it was decided to confirm the robust nature of the portfolio by running a focus group with examination of these areas as its sole aim. This took place in the Midlands region, a region chosen for the large number of forces having a history of dealing with equality issues and having larger ethnic minority communities to serve. The findings of this research were a surprise. The portfolio was structured in a way to alleviate any subjectivity due to 'canteen culture' but by focusing on uniformed members of staff, excluded non sworn staff from the development opportunities offered. As the higher percentage of police recruits are male, and the higher percentage of civilian staff are female, the new portfolio compounded a feeling of institutional indirect discrimination by not offering women employees in the service equal rights to personal development. This issue was embraced and passed on to the executive board of NPT and figures heavily in the second part of this research.

## **Language**

The language of NVQs was found to be unacceptably negative to the members of the police service encountered during this research. Mere mention of the words NVQ in focus groups had a profound effect upon participants. To this end, throughout the focus group work, a common and acceptable language was sought. This was to embrace the skills from HOC 43/96, the outcomes and the portfolio as a whole. The emerging glossary of terms was as follows.

Skills from HOC 43/96	Core skills of policing
Outcomes for independent patrolling	Core tasks for independent patrol
Outcomes for confirmation of appointment	Core tasks for confirmation of appointment.
The portfolio	The Professional Development Portfolio (PDP)

Additionally, as the workshops that focused on the structure of the portfolio (now PDP) had indicated, the format of the PDP would be in a lever arch file with removable forms. The structure would not follow a sequential system; each section would be complete within itself. Thus the PDP came to be designed in six complete sections.

1. Introduction and rules for use
2. Core skills
3. Core tasks for independent patrol
4. A live section for data capture
5. A live section for action plans and summary assessments
6. Core tasks for confirmation of appointment

Following the decision for the PDP to include the PTC stage of a probationer's development an additional section was added for that purpose. This meant that there were now to be seven different parts to the PDP and this was felt to be unwieldy. To overcome this, and to reinforce the importance of policing skills, the core skills of policing were incorporated into the introduction and rules section. To overcome any issues of navigability that a non-sequential system could cause, each section was printed on different coloured paper and separated by a card tabbed index sheet.

The PDP therefore took on the following appearance: -

Mauve section	Core skills, introduction and rules on use
Blue section	PTC stage
Green section	Core tasks for independent patrol
Yellow section	Data capture forms
Gold section	Action planning and retrospective assessment section
Red section	Core tasks for confirmation of appointment

Further tests were completed regarding the ease of use of coloured paper and red, as it was hard to actually read from, was dropped in favour of pink. At this juncture the Professional Development Portfolio was at a stage to have trials run to test its rigour and where necessary make amendments.

### **Field Trials**

A number of police forces made approaches to be included in the field tests. For reasons of suitability, cultural diversity, policing contrasts and willingness to take part three forces were chosen for the field tests. Those forces were: -

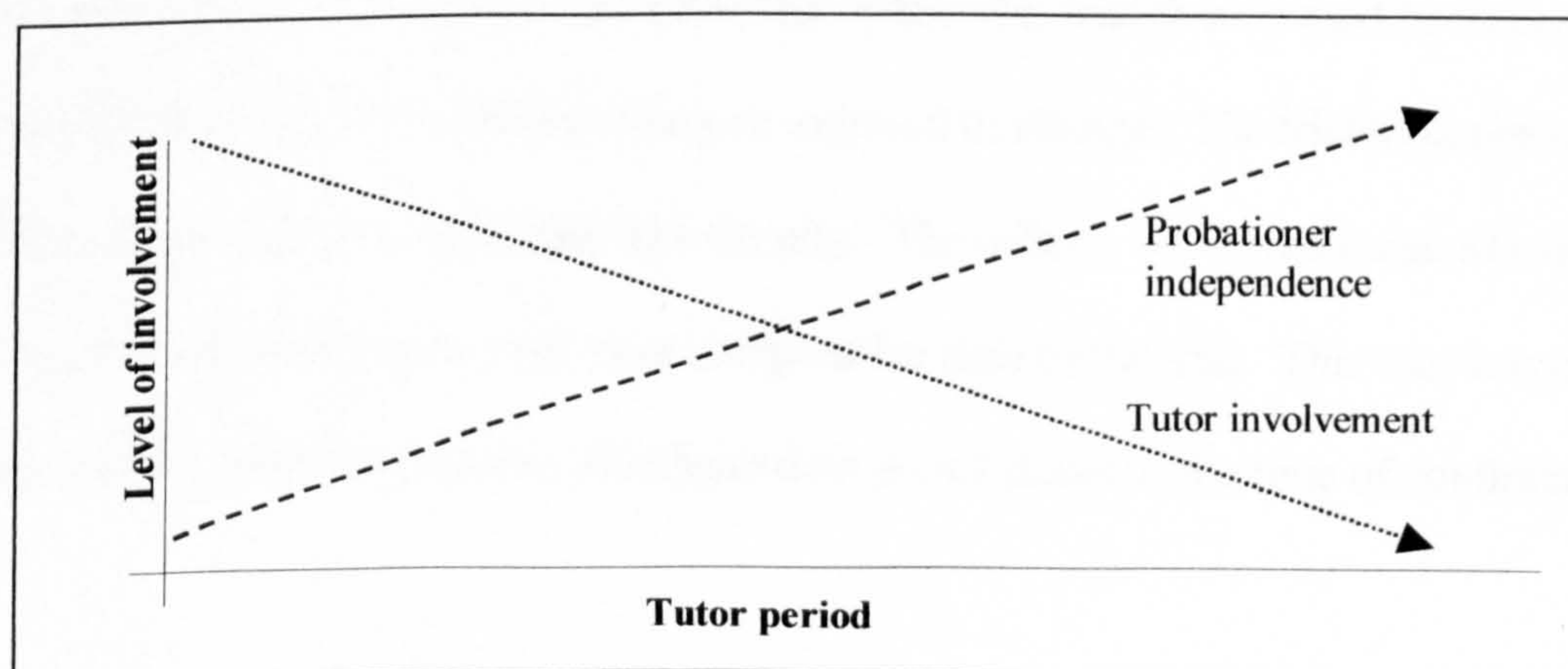


- Sussex, chosen due to their abundance of tutoring systems, strong influence of a learning culture and their centralised control mechanisms
- Hampshire, chosen due to their absence of a tutor system but noticeably good results from within the development of police probationers and their diversity of policing divisions
- West Midlands, chosen for their size, the fact that they police on a very rigid Basic Command Unit structure (with minimised central control) and that they have no structured probationer tutor system

### Sussex field trial

This trial focused on the stage of probationers' training programme known as the 'tutor constable phase'. This ten-week period immediately follows the time in the Police Training Centre and is the recruits' first taste of 'real' policing. During this phase of their development recruits undergo one to one coaching following a simple to complex model. As the time period progresses more and more of the decision-making and hands on policing falls to the probationer (figure 1). From initially being shown how to 'do the job' they begin to demonstrate to their tutor how well they can actually perform their role. This period of training is known now as stage 4 and is heavily governed by the PDP process. At the end of the ten-week tutor phase the probationer should have successfully covered the core tasks for independent patrol with a necessary level of core skill application.

**Fig. 1**





At key periods in the ten week phase, detailed focus group de-briefs were held in Sussex involving all of the active stakeholders in the process. At the end of the phase, the focus group included the probationers themselves. The learning outcomes from this trial, which are discussed later, were then built into the PDP, often causing changes to be implemented to either the design or the structure. At this stage the feedback from the trial regarding the content was that as a complete suite of core tasks, some of the actual policing events that were necessary to attend in order to prove competence didn't occur on a regular basis at every police station.

### **Hampshire field-test**

This field test concentrated on the development phase that was post the decision to patrol independently. The issue for the trial here was one of the usability of the PDP in the workplace where one to one supervision was not the norm. Whilst patrolling independently, officers in their probation were typically just that, independent and alone. This resulted in police probationers not being developed by their line manager, nor assessed as to their suitability to continue in their role whilst performing duties in the workplace. The PDP design sought to alter this and re-introduce into policing the concept of sergeants developing and supervising their junior staff. To do this, the PDP would have to be extremely robust and un-bureaucratic, it required to be seen as a process that reduced the administrative burden not increase it.

The probationers in Hampshire had undertaken their 'tutorship' phase under the system this new PDP was to replace and it was identified that within this trial there would be a certain amount of contamination due to the officers being so exposed to change. The trial took place with a dozen officers placed all over the Hampshire County. The officers covered a range of towns and cities and this policing diversity gave important comparative data to the trial. This trial was over a seventy-week period, from the granting of independent patrol status to the time of confirmation of

appointment. At key stages in the trial all the officers were also visited and focus groups were held to assess their progress and capture the PDP issues as they emerged. The feedback from this trial is discussed fully later within this paper.

### **West Midlands field test**

In the West Midlands force there operates a very strong, autonomous Basic Command Unit (BCU) structure. Within each policing area, a BCU, the police officer in charge has a greater level of autonomy over colleagues in forces not operating such a system. Thus, any PDP trial in this area would test not only the PDP and its suitability, but by comparing results with those of Sussex, it would assess the suitability of the BCU philosophy to the emerging system of probationer training. The intake involved in the trial consisted of only six officers' spread far and wide over the West Midlands policing area. The officers underwent the trial at the tutor constable phase, stage 4 of their training.

The findings from this trial emerged from the de-briefing focus group that took place at the end of their tutor constable period. The findings are discussed later in this work and focused mainly upon the environment in which tutorship should take place.

### **Contributions for all police forces in England and Wales**

Having run three diverse trials of the PDP, and gathered qualitative data from each, the PDP took its final shape and was ready for 'roll out' to forces across the country. To facilitate this process a cascade style of training was implemented. Each force provided two lead trainers to a regional training event. During these full one-day sessions the lead trainers were taken through the PDP and



its associated issues. The day followed through Blooms taxonomy of learning (1956)<sup>40</sup>, from knowledge, understanding through to application. In doing so, each trainer was provided with sufficient resources to train and implement the PDP into their own force infrastructure. Although these events were centred on a primarily finished article, the opportunity was taken to accept feedback and further refine the finished PDP product. This had a marked effect upon the motivation of participating trainers as the feelings of ownership were increased through this style of working. The main feedback from these focus sessions was in the semantics used in the PDP and the need for forces to revisit their training philosophies in light of the information from previous trials. These discussions gave rise to probationer training principles being reviewed in nearly all forces in England and Wales. This fact alone has been highlighted as a success in itself.

The Police Training Centres (PTCs) were treated in a similar style, each PTC sent two lead trainers to a training event, and these trainers then commenced a cascade of training throughout their respective establishments.

The regional training frequently gave rise to the issues surrounding the breadth of policing experience necessary to cover all the core tasks. Whilst on one hand the list had to be large and meaningful to provide a breadth of opportunity and sagacity, if it was impossible in the majority of policing areas then the PDP system was fatally flawed.

To overcome this situation and to meet the needs of the eventual users of the PDP, the three participating trial forces were used. A joint focus group was held at the Staff College, Bramshill involving a probationer from each trial and at least one of their managers.

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<sup>40</sup> Bloom, B. (1956) Taxonomy of Organisational Objectives. Handbook 1. Cognitive Domain. New York. McKay.

The field test manager from each force was also invited. During this day the work concentrated on the attainable percentage of core tasks that could be expected across all forces. The group attempted to reduce the amount of tasks, highlight essential components or find another solution to the problem. The results of this day were the eighty per cent attainment rule, detailed later and clear guidance to forces regarding the location of a police officer for their probation. If the eighty per cent rule were unlikely to be achievable then the organisation had a responsibility to review its practice of probationer placement.

In September 1998 the new Professional Development Portfolio went live across the police forces of England and Wales. Presentations were made to the Association of Chief Constables 'Personnel and Management Committee' regarding organisational issues, such as probationer placement and the need for culture change regarding the working day and the PDP was given its final authorisation. At that meeting Peter Hermitage, the then Chief Constable of National Police

Training stated: -

**“This new PDP reflects a major and significant development in police probationer training. I invite you [the ACPO PM members] to embrace its changes and move the police service forwards. This change cannot happen without your support.”<sup>41</sup>**

### **Quality assurance and verification**

After six months of use the PDP was re-visited to ensure that the systems and processes contained within it were functioning as planned. Regional workshops were held across the country and

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<sup>41</sup> Hermitage, P. (1998) Speech to Association of Chief Police Officers (Personnel and Management Committee). New Scotland Yard. October 1998.



feedback was elicited. The structure and principles were proven as robust and sound with the PDP being used by over 1,000 probationers. There were suggestions to alter some of the semantics on a small number of forms, these were actioned and the revised PDP entered the service in April 1999.

### **Employed methodologies Generic National Competency Framework**

This research followed the principles and successes of the new PDP. As a functional and relevant framework for policing competence had been formulated and introduced, was it not possible to do the same for the police service generally? This work became known as the Generic Competency Framework Project and worked directly for the ACPO Personnel and Management Committee. The aim of the research was to design (if at all possible) a framework for all members of the police service, regardless of rank and was to include sworn and non-sworn staff.

### **Desk top research - Review of Home Office Circular 43/96**

Home Office Circular 43/96 had directed forces into an appraisal process that combined the need for effective performance and the desire to improve police officers' skills. As such it should have been driving Personal Development Review (PDR) processes for police officers. Therefore, the initial stage of the research was to analyse the effectiveness of this process and assess its suitability for all ranks and roles within the organisation.

### **Review of existing competency frameworks and examples of good practice**

Within the structure of the policing environment two forces were attempting to proclaim their competency frameworks as the service's solution to the competence 'problem'. Those forces were West Yorkshire, who had a paper based framework and Kent who had a framework run by a powerful IT programme. Naturally both of these systems were reviewed. The research took place initially through detailed reading and moved on to focus groups with the leading staff in each



respective force. There was a particular focus on the 'Kent Model' as this had been sold to fifteen other forces as an assessment solution. The findings of this aspect of the research are detailed within this paper, however, as neither were found to actually offer anything that could meet the anticipated service needs, (as highlighted by this research), the examination of other police service competency frameworks became ever relevant.

In total 14 private sector and other public sector organisations were visited. At each visit, the companies concerned were able to share their current and recognised future practice. From this research a number of aspects of effective and transferable good practice emerged. Furthermore, a detailed desktop review of all the companies' relevant literature on competency and appraisal allowed patterns of convention to be amalgamated. This information was of great importance and relevance when the final framework was put together.

As the research was within the arena of policing, and was researching nationally, it naturally attracted a degree of attention. This attention was especially prevalent from management consultants who worked with police forces, worked within the field of competences or generally desired to assist the public service. As a consequence, without expenditure or covenants of future work, a number of challenging face to face unstructured interviews took place with leading practitioners in the areas covered by the research. These interviews were deliberately unstructured to leave the agenda as open as possible, thus increasing the benefit to the research as much as possible.

### **Review of forces' requirements for a competency framework**

This work commenced with a focus group consisting of 20 participants. The participants were drawn from training managers, personnel officers within forces, operational officers, occupational psychologists and representatives of all the staff associations. These participants also represented

20 different forces, thus as a sample they covered many differing facets of the national policing picture. The findings of this work were then placed into a questionnaire. The questionnaire covered quantitative and qualitative issues and the data from these was used to formulate the functionality of the emerging framework. Of the 46 forces sent a questionnaire, 36 responded, a response rate of eighty per cent. This data also served to clearly indicate the need for research in the areas of competence and assessment, as a high percentage of respondents were struggling to either operate or put into place the assessment and development issues cited in HOC 43/96. The focus group allowed the agenda for the questionnaire to come from within the service and not be skewed by any other research agendas. With the representative nature of the focus group, the high response rate and the diminished distortion of the questionnaire agenda, the inferences drawn from the results were valid and reliable.

As well as the focus group and the questionnaire data, it was felt appropriate to gather further qualitative data regarding the development of the frameworks it emerged. To this end semi-structured interviews were held in a number of forces, covering a number of forces across different 'families of forces' and differing sizes. Those forces included Dorset, Hampshire, The Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester Police, Lancashire, Humberside, Derbyshire, Devon & Cornwall and Wiltshire.

The data from these interviews was captured by a combination of notes taken during the event and a de-brief of those notes, normally by telephone with at least one of the forces representatives present at the meeting. It was found to be inappropriate to tape record these interviews as within a policing environment, itself under a great deal of scrutiny (HMIC, Home Affairs Select Committee) the presence of a tape was deemed threatening and removed any natural information flow processes from the interviewees.



## **Behavioural competencies**

Within all the frameworks investigated there were a plethora of different behavioural competencies. As human behaviour, within the parameters of this research, is complete, there is no new behaviour, only new semantics to describe that behaviour. Whatever descriptors are used within a competency framework is important only to the stakeholders within the process; this research was not seeking to 'invent' new styles of human behaviour. As the purpose of the emerging framework was to identify behavioural skills and allow them to be used in a cradle to grave approach across the service the wording of the actual behavioural statements identified and used was of paramount importance.

The psychology of behaviour is a complete science within itself. To assist the behavioural aspect of this research a number of unstructured interviews were held with occupational psychologists from within and outside the police service. As a result of this detailed research the following definition of behavioural competencies was forged: -

- Can it be observed in appraisal?
- Can it be observed in assessment or simulation?
- Can it, the behaviour, be changed through developmental feedback?

Across competency frameworks and even within professionals dealing with the subject there is a great deal of confusion surrounding labels, semantics and meanings of the issues around the idiom 'competency'. To remove some of these potential barriers from the framework, the wording was examined in detail. The outcomes of this work were that behavioural competencies as defined above became known as behavioural skills. Competences, those aspects of work that are measured in outcomes (such as NVQ performance criteria) became known as occupational skills. To assist



introduction of these expressions examples were drawn up and used both on paper and in discussion. An example of such was

‘The traffic police officer turns up at the scene of an accident. He had driven to the scene proficiently and upon arrival had signed and coned off the accident scene proficiently. These are some of the occupational skills for a traffic officer; they are descriptions of what they do. When speaking to the motorists involved, that officer was rude, lacked drive and determination to resolve the matter for the parties involved and generally failed to represent the organisation. These are examples of the behavioural skills, they can be observed, reported in words and writing and are capable of being developed.’

The organisation nationally had been driven down a path of using the behavioural skills detailed in HOC 43/96. Upon examination, these behaviours did not meet the definition being applied. Furthermore they did not fully embrace the challenges facing the police service of the future. Although there is no ‘new behaviour’, there is, within a competency framework, the freedom of choice to use and describe behaviour from the vast amount of material available. To this end, the suite of behavioural descriptors in 43/96 did not focus on the need to manage the services emerging problem solving philosophy, nor did it address the requirement to treat people from ethnic, visible and invisible minorities as equals. However, as the framework had been either introduced, or was being attempted to be introduced into the majority of forces it would have been a formidable task to overturn those efforts. It was decided therefore to adopt the principles of 43/96, enhance both its methods of use and its behaviours, and introduce it to the service as an opportunity to develop their existing work, not face change and new challenges. This blueprint then embraced many aspects of effective practice from the other frameworks examined. The feeling within practitioners was one of

relief when made aware of this development and satisfaction that their needs were being met. One of the greater challenges regarding the use of HOC 43/96 as a foundation was that the grammar and overall sentiment used was for police officers within the service, not civilian staff. To overcome the exclusionary nature of this style of writing three focus groups were held, in Swansea (South Wales), Runcorn (Cheshire) and Manchester. In these groups the language was examined, developed, refined and progressed to a finished suite of behavioural skills, drawn up to meet the current and anticipated needs of the service (appendix 2).

### **Technical ability competences**

The leading police service competency framework, as mentioned earlier, was designed by Kent Police. For many it became the benchmark upon which to improve, for some it became the only identifiable construct for a competency framework as they knew no different. Kent's model used behavioural skills and technical skills, with the technical skills designed to assist processes of occupational competence. The research of the environment for policing and the current models and frameworks in use across England and Wales clearly determined that such a model, with stand alone technical ability lists, would not confront the services needs. Many stakeholders, from all aspects of policing, including the Home Office, were championing the need for standards in policing. The favoured style of these was in the espoused NVQ format. When ACPO agreed to form a National Training Organisation (NTO), itself a body designed to operate independently of the service yet responding to national policing needs relating to NVQ style standards, the direction for technical/occupational standards was forged.

To this end, the research pointed away from writing a particular suite of occupational/technical competences and it seemed logical to form that part of the framework around existing work linked to the NTO.



## **Meeting the pragmatic needs of the service**

Throughout the research there was a reoccurring question, which centred on how the framework would actually be used, would it be computerised? Or would it involve reams and reams of paper? It is academically accepted that the police service is generally an organisation consisting of pragmatists, and although this may appear to be a sweeping stereotype, the frequency of the how 'will it be used' questions confirmed that preference of learning and working style.

The use of information technology (IT) was, and perhaps still is, the ultimate goal for any competency framework. However, as individual police forces have separate budgeting arrangements and scope for IT the research led to a non IT based application. Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMP) themselves have a competency framework. The way in which they used their framework was particularly relevant to the needs of this research. After a number of meetings with their leading occupational psychologist, this methodology was tailored to meet the needs of the police service. The process is based on prioritising competencies against roles and uses a simple but effective approach to carry out this function. This system is described fully in a later chapter.

## **Sorting and analysing data**

Mason (1997)<sup>42</sup> suggests three familiar issues regarding the reading of qualitative data, namely literal, interpretative or reflexive reading. It is suggested that pure and valid as it appears literal reading is not probable within qualitative work. Most researchers would not want to stop there, indeed it is further suggested by Mason (1997)<sup>43</sup> that the social world has already been interpreted, a fact that would prevent pure objective description from fresh data.

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<sup>42</sup> Mason, J. (1997) Op. Cit.

<sup>43</sup> Mason, J. (1997) Ibid.

Interpretative reading of data involves the researcher constructing a version of what it was thought to represent or infer. In reading beyond the factual data there will be an inevitable emphasis on the researchers own interpretations. Reflexive reading explores the researcher's role in the data that has been created and interpreted. Undoubtedly the researcher becomes inevitably and inextricably implicated in data generation and deciphering and this fact cannot be ignored when assumptions about research validity are being made.

To offset the inevitable corruption of the pure data, all original material used in focus groups, interviews etc. was retained and often shared with research colleagues who had an interest in the study. The interpretation of meaning from these representations was then taken directly into the research material, not transposed into a data bank of information for later use.

Given the iterative nature of the research process, data was often used to spawn a more rounded product than existed before the research event. Thus the resulting artefacts grew and changed throughout the study. There were few occasions in the process where the same tests were delivered to similar research groups. Most groups built on the work of those who went before them. The significance of this statement cannot be overlooked, especially when analysing the processes of data storage. Simple indexing of text became a great burden, as the cross over of data from one event to the next was minimised, whilst the increased volume of the data became a substantial reality. After a number of attempts to deploy data indexing techniques such as cross sectional indexing, transcriptions of recordings, analysis and logging of pictorial representations, the decision was made to abandon such techniques as they were becoming a burden that was preventing further research from taking place. All data was therefore stored securely under lock and key in a logical and sequential system. Where data had been interpreted or shared with colleagues the results of these events were stored with the data to represent the iterative nature of the emerging processes.



Due to the nature of research, at a number of key periods in the procedure managing groups within the service expected presentations. These instances caused the researcher to stop and take stock of progress and assess what to do next. Mason (1997)<sup>44</sup> states that such interventions allow a researcher to analyse data in order that further decisions can be made on the basis of developing theoretical principles or taking decisions on where to next direct analytical activity.

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<sup>44</sup> Mason, J. (1997) Ibid.

## **Chapter 3**

### **The Environment for Policing**

**“The style of policing has to be acceptable to the public and meet their expectations in terms of credibility and quality”<sup>45</sup>**

The environment for policing is constantly changing, ever dynamic and increasingly difficult to analyse. Indeed, within ‘policing’ there are many different views of what constitutes the actual ‘environment’. There is a national perspective involving national issues especially those of Central Government, a regional perspective with associations and partnerships between forces within regional localities and then there are many separate police forces each having their own environments. Within each of these particular localities the environment for policing activities can and most probably will be different. To therefore generalise about policing environments is fraught with many difficulties. However, Ainsworth and Pease (1997) highlighted in their findings that people typically underestimate the effects of situation and environment on the behaviour of people within the police. The importance of this topic cannot be understated. To assist the process this research focuses on a number of key areas.

#### **The rationale for policing**

The responsibility for policing and upholding the law implies a number of things, Brogden (1988) describes these as “the enforcement of the criminal law, and the maintenance of order when criminal violations occur during social unrest, political protest and industrial action.”<sup>46</sup> However,

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<sup>45</sup> ACPO (1991) Statement made by ACPO Quality of Service Committee to attendees at ACPO Quality of Service Seminar, 2 July 1991. London. ACPO.

<sup>46</sup> Brogden, M. et al. (1988) Introducing Police Work. London. Unwin Hyman Ltd.



for that definition to be wholly applicable it implies that there is current agreement as to which laws to enforce and what would actually constitute 'social unrest'.

In the modern, plural societies of England and Wales, different clusters of society define these aspects of policing from totally different perspectives and value bases. Thus, within policing there is increasing difficulty in providing the realistic 'policing by consent' that law enforcement would espouse.

Originally police commissioners believed that police effectiveness would be determined by "unquestioned respect for their legitimacy."<sup>47</sup> That legitimacy in the early 1800's possibly stemmed from a society of more common values and beliefs, indeed in those early days the new highly visible police were designed to function solely by having their attention attracted by the public they were serving. As the demographic nature of England and Wales has altered over the one hundred and seventy years of policing, the ability of the police to retain that aforementioned legitimacy has proven difficult and has been tested and challenged in sometimes quite public cases. The mandate to enforce the law impartially, efficiently and acceptably is therefore inherently unstable. There has been constant movement around a circle of activity over these turbulent years, from the police actively providing a public service at the behest of that public, (through legitimacy), through a culture swing of the 'police knowing best as to what was required' (as seen in the Thatcher years of modern policing), to a return to perhaps more traditional values as directed by such legislation as the Crime and Disorder Act (1998). Virtually fifty percent of the community has contact with the police in each year<sup>48</sup>, therefore the scope for influencing public attitude to the police, within the environments of that police work is enormous.

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<sup>47</sup> Brogden, M. et al. (1988) Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ainsworth, P and Pease, K. (1997) Police Work. Leicester. British Psychological Society.

## **Police accountability**

The policing in the early 1980's multi racial communities and the subsequent racially motivated social disorder was examined at length by Lord Scarman. This research had profound effects upon policing from the time of the findings being published. Not least of these was the recommendation that the police engage in public forums on a regular and localised basis. These were made statute law in 1996 under the auspices of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. The aim of these forums was to provide the general public with an opportunity to meet and inform the police in their residential area of their needs and requirements for policing activity. Although well intentioned, the lack of actual success of these forums is perhaps clearly evidenced by the developments brought about in recent legislation. The Crime and Disorder Act has made localised crime, nuisance and disorder audits a statutory requirement of all policing areas. Moreover, these audits are drawn up within boundaries of localised government, which are not necessarily co-determinant of policing boundaries. Thus, localised accountability and perhaps the legitimacy of policing may return.

Generally, commentators on police accountability refer to "the institutional arrangements made to ensure that the police do the job required of them."<sup>49</sup> But what exactly constitutes police accountability? Lustgarten (1986) reviewed this question and derived a definition that drew upon a political perspective, namely "the degree of control various political institutions are to have over the police."<sup>50</sup> However relevant that definition was in 1986, a time of high Government influences and control of the police, it is not a definition that would sit comfortably in the year 2000 and beyond. Police accountability becomes an issue whenever there is public concern over "the arrangements for ensuring that the police perform satisfactorily in any part of their role are not working."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Jefferson, T and Grimshaw R. (1982) Law, Democracy and Justice the question of Police Accountability. in D. Cowell et al, Policing the Riots. London. Junction Books.

<sup>50</sup> Lustgarten, L. (1986) The Governance of Police. London. Sweet and Maxwell.

<sup>51</sup> Brogden, M. et al. (1988) Ibid.



As the numbers of leaders in the police who had joined from military service reduced in the 1960's and 70's, the controlling influences and supposed rigidity of a quasi-military police service also began to dwindle. At this time, the police found themselves forced to enter into dialogue and liaisons with other agencies, such as Social Services. Thus, as militaristic police 'authority' was eroded "a new and more secure public image had to be laid."<sup>52</sup> This process was hampered by the publicity that surrounded major miscarriages of justice that made and held media headlines. The revelations of malpractice in the criminal investigations carried out by Sheffield detectives (1963),<sup>53</sup> the release of terrorists such as the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four in the 1980's, all pointed to a level of criminal investigation that did not meet satisfactory standards. In 1999, the very public report into the investigation of the killing of Stephen Lawrence<sup>54</sup> again brought police ethics, values and investigative skills under the public microscope.

Within established procedures the police are accountable to a number of statutory instruments, namely the Police Discipline Code, the Courts (with regard to both criminal and civil courts) and the police complaints procedure. The Police Discipline Code established a code of conduct for all police officers. If found to be in breach of this code, a police officer could find themselves penalised or dismissed from their role. However, the governing legislation, The Police Act of 1964, required a standard of proof that has recently been overturned within the Police Personnel Procedures, 1998.

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<sup>52</sup> Holdaway, S. (1983) Inside the British Police - A Force at Work. Blackwell. Oxford.

<sup>53</sup> Home Office. (1963) Sheffield Police Appeal Inquiry. London. HMSO.

<sup>54</sup> Home Office. (1999) The MacPherson Inquiry into the Death of Stephen Lawrence. London. HMSO.

Complaints generated by members of the public lead to investigation of discipline and criminal matters and when so required these complaints are overseen by the Police Complaints Association, a body formed to provide objective assessment of complaints procedures. It would appear that within Lustgarten's definition of police accountability, the criteria are met. However, the level of accountability to the public is not discussed within his definition of political institutions. A 1998 investigation of the policing of diverse communities found that "many members of the public still lack confidence in the police complaints system as an effective redress against police malpractice and this has led to an increase in civil litigation against the police."<sup>55</sup> Coupled with the previously discussed failure of Police and Community forums under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) there was a need within society for a far greater level of community involvement within policing strategy, policy and discipline.

### **Public involvement within accountable policing activity**

The HMIC evaluation of policing activities stated that the team of investigating officers found "those police commanders who involve the public, either through groups or individuals, in strategic and policy making processes, enjoy the most successful community relations."<sup>56</sup> In 1829, almost one hundred and seventy years earlier, Sir Richard Mayne concluded that the police needed to secure the consent and support of the public if they were to successfully perform their duties. However, that challenge faced by officers in the more modern police force is far greater than the task of the early 1800's. It is perhaps relevant to observe that for many reasons the focus of policing efforts moved away from public accountability, and therefore legitimacy during the period leading up to this research, namely the 1980 - 90's.

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<sup>55</sup> HMIC. (1998) Winning the Race - Policing Plural Communities. London.. Home Office,

<sup>56</sup> HMIC. (1998) Ibid.



Jones (1983) found that the “public is not a homogenous entity with a single set of policing needs and the public judged police effectiveness not by their success in crime control, (as the police were prone to think) but in terms of the quality of service, in human terms, offered.”<sup>57</sup>

As previously discussed, a great deal of attention was spent on analysing the race riots of the early 1980’s, from which it was widely concluded that the police had lost the overall ability to meet the needs of the public they served. This was especially relevant in areas of increased racial tension where the communities consisted mainly of ethnic minority residents. However, in the miners’ strike (1984) and the poll tax riots of 1990, there was clear evidence that the potential for such riotous criminal activity was not reserved for members of minority communities. Her Majesties Inspector of Forces, David O’Dowd concluded (1998) that “incidents that trigger disorder are not always predictable or necessarily serious in themselves, but the initial action taken by the police officers and their ability to work in partnership with intermediaries who are acceptable to the communities involved, can significantly effect the way in which events develop.”<sup>58</sup>

The first major national steps towards public consultation, apart from the aforementioned community forums, were the national Quality of Service questionnaires, implemented as a direct consequence of HOC 17/1993. Forces were initially invited then later required to survey the public to ascertain their own service quality. The circular followed initiatives such as the Policing to Standards Initiative in which the Metropolitan Service stated: -

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<sup>57</sup> Jones, S. (1983) Police - public relations: A Study of Public and Police Perceptions of each other. Summary of main findings. Department of Social Administration, University College, Cardiff.

<sup>58</sup> HMIC. (1988) Ibid.

**“There should be clearly identified mechanisms for monitoring customer satisfaction with the quality of service delivered, with particular reference to Equal Opportunities and in relation to members of the public.”<sup>59</sup>**

**These surveys covered public satisfaction with the service offered at crime scenes, road traffic accidents, police station front counters and when members of the community contacted the police with a more general enquiry over the telephone. A further questionnaire asked the public what the level of satisfaction was with patrolling officers and police patrolling visibility. These survey respondents were taken at random from voter’s registers and had not necessarily come into recent contact with the police. A number of forces used this questionnaire to generate information regarding the community requirements of their police service; this was done by asking for respondents to prioritise their wishes for the localised policing function. This information was generally used as data within the planning processes on policing areas. Although this was ground breaking work at the time, the information was quantitative and from a pre-determined options list, the criteria being set by the respective police force. In terms of true accountability and public legitimacy, the agenda was still being set by the police and not the public they served.**

**The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act took public consultation and therefore accountability to new depths. Under the provisions of this act the key agencies involved in dealing with 'crime and disorder' were forced into an advance towards providing a better society through a partnership approach. The act had a number of key themes, namely: -**

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<sup>59</sup> Metropolitan Police Service. (1993) Policing to Standards. London.. MPS.



“the purpose of the youth justice system is to cut offending. Action must be taken quickly to nip youth offending in the bud; the police and the local authority - with the whole community - must establish a local partnership to cut crime; local authorities and other public bodies must consider the crime and disorder implications of all their decisions.”<sup>60</sup>

Whereas in previous times there had been pockets of good practice, especially in the arena of partnerships, it became a statutory requirement for this to occur when the preceding bill became law. Education, the health service and the police were obligated to collaborate in a multi-agency approach towards reducing crime and incidents of disorder in their particular area. These areas are based upon borough boundaries which have no direct respect for existing reporting boundary arrangements within the partners of the new initiatives.

All partnerships were obliged to carry out a crime audit and report publicly exactly what steps they were undertaking to deal with the matters arising. This work commenced in 1998 and first reported in the spring of 1999. The direct partnership approach, the audit and consultation processes that led to it, and the use of existing ‘community’ boundaries were significant steps towards the provision of an accountable police service.

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<sup>60</sup> Home Office. (1998) Crime and Disorder Act - Introductory Guide. London. HMSO

## **Police Planning Processes**

This level of public accountability, however, led to a dichotomy within police planning arrangements. The planning process had its routes firmly entrenched in Government policy; the accountability from the newly created Crime and Disorder Act was not in keeping with this centralised function. The Home Secretary would set annual policing objectives, latterly known as Ministerial Priorities. These would typically reflect the Government's current trend in policing style; a typical example was contained in Lancashire Constabulary's Policing Plan 1996/7. The Home Secretary's objectives would be promulgated to each police force who would be expected to draw up a detailed policing plan that focused on their approach to the pre-set objectives. To use the example of Lancashire Constabulary, the Lancashire Policing Plan for that year included a force wide commitment to "maintaining and if possible increasing the number of detections for violent crime."<sup>61</sup> This planning commitment was then adopted in policing sectors who would typically draw up targets for performance, e.g. maintain the number of detections for violent crime, per 100 officers, at 119."<sup>62</sup>

For the forthcoming year the force would plan to target police actions in efforts to achieve this and other reported objectives. At the end of the policing year, typically the financial year, policing success would be measured against the recorded performance in those key areas. The issues surrounding individual performance and its associated links to the planning processes are examined later in this research. It is clear, therefore, that although being publicly accountable for performance, the performance areas were not necessarily meeting the needs of the served public. Although offering a 'best fit', these policing objectives, and subsequent plans, actually served to meet the needs of central Government. (The debate on the true representation of the general public

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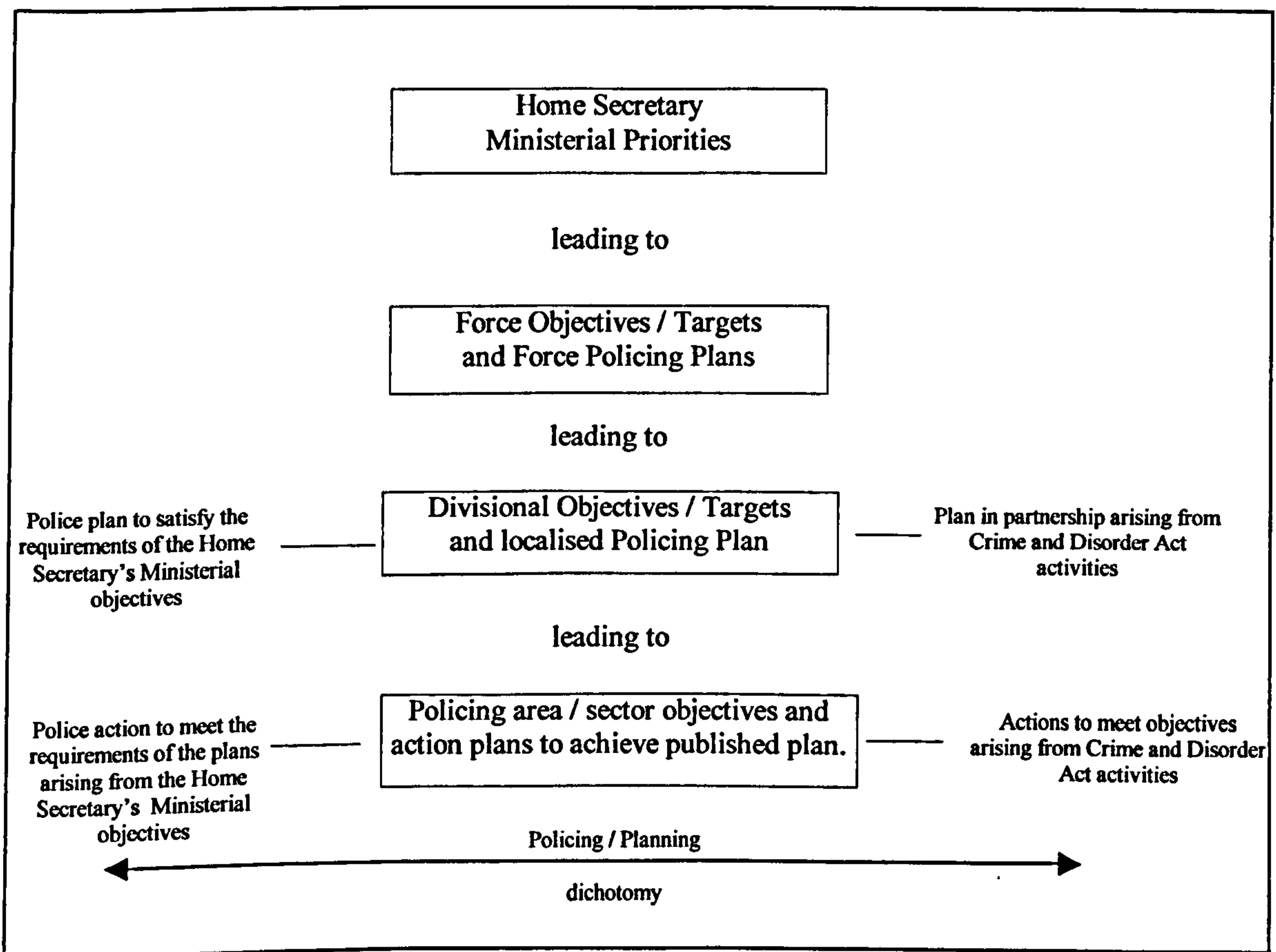
<sup>61</sup> Lancashire Police Authority. (1996) Annual Policing Plan Preston. Lancashire Police Authority.

<sup>62</sup> Lancashire Police Authority. (1996) Ibid.



by the duly elected government would be of little relevance to this study. Clearly within communities served by the police it was the accountability of the police to that community that was the issue, even if the local parliament member was representing that constituency). The planning process, through ministerial controls, was still not a fully legitimate representative form of police accountability to the public, although it did make clear the accountability to Government in local policing areas. In diagrammatic form the process appeared as follows: -

**Fig. 2**



The policing / planning dichotomy was addressed nationally by Lancashire Constabulary at a conference of senior police managers early in 1999. The conference was discussing, amongst other issues, the aspects of best practice in the Police and the use of the European Foundation for Quality

Management model. Mr David Brindle, a member of the Constabulary's senior management board, when asked a question on the dichotomy stated:-

“The matter for planning policing priorities lies with the police force and police authority for the relevant area. If Home Office direction is not fully in accord with those plans then it is the Home Office direction that won't be adopted. This is the case this year with the Ministerial Priorities.”<sup>63</sup>

If one police force was prepared to publicly speak out against government direction and policy, it was clear that the issue of public accountability was high on the agenda and of paramount importance to accountable police managers. Within published Government papers, such as the 'Overarching Aims and Objectives to take Policing into the next Millennium,'<sup>64</sup> consultation and partnerships receive a high profile and are stated as one of the seven guiding principles that outline the way in which police should carry out their functions. Thus, the issue of public accountability and central Government control, the 'police / planning dichotomy' is at a pivotal point and crucial to any studies of the policing environment.

Examination of a plan to reduce crime and disorder in a particular area, in this instance the Leyland Division of Lancashire, brings to light other accountability issues. The plan exploits the partnership approach and takes significant steps to increase the legitimacy for the plan aimed at ensuring a tranquil society by publicising the involvement of the participating agencies, including representatives of the community.

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<sup>63</sup> Brindle, D. (1999) Keynote speech to Policing EFQM Conference, Blackpool, February 1999.

<sup>64</sup> Home Office. (1998) 'Overarching Aims and Objectives to take Policing into the next Millennium.' London. HMSO.



In April 1999 the concept of 'Best Value' became a legislative prerequisite for all Government services, including the police. Within the concept of Best Value lies a duty to provide the best service possible for the public. In particular the Government's vision of Best value organisation is one which

- "finds out what the public wants and then commits itself to delivering it to the highest quality at the best price
- constantly searches for improvement in its services, and
- improves front line services for the public."<sup>65</sup>

It is therefore timely to conclude that within the national policing arena, positive steps are being taken to increase the accountability of the police to the public it serves. Through examples of multi-agency partnerships, reduced planning accountability to central Government, increased accountability to the community and a widespread recognisance of the matters of national diversity, the environment for policing is dynamic and constantly evolving and ripe for changes in training and employee development to meet these challenges. Within this police milieu there is a clear opportunity to address police behaviour, organisational and personal performance and the employee culture. In doing so there is an opportunity to improve the status and legitimacy for the service provision required, for both the public served and the majority of police employees providing it. The submission by The Chief Inspector of Constabularies to the Lawrence inquiry stated in the submission summary:-

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<sup>65</sup> Steward, G. (1998) Piloting the Governments Best Value Initiative. in Criminal Justice, Vol. 2, Issue 1.

“the most significant factor must be the representativeness of a force in relation to its local community.”<sup>66</sup>

In setting the scene for police assessment and personnel development it is judicious to make reference to the HMIC Thematic Inspection of Police Training (1999) in which it was stated that the service requires a nationally agreed competency framework and that there should be “identification of training needs through a nationally agreed and standardised appraisal and development process.”<sup>67</sup>

The following chapters contained in this paper outline the research that took place in the environment mentioned, to meet those challenges laid down by the HMIC and other interested parties.

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<sup>66</sup> HMIC (1998) Written Evidence of HMIC to the Inquiry into the Matters Arising From the Death of Stephen Lawrence. HMIC.

<sup>67</sup> HMIC. (1999) Managing Learning. Home Office. London.



## Chapter 4

### Police culture

**“Organisational culture is a reality that influences the values and behaviour of its members. Change in core values is difficult to achieve: change in behaviour is easier”<sup>68</sup>**

The police forces of England and Wales are often placed together into the general organisational heading of ‘The Police’. However, within these forces there are separate and diverse cultural identities. Of the more easier to distinguish are issues that arise from nationality, e.g. forces from either England or Wales, or those from force demographics and size, e.g. Warwickshire Constabulary (923 officers)<sup>69</sup> and The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) (26,106 officers).<sup>70</sup>

Within each and every one of these separate forces there lie pockets of cultural differences; it would be unrealistic to expect a police force the size of South Yorkshire (3,170 officers)<sup>71</sup> to have a single culture throughout all the spectrums of its operations. Different departments have different ways of carrying out functions; civilian and police employees differ in their outlook and basic geography prevents many practices being exact replicas over the force area.

Inside police divisions or departments there may be a variety of leadership and management styles, these in turn lead to variances of culture and ‘modus operandi’. An autocratic leader may manage by fear and deprivation of power of employees whilst a manager supporting empowerment may facilitate problem solving and task ownership amongst the workers they have responsibility for.

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<sup>68</sup> Anthony, P. (1994) Managing Culture. Buckingham. Open University Press.

<sup>69</sup> Home Office. (1997-8) Labour Force Survey. London. Home Office.

<sup>70</sup> Home Office. (1997-8). Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Home Office. (1997-8). Ibid.

Both of these styles, and many other methods of managing staff, all have an impact upon policing and police culture.

Many of the findings of this research were common to the majority of police forces. With regard to police probationer training there was general antipathy towards changing the process, yet characteristically there was an acceptance of a need for change. For example, a high percentage of participants in focus groups agreed that the situation of action planning needed development, yet initially when that change was put into place there was a reluctance to move over to a new system. There appeared to be a need to cling to the practices, methods and cultural norms of assessment that they were more comfortable with. At Bruche Police Training Centre (PTC) a high number of the training staff indicated that they agreed with the proposed changes to action planning and were tutored on the details of the changes that the new PDP brought about. When the new PDP programme was reviewed after six months of operation it transpired that the original action planning practices were being retained and simply transposed onto the new PDP forms.

This and other examples (such as the Sussex training managers resistance to assessment changes and the overall visible signs and symbols of probationer assessment) serve to support the theory that there is, in certain aspects of policing, an overall, general, generic police culture. However, this research chapter will reveal that the culture of the police has many facets and operates at a number of functional sub-cultural levels. Within probationer training this diversity of cultural issues is perhaps reduced as all initial classroom training for probationers is delivered by National Police Training (NPT), a national organisation with a single goal and corporate philosophy. Perhaps this training provision by NPT creates less opportunity for cultural variance than if separate forces delivered initial training. Within policing nationally, therefore, the pluralist existence of cultures is allowed to flourish due to the differing policing dimensions outlined earlier.



If a new style of assessment and staff development, such as the new PDP, is to be offered to the police service and it is to be successfully introduced, there must be an understanding of what the culture of the police service actually is. This understanding should include the possible barriers that may be presented to agents of change and the opportunities the service culture may offer. This chapter unravels some of the issues that surround culture within the police service. The focus is upon the cultural issues that relate directly to the development and supervision of the police probationers and police employees to whom this research refers. Initially this research reviews contemporary views on culture and in particular police culture, it then goes on to examine the empirical cultural findings of this research within the police forces and police organisations visited.

### **Defining culture**

Whether the discussion is regarding nation-wide cultural issues or the particular nuances of a small policing division, there is a prerequisite need to identify exactly what culture is and to what extent culture effects the situations under debate. Policing is not however a business, industry or commercial venture and it is from these fields of enterprise that most cultural models have emerged. Policing is different from these ventures. For most companies, no profit indicates troubled shareholders and an uncertain future. For the police, despite limiting budgets, the function of policing will continue no matter what. This fact alone sets a study of police culture apart from previous seminal works. With that overriding factor under consideration there are a number of parallels that can be drawn from espoused theories to specific sections of police culture.

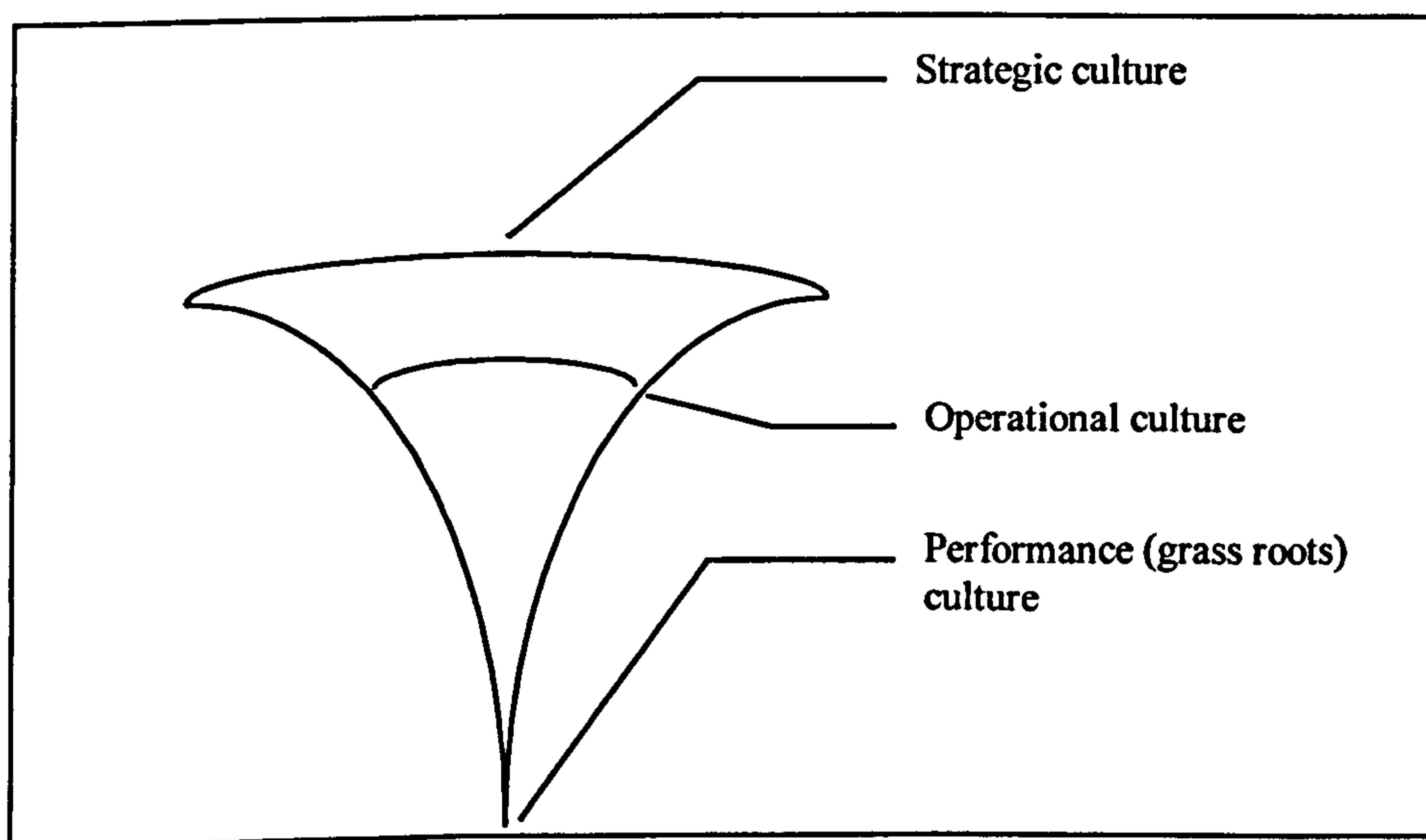
### **Performance and culture**

This research found many different layers of police culture existing in an identifiable form. On the higher tier there lies a strategic police culture that surrounds policing nationally. Below this

national strategic culture lies a localised cultural spectrum that is representative of variances caused by more provincial matters, such as leadership and geographical causes. Finally the focal point of police culture rests in the dynamic grass roots performance culture. This finely focused culture drives police performance and governs the individuality that arises from a police service consisting of thousands of police officers across the nation.

These layers of culture warrant further examination, especially as the nature of organisational culture, climate and employee commitment is important to any manager involved in organisational conflict and change (Mullins).<sup>72</sup>

**Fig. 3 The cultural triangle.**



‘Strategic culture’ lies in the practices and beliefs held by ACPO and central Government. ACPO, as a representative body, consists of members at the ranks of Assistant, Deputy and Chief Constable (or the MPS equivalent).

<sup>72</sup> Mullins, L. (1999) Management and Organisational Behaviour (5th Edition). Financial Times/Pitman. London.



Committees that are overseen by the Chief Officers Council undertake the management of policy by ACPO members. During this research the differences in cultural norms between this level and other subordinate cultural platforms frequently arose and were observed in practice. This cultural gap was extremely prevalent in relation to the proposed changes to assessment policies and development philosophy that the new PDP was to generate. There is a commonly held cultural belief that these ACPO committees and their members decide and influence national policy. In 1988 McCabe put forward the view that: -

“The kind of policing we enjoy is determined by this small group of men whose personal attitudes are a major factor in the creation of policing styles.”<sup>73</sup>

The extent and reality of that belief was found during this research to be questionable. The day to day workings of ACPO and its members is not frequently exposed to research and there is little systematic knowledge of this elite group (Reiner 1991).<sup>74</sup> Therefore, especially amongst ACPO members, this research discovered a belief in the strength of decision making that was not always reflected through the service. The following example of attempted cultural change to the assessment process highlights this.

Generally, the models and theories of police assessment that arise from this research aim to enhance the standards of officers' development and raise the quality of policing. By doing so the goal alters and creates a positive effect upon police culture. To do this the implementation of a new policy had to be introduced at the various key cultural levels. Addressing senior officers through the ACPO

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<sup>73</sup> McCabe, S. (1988) The Police, Public Order and Civil Liberties. London. Routledge.

<sup>74</sup> Reiner, R. (1991) Chief Constables. London.

Personnel & Training Committee started the process of influence and change. In a presentation to that committee, the benefits of the new PDP were outlined and examined in detail.

The potential for positive cultural changes, such as more objective, robust development systems, was outlined and discussed. At the same time the need for officers to be allowed to review and reflect upon their work to complete the required portfolio of evidence, and maximise on the advantages of the new PDP, was highlighted as an opportunity cost. This 'cost' to the organisation should occur within the police probationers' working day. To do so would represent a cultural change as the general prevailing norm was for officers to work on operational issues for the duration of their tour of duty and develop along the way, not to take time out for personal development in the working day.

The consensus of the ACPO committee was in favour of this becoming the norm and twenty minutes a day was accepted as the prerequisite time for this reflective period. It was clearly believed by the committee members that this decision would become national practice following the publishing and disseminating of the meeting's minutes.

Some twelve months after that meeting, despite the relevant processes of senior officers' communication not one person had seen, heard of, or witnessed any change in police procedure. The dissemination of the minutes that represented that decision, that should have reached of all the police officers, supervisors, tutor constables and trainers interviewed during this research, over one hundred in total, had clearly not been effective. It was still the norm for sergeants to believe that "the only place a probationer can learn anything about this job is on the streets".<sup>75</sup> In an interview

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<sup>75</sup> Interview with a Hampshire Constabulary probationer. Harrogate. January 1999.



with a police officer from West Mercia Constabulary who had the responsibility for managing probationers on her division, she stated: -

“If I could convince my sergeants and superintendents of the benefit of twenty minutes of reflection, the whole process would run smoother. As it is, the probationers fill in the PDP in their own time, nothing, nothing has changed, it’s a crime.”<sup>76</sup>

Despite the belief that they had effected changes to police culture, the decision of the ACPO committee had little, if any, effect upon cultural change and it remained standard procedure for probationers to reflect and review their day in their own time away from the workplace. These findings reinforce those of Holdaway (1991) in so much as: -

“the views of many senior officers about the purpose of police work and how it should be practised are rather different from those found amongst the ranks.”<sup>77</sup>

This clear failure to change police culture ‘from the top’ served to confirm the work of Schein (1985)<sup>78</sup> that organisational culture cannot actually be managed let alone be steered to a point where it favourably influences business performance. Harrison (1970)<sup>79</sup> offered a framework for organisational change that based cultural development on the premise that to attempt change an intervention should be made at a level no deeper than that required to ensure a solution to the problem.

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<sup>76</sup> Interview with West Mercia police constable. Harrogate. 1999.

<sup>77</sup> Holdaway, S. (1991) Recruitment, Race and the Police Sub-culture (in Police Force Police Service edited Stephens, M). London. Macmillan.

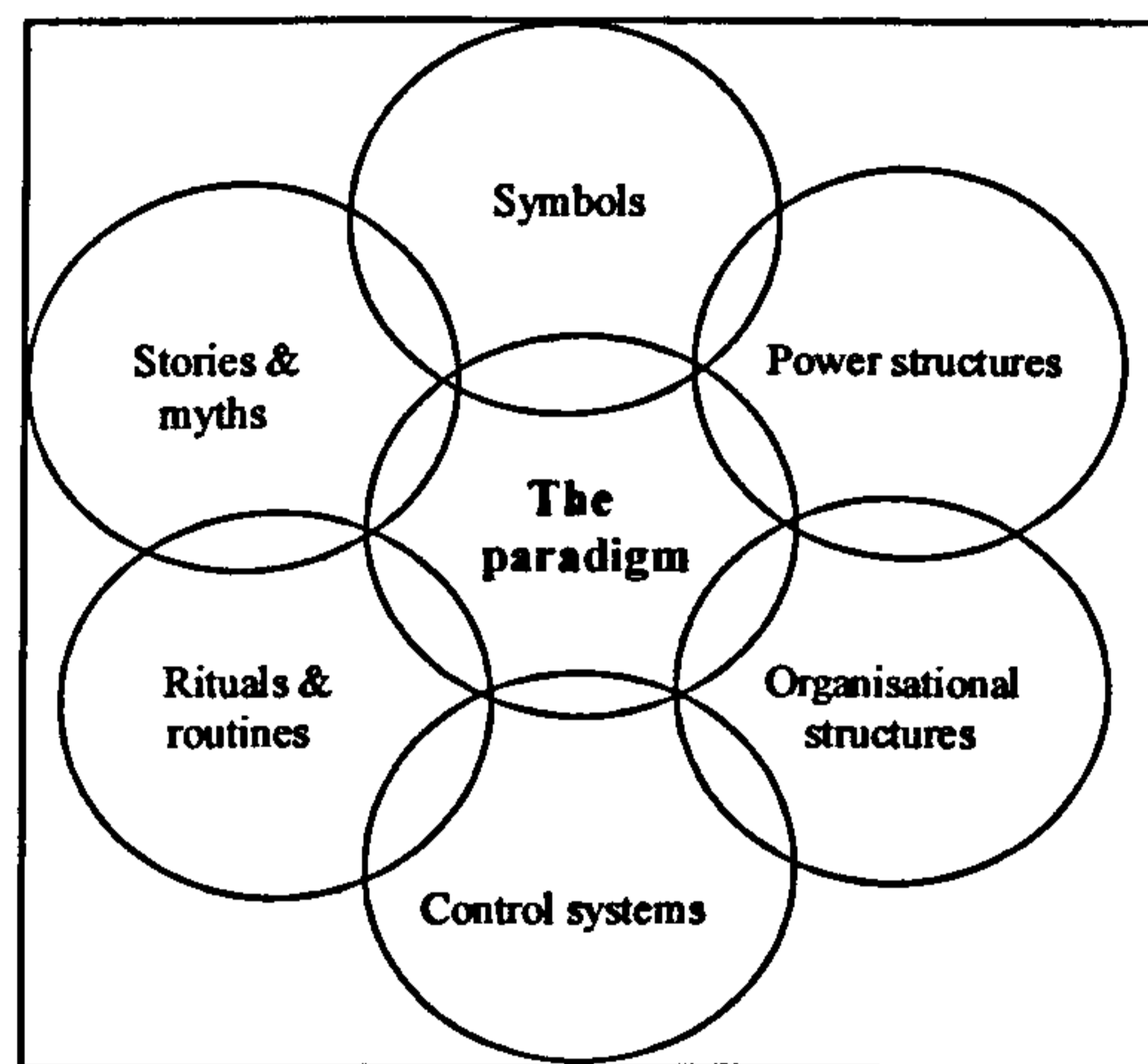
<sup>78</sup> Schein, E. (1985) Organisation Culture and Leadership. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.

<sup>79</sup> Harrison, R. (1970) Choosing the Depth of Organisational Intervention. Journal of Applied Behavioural Science. Volume 6, pp181-202.

To this end another attempt was then made to adjust the cultural practices regarding police assessment and development.

It was apparent that to effect change in probationer development the overall culture of the organisation had to be tackled from different directions. Despite Schein's findings highlighting the difficulties of steering culture, the 'objective' of cultural adjustment was felt worthy of attention within this research. In doing so the cultural web<sup>80</sup> of the 'performance level' of policing, especially with due regard to police probationer training, was examined in an effort to identify the drivers that could assist this requirement for cultural change.

**Fig. 4 The Cultural Web**



The examination of the cultural web in relation to probationer assessment and development led to the following findings<sup>81</sup>: -

<sup>80</sup> Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (1997) Exploring Corporate Strategy (4th Edition). London. Prentice Hall.

<sup>81</sup> From interviews and observations during PDP trials in West Midlands, Hampshire and Sussex.



- Routines** Routinely probationers were utilised in front line operational policing roles. These roles took place in circumstances of high workload and the probationer was often working alone without any effective supervision.
- Rituals** The key development phases for probationers, (independent patrol and confirmation of appointment) were seen as major milestones. Decisions at these stages required a high level of input from supervisors and managers alike. It was at this point that assessment and development was assured the required amount of attention by senior managers' interventions.
- Stories** Many supervisors were found to be lacking in assessment evidence for their probationers, a fact that caused them great stress when writing meaningful assessment reports that would be read by managers in differing parts of the organisation. There was a perception that these reports lacked clarity of purpose.
- Symbols** The '36 skills and abilities'<sup>82</sup> were the symbols of police assessment. The need for a comprehensive and robust set of performance tasks was not in existence. A recurring symbol of probationers' worth and ability was the volume of prisoners handled and processed by the officer.
- Power structures** The seat of power with probationers lay firmly in the hands of the sergeants who had direct supervisory responsibility for the individual officer.

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<sup>82</sup> NPT (1989) The Probationer Development Portfolio. Harrogate. NPT.

- Control systems** There appeared to be little in the way of effective measurement of probationers' performance, as highlighted in the probationer review.<sup>83</sup> Despite the best efforts of some progressive police forces, probationer assessments were often uncontrolled and 'ad hoc'.
- Organisational structures** Formally, the development of probationers was found to lie within the management structure of the local police division. Informally, the structure that outlined success or otherwise was found to lie in the immediate working environment.

These findings contrast with a more generic analysis of the police, in this case Lancashire Constabulary, undertaken by Cunningham (1996)<sup>84</sup> as part of that constabularies 'Change Programme'. Within this work Cunningham observed that:-

“Where Government involvement is high, the issue of public accountability becomes an important influence; it is likely to give rise to a centralised structure of decision making where both power and accountability are in the hands of an easily identifiable team or individual at the centre. Higher levels of decentralisation would disperse authority more widely and make public accountability more difficult – or at least more difficult to demonstrate to the public.”

In earlier work Arkle (1995)<sup>85</sup> commented that the overall cultural ambience of the constabulary led him to believe that there was a cultural disparity across the geographic divisions with officers in

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<sup>83</sup> NPT (1996) Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Cunningham, M. (1996) An Examination of the Main Cultural Characteristics of the Lancashire Constabulary. Lancashire Constabulary Internal Paper.

<sup>85</sup> Arkle, D. (1995) A Review of the Present Position of the Lancashire Constabulary. Internal Report.



each tending to do their own thing rather than policing to a co-ordinated strategy. Cunningham's analysis of Lancashire Constabulary against the cultural web produced the following results: -

<b>Routines</b>	Importance of paperwork; communication by fixed hierarchical structures; limited horizontal communication; formality; team working.
<b>Rituals</b>	Deference to senior officers; saluting past heroes (detectives and those who were brave and strong-minded).
<b>Stories</b>	Stories of past arrests; stories of loyalties; stories of past mistakes;
<b>Symbols</b>	Officers' mess; uniform/badges of rank; senior officer car parking; HQ complex; police band.
<b>Power structures</b>	Centralised; duplicated work within hierarchies; centralised decision making; paternalistic; low risk.
<b>Control systems</b>	Public service spending controls; planning systems; bureaucratic procedures; procedure led.
<b>Organisational structures</b>	Hierarchical; departmentalised; small spans of control; separate police/civilian structures.

The value of this former research to this doctorate is found within the visible aspects of a constabulary's culture. Hierarchical structures, formality, low risk centralised decision making were all aspects of the probationer culture that highlighted and confirmed where in a typical police structure cultural change could focus. As well as applying the cultural web to the matter in hand, the work of Schein (1990)<sup>86</sup> also assists to highlight where a concerted enterprise should focus. Schein breaks down culture into three clear dimensions. In doing so he states that each dimension holds a

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<sup>86</sup> Schein, E. (1985) Ibid.

differing level of visibility. Those dimensions are: -

Artefacts and creations - which are visible but not decipherable.

Values - a greater level of awareness.

Basic assumptions - taken for granted yet highly visible.

### **Artefacts and creations**

- technology
- art
- visible and audible behaviour patterns

### **Values**

- testable in the physical environment
- testable only by social consensus

### **Basic assumptions**

- relationships to the environment
- nature of relativity - time and space
- nature of human nature
- nature of human activity

The analysis of the cultural web indicates that it was the 'basic assumptions' level of Schein's cultural analysis that appeared to be relevant to the accurate determinant of where the police service culture required improvement regarding assessment and development. This is especially relevant as



it is within the 'human nature' and 'human activity' spectrum that the culture of probationer assessment appears strongest.

It had become evident from focus groups throughout the country and meetings with managers in many forces, such as Dorset and West Mercia, that the police service required alterations at its visible levels of 'artefacts and creations', especially with regard to 'behaviour patterns'. It was hoped that such behaviour would be effective in altering the roots of the activity of those involved. There were also demands for alterations to both the 'values' and the 'basic assumption' levels. An example of a comment frequently proffered is: -

"It's not that we need to analyse what our lads do, we need to actually control what they do at work, this is a change they wont like."<sup>87</sup>

It was therefore prudent to analyse the national position of police probationer assessment and development, as it stood prior to the new PDP, against Schein's levels of culture.

### **Artefacts and creations**

The PDP artefacts and creations that existed prior to this research fell mainly into the 'visible and audible behaviour patterns' spectrum. Behavioural decisions on probationers' progress was spoken of in terms such as 'level two' decision and 'level three decision', representative of the decisions for patrolling and confirmation of appointment respectively. The two levels used were taken from the required standard on a Likert scale of behaviour that probationers were assessed against. It became the cultural norm for managers and tutor constables alike to refer to the performance level of a

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<sup>87</sup> Interview with superintendent, West Midlands Police. 1998.

probationer as being for example, 'level two'. This labelling became accepted even though the managers concerned were unlikely to be able to recall the performance statements contained in those levels; "there was an acceptance that 'probies' had reached the level we wanted, level two."<sup>88</sup> Thus, in confirmation of Schein's labelling of culture, there existed a visible yet indecipherable behavioural pattern that was difficult to actually analyse.

## **Values**

The training manager in one force, when discussing the new PDP and these assessment decisions, was resistant to losing these two labels, such was his reliance upon the cultural meaning. The visible behavioural labels had become entrenched into his professional mindset and values.

Although these behavioural statements were visible when examined closely, they were a source of his cultural resistance, not visible in practice to many independent observers. To further exemplify the importance of cultural values, the fact that the new PDP allowed no localised flexibility in the tasking of probationers again challenged the values of many training managers and tutor constables.

In the Sussex PDP trial, the feelings of the middle managers to whom the job of controlling the actions of police probationers and tutors fell, were often voiced at focus groups. The proposed change was from an apparently unstructured 'human activity' to one of structure and focus over a fixed time period. This was to be measured against specified performance criteria (core tasks) and gave rise to many debates where people spoke from cultural values and norms. One example of this was the comment: -

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with police sergeant, Preston (Lancs.). 1999.



“This new PDP requires ten weeks structured experience. My tutors have got into the habit of doing what they prefer over the tutor period and although I accept this allows many to have one week’s experience ten times, to change them will be difficult.”<sup>89</sup>

### **Basic assumptions**

To the managers of Hampshire and Sussex, this belief of the mindset of the tutors’ falls into the category of Schein’s cultural held values, and as the previous statement makes clear, this assumption is part of the cultural pattern of many forces. Supporting this assumption lie the values of the tutors, which are worthy of examination and should be treated as sets of individual beliefs. If face value comments offered during this research were to be accepted, evidence would suggest that the tutors would not accept the PDP changes and would resist this evolution of probationer development.

The use of trials in the three different forces during this research afforded clear opportunities to examine the attitude of tutors and to discover the relevant issues that actually existed within their cultural pattern. In doing so, the drivers required for positive change and the enhancement of police assessment could be highlighted for change in future management initiatives.

### **Penetrating existing cultures**

This analysis of the prevailing culture that could affect organisational development and the introduction of the new PDP, pointed towards a focus on the impact and energy available via tutor constables and tutor unit managers. The depth of cultural penetration required to effect change was

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with a rural forces training manager. 1999.

therefore resting at the 'performance' level and not the 'organisational level' as first attempted via ACPO.

Leavitt (1964)<sup>90</sup> argued that directing the required energy at any of four key points can change organisational culture. Those points are the people, the task, the technology and the structure. In practice the new PDP attempted to tackle three of these four points (people, task, and structure) in combination. In doing so, the desire was to execute a programme of change in a conscious and planned way. By targeting the PDP practitioners to guide and assist the necessary cultural changes, it was prudent to confirm the lack of a plan for structural changes to tutoring in the trial forces, therefore focusing upon a 'people' approach of behaviour modification as favoured by Huczynski. (1987).<sup>91</sup> Prior to this fact being made clear to all the participants in the research and focus group attendees, a frequent question from them was: -

“Is there a role for tutors and managers of tutor units, are we still important?”<sup>92</sup>

With that question answered, and the associated worries regarding the tutoring role discarded, it became easier to harness the energy of those people involved in the PDPs introduction and the subsequent cultural developments.

### **Tutor constables**

It is often argued that tutor constables play a major part in both setting the standards for new police constables and have an important part in setting cultural values, (Rouse 1998).<sup>93</sup> At the tutor

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<sup>90</sup> Leavitt, H. et al. (1964) Applied Organisational Change in Industry: Structural, Technical and Human Approaches - New Perspectives in Organisational Research. New York. Wiley.

<sup>91</sup> Huczynski, A. (1987) Encyclopaedia of Organisational Change Methods. Aldershot. Gower.

<sup>92</sup> Focus group, Hampshire, 1998.

<sup>93</sup> Rouse, P. (1998) The Future of Training Units. Bramshill. NPT.



constable stage of a new officer's career, the recruit is vulnerable and easily exposed to bad practice and procedural distortion. In the HMIC report on police integrity the HMI commented: -

“new starters go with the flow, it's part of the police culture”.<sup>94</sup>

The same HMIC report goes on to comment on the importance of the tutor constable in setting standards for police integrity stating that: -

“The service should recognise tutor constables are an essential element in starting police officers on the right road .....”<sup>95</sup>

Thus, following the principles of cultural change identified by Leavitt<sup>96</sup>, the decision was made to actively target tutor constables to effect the change required to the service wide culture brought about by the new PDP. To do so would also effect change at the ‘performance (grass roots) level’ of police culture, it was anticipated that this would have a greater visible effect upon employees than other attempts at communicating cultural change.

Schein's middle dimension of cultural visibility, ‘values,’<sup>97</sup> is stated as being testable in a physical environment and only then by social consensus. By targeting change and the management of change at tutors, the detectable symbols of change would be observed by other colleagues and therefore promoted and transmitted through the workplace. This direct approach was in stark contrast to the original option of promulgating change via the ACPO communication channels.

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<sup>94</sup> HMIC (1999) Police Integrity - Personnel and Training. Home Office. London.

<sup>95</sup> HMIC (1999) Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Leavitt, H. (1964) Op cit.

<sup>97</sup> Schein, E. (1985). Op Cit.

## **Existing cultural norms**

When de-briefing tutors who had worked on the trials, especially in Sussex and Hampshire, it was noticeable that there was a desire to generally adhere to existing practices and try to apply them to the new PDP. One such area for this was in the style of assessment. The previous style, theoretically, was for both probationer and tutor (or sergeant when the probationer was patrolling independently), to compile lengthy narrative assessments and for these to be compared. If these reports mirrored each other then the reflective skills of the probationer were deemed to be at the appropriate level. In practice, police culture led to a less challenging system. If the tutor felt that the probationer had done well the reports would be completed sequentially, probationer then tutor, thus the mirroring effect would be increased and this would confirm the development and suitability of the probationer.

This assessment practice would serve to reinforce the culture described by Handy (1995)<sup>98</sup> as a task culture, where the most important principles are individual autonomy and respect based upon ability. As Handy discovered, the main barrier for an organisation surviving under this cultural style is that when control requires to be exercised from the organisational centre, the task culture can often degenerate and become one of a power culture where individual charisma drives initiatives forward. Within the skills of those employees taking control of the power base, it is their level of skill and overall ability that becomes a deciding factor in any programme of change. Furthermore, interest is often focused on the end result and not the means of achieving it, which can lead to the organisation having an inappropriate strategic direction.

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<sup>98</sup> Handy, C. (1995) Understanding Organisations. Penguin. London.



This was seen to be the effect of the new PDP upon the thriving task based culture of police probationer development. The cultural norm of lengthy assessments and mirrored reports were set to disappear with the newly introduced PDP. In their place was to be a constantly recorded data capturing method that removed the need and facility for summative tutor / supervisor assessments. This change became perceived as a common adversary to tutor constables' norms and this fact alone threatened to change the culture to a resistant, dominant and negative power base in the constabularies being observed.

In Sussex, the potential for this shift was clearly observed in a focus group consisting of tutors and probationary constables. Having spent five weeks in the company of their tutors, the officers, tutors and probationers were brought together to analyse how the PDP had effected their work. One tutor had run the new PDP under the previous PDP assessment systems, using his natural style and charisma to overcome any critical observations from peers.

In doing so the combination of both styles led to an amalgam that suited neither old nor new. Upon de-briefing the five-week experience with other probationers, the officer subjected to this management style became critical of her missed opportunities to direct her own development through a formative assessment process. She observed that had she been able to do so, she would have had greater control over her own police development and ultimate destiny. She, as did many other commentators, desired the ability and 'bounded freedom' to direct, control and designate the key areas of her development. Although this latitude is key to the introduction of the PDP, it is only relevant if the boundaries for this freedom are set by the organisation, not individual maverick operators who retain an unnecessary power base.

## **Co-ordination in cultural change**

In contrast to Handy's definition of a 'person culture',<sup>99</sup> this person centred approach required a reduction in the autonomy of those involved. Gooch (1995)<sup>100</sup> noted that without such control any police project would create confusion, lead to a distinct lack of corporate direction and diminish any possible understanding of the new philosophy that was being introduced. Upon examining the culture of Lancashire Constabulary Arkle (1995) commented:-<sup>101</sup>

“Everyone tends to do their own thing rather than work together as a co-ordinated strategy, we often move away from each other or collide together.”

Within Lancashire, Sussex and other forces examined, it manifested that officers tasked with the development and assessment of probationary officers had to be diverted from forming their own dysfunctional culture whilst learning to adapt to, introduce and become proficient with the assessment style of the newer PDP. Schein (1984)<sup>102</sup> identified that in learning to cope with the problems of external adaptation and internal integration, a new culture would only form if the pattern of basic assumptions that the group invented or developed worked well enough to be considered valid. Furthermore Schein (1983)<sup>103</sup> had also identified that without a shared and common ideology, the organisational strength that would be generated to deal with inexplicable and uncontrollable emerging issues and anxieties would be compromised.

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<sup>99</sup> Handy, C. (1995) Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Gooch, G. Strategic Command Course Policing Plans Project. NPT. Hampshire.

<sup>101</sup> Arkle, D. (1995) Op. Cit.

<sup>102</sup> Schein, E. (1984) Coming to a New Awareness of Organisational Culture in Sloan Management Review Winter 1984. Sloan Management Review Organisation.

<sup>103</sup> Schein, E. (1983) The Role of the Founder in Creating Organisational Culture in Organisational Dynamics, Summer 1983. American Management Association.



Returning to Schein's model of cultural dimensions and visibility, the 'basic assumptions' level is stated as "stabilising much of the internal and external environment for the group as a defence against anxiety."<sup>104</sup> This research highlighted that it was attention to those 'basic assumptions' that existed within operational tutors, constables and sergeants that was required to effect the cultural change demanded by the new PDP. Only when systems, structures and processes were put into place that were robust enough to withhold the pressures brought to bear by change resistors did the culture of police probationer assessment begin to overtly represent a managed development.

### **Developing hearts and minds**

To affect the very heart of probationer assessment within policing, it emerged that changes to structures and systems were having little effect upon organisational development. However, these developments were necessary to support the primary change agents, that of cultural training and development, which would affect core values. Only when the culture that required developing as part of the organisational improvement was correctly identified, targeted and focused upon, did the true nature and scale of the opportunities that could be achieved actually manifest in the work environment. Without that accurate focus of attention any attempts at development that required a culture change, were frustrated by a lack of system or cultural resistance.

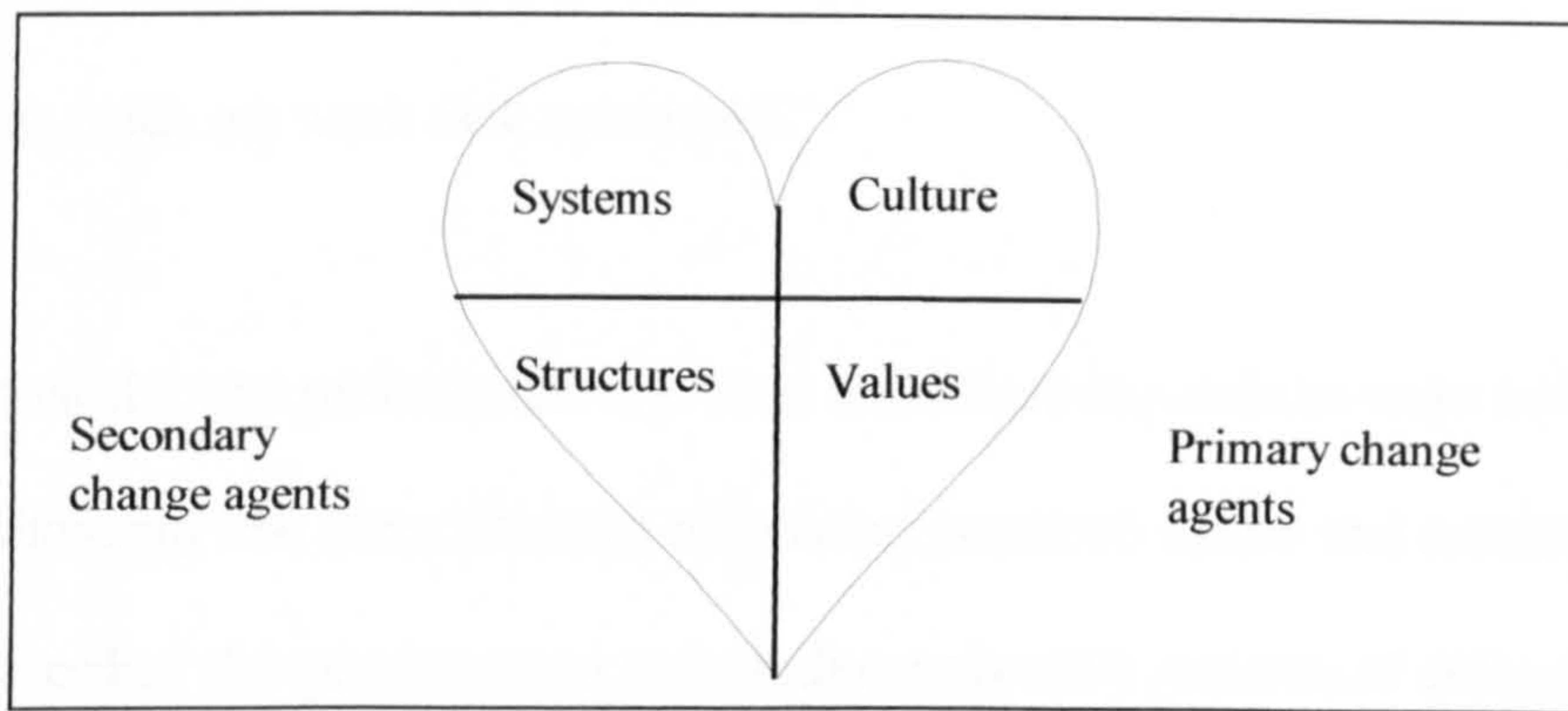
In the Hampshire trial this fact was clearly evidenced and important PDP data can be drawn from the differing stages of the trial group's development.

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<sup>104</sup> Schein, E. (1984) Op. Cit.



**Fig. 5 Organisational change through hearts and minds**



In Hampshire, as in all police forces following on from the trial, systems and structures were relatively easy to identify, adjust and put into place that would facilitate the new PDP's introduction into the establishment. Probationer development and recruiting officers (PDROs) were trained and briefed. Sergeants were identified, trained and given points of contact for any emerging difficulties with the new system. The need for officers to reflect on their performance and complete their PDPs in duty time was pointed out. The perceived benefits of the new system were highlighted to all stakeholders in the process. Without question, all participants agreed to 'give it a go.'

### **'Group think'**

At key stages over the eighteen month period of the Hampshire trial, the relevant officers were brought together for a focus group progress review. Throughout these focus groups, four in number, there was a high degree of negativity towards the work the officers were having to complete to become competent.

Comments were passed such as :-

"It's too time consuming."



“There are not enough policing skills areas covered.”

“It has made my work task orientated.”

It appeared that the trial probationers and their immediate supervisors were not fully embracing the new PDP philosophy and were adhering to existing practiced values and norms as a group. Janis (1972)<sup>105</sup> described this phenomenon as including collective patterns of defensive avoidance, the suppression of worrisome defects and reliance on shared rationalisations.

Of particular note regarding the theory of ‘group think’ is the notion of scapegoating. This manifested in Hampshire, amongst all the PDRO’s, who saw the Constabulary or the new PDP as culpable regarding the extra time it was taking officers to reflect and complete their PDPs. This became over the trial period a major issue of concern amongst the managers of the PDP process. As the trial progressed the strength of feeling amongst these officers became quite profound. It appeared that they felt invincible and free from organisational pressures to adhere to the PDP system, which was highlighted when an officer stated:-

“My PDRO has told me that I do not need to reflect, action plan and record evidence, I just need to get the tasks done as best I can.”<sup>106</sup>

This concept of group members feeling invulnerable is another common trait of ‘group think’ as espoused by Janis. ‘Group think’ was feeding into and forming part of the trial group sub-culture within Hampshire. The effect of altering that culture and reducing the power of ‘group think’ is

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<sup>105</sup> Janis, I. (1972) Victims of Group Think. Boston USA. Houghlin Mifflin.

<sup>106</sup> Interview with a Hampshire probationer during trial de-brief focus group.

therefore inherently significant when implementing the PDP changes into the hearts and minds of subsequent PDP stakeholders.

At the final focus group of trial officers, all but one had successfully completed their PDP targets. Although the focus group information may have been tempered by a sense of elation at this achievement, there was a noticeable swing in the attitude of the officers towards PDP completion, reflective practice and when these PDP requirements should take place. In a questionnaire that all twelve officers completed the final question stated simply “The PDP is worth it”. Respondents were asked to take into account all their feelings, knowledge and personal experiences of the PDP during their probationary period when answering the question. The trial group went on to answer that they agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case.

In one to one tutorial interviews, all the officers stated that due to organisational pressures both culturally and operationally, they preferred to complete their PDP reflections at home. They viewed its completion as a measure of their professionalism and there were frequent comments that supported one officer’s statement:-

“I cannot work out why everyone is against doing this [the PDP] at home. Its not a problem, if we [the service] want to be seen as professional let’s be that, professional. There are not many professions that rely on a strict eight hour day.”<sup>107</sup>

The evidence from the trial clearly challenged the collective thoughts that emerged from the ‘group think’ philosophy. The effect of ‘group think’ upon the trial group police probationers had a

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<sup>107</sup> Interview with a Hampshire probationer during trial de-brief focus group.



marked effect upon their spirit and clarity of thought; it was only when they were free of the constraints of trial pressures and close supervision that these officers rejected this concept. Brown (1998)<sup>108</sup> states that 'group think' is more common in organisations where people work in an arena of conformity and have attention placed upon them whilst in small groups.

This is most certainly the case with this trial, but as the new PDP is introduced nationally these are facts that all police forces should remain sensitive to. Brown<sup>109</sup> suggests that organisations need to ensure that they take adequate measures to ensure against 'group think'. As part of the implementation strategy that transpired from this trial, assistance on this phenomenon has been included for all police forces within more general PDP guides.

It is important, as evidenced in the Hampshire trial, that all future users of the PDP are engaged in cultural change. They and their managers need to feel part of a complete process and they should recognise that this process is designed to take place over one hundred and two weeks. Kanter (1984)<sup>110</sup> recommended that in attempting to change corporate culture in such a manner, all the people involved should be allowed to feel part of a whole process rather than identifying with the issues existing within a brief moment or project part.

### **Police culture, change and the new PDP**

To effect cultural change within police assessment, the focus of attention transferred during this research from the cultural 'strategic level' (ACPO) to the 'performance level' of the tutor constable. In doing so, this fact has led to re-analysis of the 'cultural triangle'. Cultural developments in the

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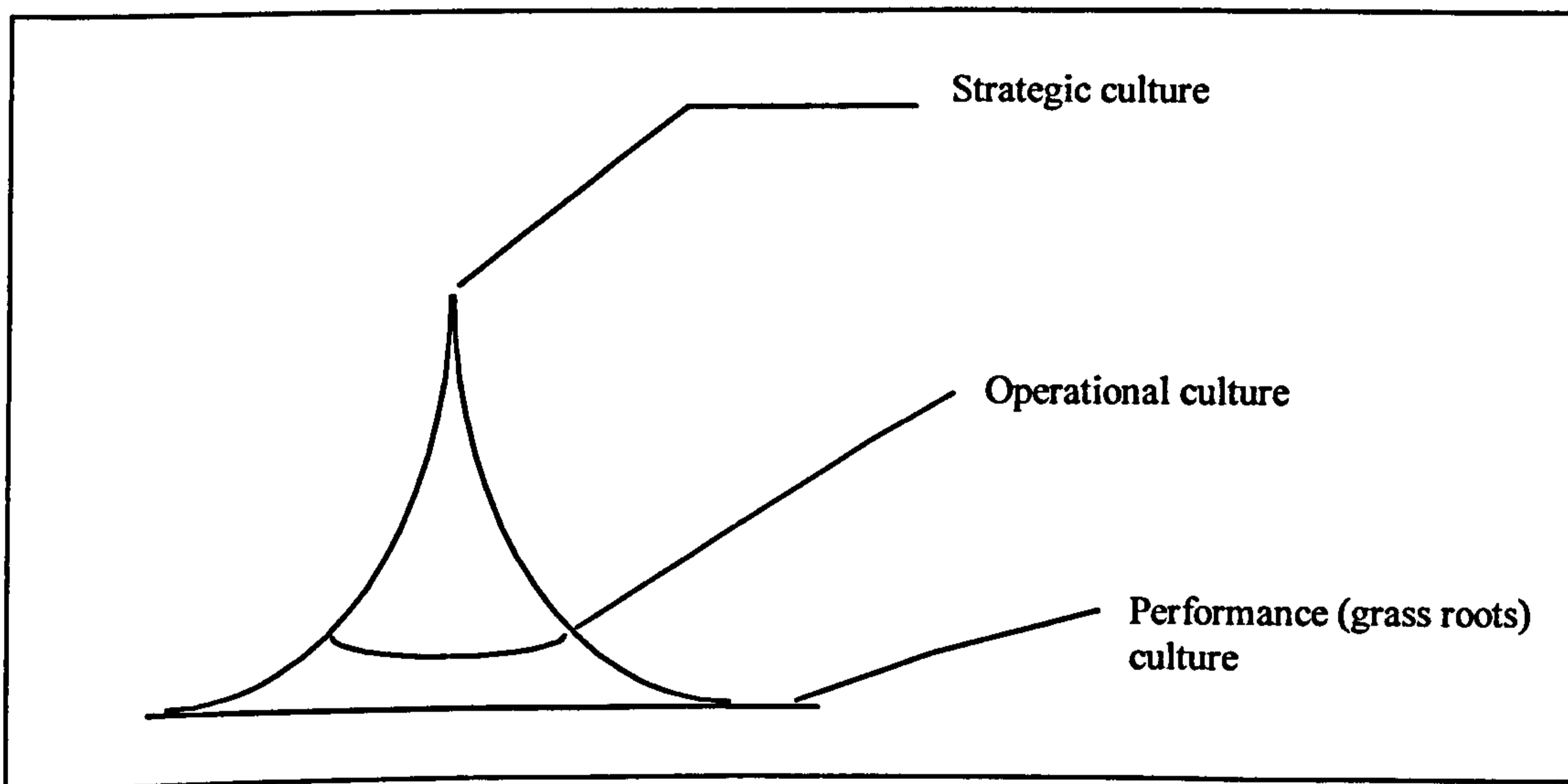
<sup>108</sup> Brown, A. (1998) Organisational Culture. London. Pitman.

<sup>109</sup> Brown, A. (1998) Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Kanter, R. (1984) The Change Masters. London. Allen and Unwin.

area being examined required inductive processes of change, allowing participants to become part of the progression rather than having matters imposed upon them too overtly. Where the cultural triangle focused attention on the perceived wide spread of strategic ACPO control and highlighted the sharp crucial performance element as a minority, the truth of the matter is that to be totally effective with cultural change for police assessment the triangle should actually appear inverted.

**Fig. 6 The inverted cultural triangle**



Change within the police force is both inevitable and perpetual and as such it requires managing in an informed manner. This management becomes a greater and more demanding task if the alteration is to take place at the 'grass root' level where the span of control and the enormity of the task is extreme.

Despite this investigation of the relevant issues, the influences and nuances of culture within the police force cannot be totally planned or predicted. Fincham and Rhodes (1992)<sup>111</sup> stated that cultures are the natural products of social interaction, however it is believed that through accurate

<sup>111</sup> Fincham, R and Rhodes P. (1992) The Individual, Work and Organisation. Oxford. Oxford University Press.



analysis of the core cultural issues the negative effect of unforeseen cultural concerns can be minimised. Morgan (1986)<sup>112</sup> identified that evolving cultures can be influenced by managers by them being aware of the symbolic consequences of their actions and by attempting to foster the desired values. It is recognised that such insights, as outlined in this thesis, cannot and will not ever provide an easy formula for solving the difficulties of change that many in the police service would desire.

Schein (1984) states that with regard to managing cultural developments in these contexts:-

“theories of organisational change will have to give more attention to the opportunities and constraints that organisational culture provides. In sum, the understanding of organisational culture would then become integral to the process of management itself.”<sup>113</sup>

Furthermore, without a commitment to improving performance through the PDP and its associated principles on the part of probationers and first line assessors, any changes that are achieved to the corporate culture are short lived. If, however, these changes can be made in the hearts and minds of those involved through cultural modifications and the totality of the ‘cultural web’ is altered then the PDP changes can become effective at a macro level. To be totally effective within the police service culture that currently exists, any approaches to cultural change require targetting at the wider ‘performance culture’ where the effect can be implimented without the frustrations of bureacracy and poor communications. ‘Organisational culture’ is a blanket expression used to describe a broad range of often intangible societal and organisational trends. For the new PDP

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<sup>112</sup> Morgan, G. (1986) Images of Organisation. Beverley Hills. Sage.

<sup>113</sup> Schein, E. (1984) Op cit.

practices to succeed, the importance and locations of these cultural phenomenon required to be suitably identified. With that task completed, and only then, could the new style of assessment and development of police probationers improve the service delivery standards of the police overall.

Geertz (1973)<sup>114</sup> states that the person who desires to be the catalyist of change, and wants to discover exactly what a science such as a culture actually is, he should look not at its theories and findings, but at what the practitioners of it do. The changes to the culture of police assessment that the PDP brings about may begin to open peoples minds and increase autonomy at the appropriate decision making levels, whilst at the same time providing an overall framework for reducing confusion within the assessment systems in existance. This form of 'uncertainty avoidance' is commented on (Hofstede, 1980)<sup>115</sup> as having a positive effect upon problem solving as employees seek to express themselves honestly and confront organisational problems from a more secure and rationalised foundation.

It is within that cultural context, and the police environment of hopefully diminishing uncertainty that the new style of probationer assessment, via the PDP is offered and introduced. The importance of understanding the 'culture' at the time of implementation has been proven to be profound and vital. With this understanding the nuances of police officers, the stratification of the meaningful structures of assessment and development can be observed, recognised and where appropriate acted upon. Without this awareness the role, to whoever it falls, of implementing this new approach to probationer assessment and development would without doubt be cumbersome and problematical.

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<sup>114</sup> Geertz, C. (1973) Interpretation of Cultures. Hutchinson. New York.

<sup>115</sup> Hofstede, G. (1980) Cultural Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values. Beverley Hills, USA. Sage.



## Chapter five

### Competency

**“No matter how much psychologists show that some tests work, people don’t use them unless the tests make sense to them”<sup>116</sup>**

#### Defining competence

As a method of assessment, ‘competency’ is perhaps still regarded in some circles as new and challenging; this is especially true within the police service. The lack of clearly defined assessment levels, e.g. an examination mark, leaves some supervisors and managers struggling with the concept. This is recognised by the Management Charter Initiative (MCI) which states: -

**“Personal competence is less tangible than some of the actual technical parts of your work, but it is none the less valuable.”<sup>117</sup>**

There are many schools of thought regarding ‘competence’. How competence is conceived in the mindset of any practitioner will make a considerable difference to the ways in which competency standards are used and assessed. In any research, it is of paramount importance to explore the existing definitions that surround the subject and draw such inferences as appear appropriate. It is clear that the social phenomenon of the Competency Movement within the UK has transformed the ways in which society “selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates vocational

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<sup>116</sup> McClelland, D. (1997) Understanding Competencies (in IRS Competency, Volume 4, Number 3, pg 18). IRS. London.

<sup>117</sup> MCI. (1999) Personal Competence Model London. MCI.

knowledge.”<sup>118</sup> Competency, as a tool for organisations, is therefore firmly rooted in modern workplace cultures and clearly available for use within the police service.

Before examining and making observations regarding competency in the modern police service it is pertinent to examine the ground that has been covered within the past decade in this area. Prior to the Scarman report (1985) and the associated changes to police culture and police training, managers within the service had greater flexibility and, therefore, greater use of subjectivity in recruit selection and internal postings. In 1985 Burbeck founded a list of attributes most suited to recruits in the service. It is surprising to note that most of these were not directly measurable and some just cannot possibly exist within the climate of the current police employment philosophy; this is especially true of the twenty first entry on the list of thirty two attributes, that of being “heterosexual.”<sup>119</sup> This work also went on to suggest that some attributes were easier to confidently judge than others; included in this was “good bearing” and “sociable personality”. It is perhaps due to such subjective and potentially discriminatory beliefs within police selection that the rise of, and shift towards accurate and measurable competency statements has come about. This chapter examines the results of the research into ‘competence’ and outlines a relevant, theoretical, competency framework structure for the police.

In any work that focuses on ‘competency’, the semantics surrounding the many and varied uses of the word cause a great deal of confusion. Rowe (1995)<sup>120</sup> attempted to clarify the situation with a simple, yet effective, English lesson. He defines ‘competence’ as a skill and standard of performance to be reached, and ‘competency’ as the behaviour by which this is achieved. Thus, the

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<sup>118</sup> Bernstein, B. (1971) On the classification and framing of educational knowledge (in Young, M. (ed) *Knowledge and Control*. London. Collier Macmillan.

<sup>119</sup> Burbeck, E. (1985) The Recruit Selection Interview *Police Journal*. Volume 58, Number 3, pgs 233-242.

<sup>120</sup> Rowe, C. (1995) Clarifying the use of competence and competency models in *Industrial and Commercial Training*, Volume 27, Number 11, pp 12-17. MCB Press.



plurals of these words give rise to further definitions. “Competences refer to the range of skills which are satisfactorily performed; while ‘competencies’ refer to the behaviours adopted in competent performance.”<sup>121</sup> Therefore, competences measure **what** is done and competencies measure **how** this is done. Other writers and users of competence, such as the Management Charter Initiative (MCI), go further in the debate and attempt to define the application of these definitions. Care has to be taken at this point as the debate can become endless and confusing, ordinarily practitioners often struggle to determine the subtle differences between behaviour and an occupational skill.

Competency based assessment concentrates on the outcome of performance and since performance constitutes a series of tasks, competency standards are often perceived as simply a series of discreet task descriptions. Within policing this research discovered a tendency to view tasks as a pure checklist to be accomplished within a given time frame. The danger of assessment becoming so ‘task focussed’ is that the broader aspects of performance, such as planning or reacting to contingencies, are left out of the picture. When competency statements are then used within training, recruitment and selection strategies, these broader aspects of the role are omitted and important human resource strategies become narrow and lack organisational relevance. To resolve this predicament Hager and Gonczi (1996) suggest viewing competence as “possession of a series of desirable attributes including knowledge of appropriate sorts, skills and abilities such as problem solving, analysis, communication, pattern recognition, etc. and attitudes of appropriate kinds.”<sup>122</sup> This resolution suggests a further clouding of the competence issue. Whereas other writers (Fletcher 1992) focus on clearly determined barriers between behaviour and occupational outcomes,

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<sup>121</sup> Rowe, C. (1995) Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Hager, P and Gonczi, A. (1996) What is Competence (in Medical Teacher, Volume 18, Number 1, 1996.) Journals Oxford Ltd.

this approach appears to mix the two issues into an amalgam that for assessment purposes would further confuse non-learned practitioners.

The origins of competency tend to be traced back to Boyatzis. His definition (1982) when applied in the current assessment context serves to complicate matters further by being extremely broad.

He states that competency is “an underlying characteristic of an individual which is causally related to effective or superior performance in a job.”<sup>123</sup> McClelland (1996) states that competency can be traced back to the USA where the word was originally used to replace the narrower term ‘skill’.

His historical perspective is seen to relate to behaviour, defining this as an act or series of behavioural acts that compliment pure skills.

### **Behaviour or technical ability?**

#### **Behaviourist model**

Gonczi (1994) split overall competency into three differing concepts, those of behaviourist, generic and holistic approaches. His work is worthy of detailed examination as it attempts to define competence issues and observes relevance within a professional discipline. The behaviourist concept breaks down the job in question into discreet behaviours associated with the completion of atomised tasks. By having clear unambiguous competencies there can be no disagreement about what comprises a satisfactory performance. Within this concept of competence, as defined, there is little regard for the processes that occur with the coming together of these tasks. There is a presumption that the whole is not greater than the sum of all parts.

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<sup>123</sup> Boyatzis, R. (1982) The Competent Manager New York. Wiley.



Evidence of competence can only really be gained from direct observation of performance in the work place. Of this Gonczi observes:-

“It is positivist, reductionist, ignores underlying attributes, ignores group processes and their effect on performance, is conservative, atheoretical, ignores the complexity of performance in the real world and ignores the role of professional judgement in intelligence performance. Clearly this approach is inappropriate for conceptualising professional work and there are very serious doubts about its relevance to work at any level.”<sup>124</sup>

Jones and Moore (1995) explore this style of competence further and state that the functional analysis style as well as appearing regressive, counters the trend in virtually every other research area where the movement is towards models of interaction between individuals and their workplace socialisation. Jones and Moore state of this concept of competence:-

“It is probably fair to say that it is only within the current competency movement that it retains any credibility.”<sup>125</sup>

Within this concept of competence sit those espoused by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's).

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<sup>124</sup> Gonczi, A. (1994) Competency based assessment in the professions in Australia (in *Assessment in education*, Volume 1, number 1, pp 27-44).

<sup>125</sup> Jones, L. and Moore, R. (1995) Appropriating competence: the competency movement (in *British Journal of Competency and Work*, Volume 8, number 2). 1995.

## **Generic model**

Gonczi's second concept is the 'generic model'. This approaches the subject with a suite of general attributes that are critical to effective performance. In doing so it concentrates on non-contextualised aspects of performance which when developed can be allegedly transferred to any given situation. The major opprobrium in this concept is the validity of transferability and the danger of decontextualising competence away from tangible situations in which skills are exercised.

## **Holistic model**

The third approach to competence highlighted by Gonczi, is one that is supported by many practitioners, such as Jones and Moore (1995).<sup>126</sup> In this he seeks to marry a general attributes approach to the actual context in which they will be employed. Thus the situation becomes complex combining attitudes and behaviour with knowledge and the values of the individual. This form of competency measurement is fundamentally relational and can, at best, only offer a test of ability within a narrowly defined context.

## **Interactions within competency**

Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald (1990) declare competency as "the virtues unique to each individual which are expressed in the process of interacting with others in a given social context."<sup>127</sup> They suggest that their definition doesn't limit competency to knowledge and skills, nor to expected behaviours; they state that competence occurs when "personal (inherent to the self) and situational (contextual - social, political etc.) factors interact."<sup>128</sup> To successfully adopt a competency framework under this approach it is suggested that organisations need to adopt competency in their

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<sup>126</sup> Jones, L. and Moore, R. (1995) Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Antonacopoulou, E and Fitzgerald, L. (1990) Reframing competency in Management Development in Human Resource Management Journal. Volume 6. Number 1.

<sup>128</sup> Antonacopoulou, E and Fitzgerald, L. (1990) Ibid.



policies and practices and not merely as a particular style of classification (such as MCI).

If the interest with competency truly lies in a drive towards improvement in assessment and performance management, as Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald suggest, then the behaviour of employees, both actual and expected by the employer must surely be explicit and visible in any framework. This is especially pertinent within the policing context as managers and assessors frequently require clear pragmatic performance statements upon which to base their assessment of subordinate staff. The contextual aspect of competency within this definition is side stepped and therefore not capable of satisfying the current requirements of the police service.

Given the complexity of policing, the factors that govern the environment in which that duty takes place and the fact that working within the police force is a public service, it becomes clear that the working definition of competency (to be used in any subsequent framework) requires defining within the context of that function.

Kandola (1996) suggests that the answer lies in combining behavioural approaches with occupational approaches to get the best results for an organisation. To do this, she suggests that competencies focus on the organisation's competence, "namely those areas that the organisation is good at."<sup>129</sup> In this approach it is advocated that the organisation's key goals and vision are identified and broken down into behaviour; it is then appropriate to develop individual's competencies against this backdrop. In doing this the competencies become "the glue that binds the organisation together."<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Kandola, B. (1996) Are Competencies too much of a good thing? (in People Management, 2 May 1996, pg 21).

<sup>130</sup> Kandola, B. (1996) *Ibid.*

In the policing environment due to public accountability and desired credibility this becomes an extremely relevant method of defining competence. Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald agree with the sentiment of this statement when they review the purposes of a competency framework. They state that a framework should be capable of being “ a system which draws input from organisational plans and delivers outputs in the form of concomitant performance in staff.”<sup>131</sup> The political drive for comparable policing standards within the United Kingdom would certainly not fully support such individuality even though such a framework could be based on their individual operational plans. This is likely to become more germane as the Home Secretary loses some political control due to the ‘policing / planning dichotomy’ outlined earlier. To be generic across the forty three forces, a framework cannot afford to be solely drawn from separate operational policing plans and objectives. Dulwicz (1989)<sup>132</sup> suggests that within competencies, firm and specific competencies represent only thirty per cent of the total basket, whilst the remaining seventy per cent represent more general requirements. This leads him to suggest that “with more research and some unity of purpose, it should be possible to produce a universal model.”<sup>133</sup> It is prudent to assume therefore that adopting such a ruling within a framework for the police, may serve the needs for individuality whilst allowing for generality across the nation.

Thus far the issues have focused on the individual within an organisation and an element of framework enhancement from the organisation. Belbin (1981)<sup>134</sup> suggested that organisations benefit if the individual is performing in a team that has the correct balance of attributes, skills and knowledge. By focusing on either the individual or the organisation, or any combination of the two,

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<sup>131</sup> Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald. Op. Cit.

<sup>132</sup> Dulwicz, V. (1989) Assessment centres as a route to competence. Personnel Management November 1989, pp 56-59.

<sup>133</sup> Dulwicz, V. (1989) Op cit.

<sup>134</sup> Belbin, M. (1981) Management teams, why they succeed or fail. Butterworth-Heinemann. London.



the important dimension of the team is perhaps overlooked. Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald<sup>135</sup> conclude, “individual definition of competencies may not lead to effective teamwork.”

Secondly, individually defined competencies do not help the organisation to judge the contribution of one individual to the outcome of a group activity.”<sup>136</sup> The role of the team and the individual as a component of a team, however, should not be left to be managed by a competency framework. This is clearly a role of the first line supervisor who should have an overview of the workings of the subordinate team and should assess individual’s contributions accordingly. Being part of a team may be a function of behaviour, but it is not the sole driver to effective performance.

### **Competency requirements for the police service**

Overall competent performances are complex sets of processes, not totally dependent on an individual, nor totally dependent upon the organisation served. Clearly however, the setting for the performance, the working context, does and will have a significant influence on any relevant assessment of work. As a result of this research it has become clear that within the overall national portrayal of policing there are a number of key factors that will form a successful competency framework.

The individual’s requirements for competence should be stated and subsequently assessed. In doing so this should take the form of behavioural measurement, work placed skills and a union of these should occur within contextualised work placed activities.

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<sup>135</sup> Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald. Op cit.

<sup>136</sup> Antonacopoulou and Fitzgerald. Op cit.

Behavioural elements, as espoused by Boyatzis and McClelland should be utilised to accurately manage and assess the conduct of police employees who are generally high profile and very visible public servants. The behavioural requirements of the police service are often quite clear and displayed by the organisation publicly, through the media and within the organisation in the form of Home Office Circulars, appraisal forms and many other internal communication forms. The expected use of behaviour within the service should be explicit and clear. Those behaviours used should represent the current actual and desired conduct for all employees. This research included lengthy meetings with occupational psychologists from both within and outside the police service. With due regard to previous research and as a result of this research the preferred interpretation of behaviour recommended to the police should therefore be:-

Characteristics and abilities that you can observe someone doing, or that can be developed through feedback. These must be usable in appraisal, assessment and through feedback, the influence of change.

It should be made quite clear within any suites of behavioural competencies that it is for every employee, not just those sworn into the police service. This point was reiterated by a traffic warden in Swansea<sup>137</sup> who said: -

“This list of behaviour should be for all employees of the police. I’m as much on the ‘front line’ as any constable and I want to be part of the same organisation.”

Using behaviour in an explicit form within a competency framework should not exclude other

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<sup>137</sup> Non attributed quote in focus group. Swansea Police Station. March 1999.



measurements of competence. Some writers make clear distinctions (Rowe, Kandola) between behaviour and any other form of competence. Other writers (Gonczi) bring all forms and definitions of competence together. This research has discovered a need for the police to have clear boundaries drawn around the components of competence. The environment for policing is increasingly demanding clear standards for all policing functions. These standards are emerging as clusters of tasks, 'competences' to utilise Rowe's definition. Throughout the service, when all Chief Constables were contacted, the replies that emanated confirmed this requirement for clear and unambiguous standards.

The National Crime Faculty, ACPO (Traffic), The Metropolitan Police Service and many others, at the time of this research, were all in the process of writing such standards. Due to developments in their use competences should be a principal dimension of any police framework for competency. To remove any misunderstandings caused by the debate around semantics, these 'skills', previously referred to as the 'what is done' should be designated the label 'occupational standards'. This designated label should then be defined as: -

The description of outcomes expected from the performance of professionally related functions, or knowledge, skills, values and attitudes deemed to be essential to the performance of those functions.

By adopting this definition, the behaviour expected of an employee is quite disconnected from the function of the employee as measured in outcomes. This is perhaps worthy of explanation by use of an example that occurred whilst carrying out this research.

“I approached the reception desk in the entrance to my overnight accommodation. The receptionist approached the desk and asked my name. She neither smiled nor entered into pleasantries. In a brusque manner she gave me a form to fill in and a key to my room. She then asked questions regarding my car. These questions were of a closed nature, delivered in monotone and my answers were, in my opinion, not really actively listened to. I left the reception area with clear instructions regarding my car and breakfast and a bitter taste in my mouth regarding how I had been treated.”

The analysis of this event allows two separate components of competency to be identified. Firstly, in terms of occupational standards it was the receptionist’s job to give out room keys, record vehicle details and make guests aware of catering arrangements. To that end the receptionist was ‘competent’. Secondly the behaviour can be identified. In terms of oral communication, active listening, representation of the organisation’s philosophy on customer focus, it was clear that this employee had significant development needs. Regarding behaviour, this employee was not competent.

Policing uses many components of competence from other work disciplines. Accreditation of qualifications is utilised when employees are brought into the organisation from other disciplines. Within this research the use of national awards was identified for civilian front counter staff (Thames Valley Police), and the requirement for all middle managers to have accredited MCI awards in Northumbria Police was also noticed. The findings of focus groups pointed continually to police employee’s genuine belief that these qualifications only went part of the way to outlining competence. Coupled with a detailed analysis of behaviour there was still a belief that the missing



dimension was that of the complexity of the policing context. A police trainer put this into words by stating: -

“Where else does an employee, when giving directions on the street to a member of the public, have to wear a bullet and stab proof vest in case the situation turns to one of disorder; where else is there an automatic responsibility to become an effective and knowledgeable problem solver when all around are frightened and panicking?”<sup>138</sup>

Policing has its own unique context for behaviour to be measured and the ability to perform tasks to be assessed. This context makes policing stand alone within its competence framework. Policing therefore, should re-define competency and utilise all three of these dimensions in doing so. Furthermore, policing should acknowledge that as the politics of performance are recognised more and more within daily duty, the sole purpose of any competence framework should be to support the visible goals of the organisation.

The overriding outcome of this research, ascertained from interviews, focus groups and desk top research suggests a competency framework for policing as one that:-

Calls upon contextually based;

- behavioural standards,
- occupational standards,

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<sup>138</sup> From an interview with a police sergeant, Cumbria, 1998.

- organisational and individual values and ethics,

all which have increasing performance as their mutual goal.

When these elements are represented visually they form three dimensions of competency which build together in the following manner:-

**Fig. 7**

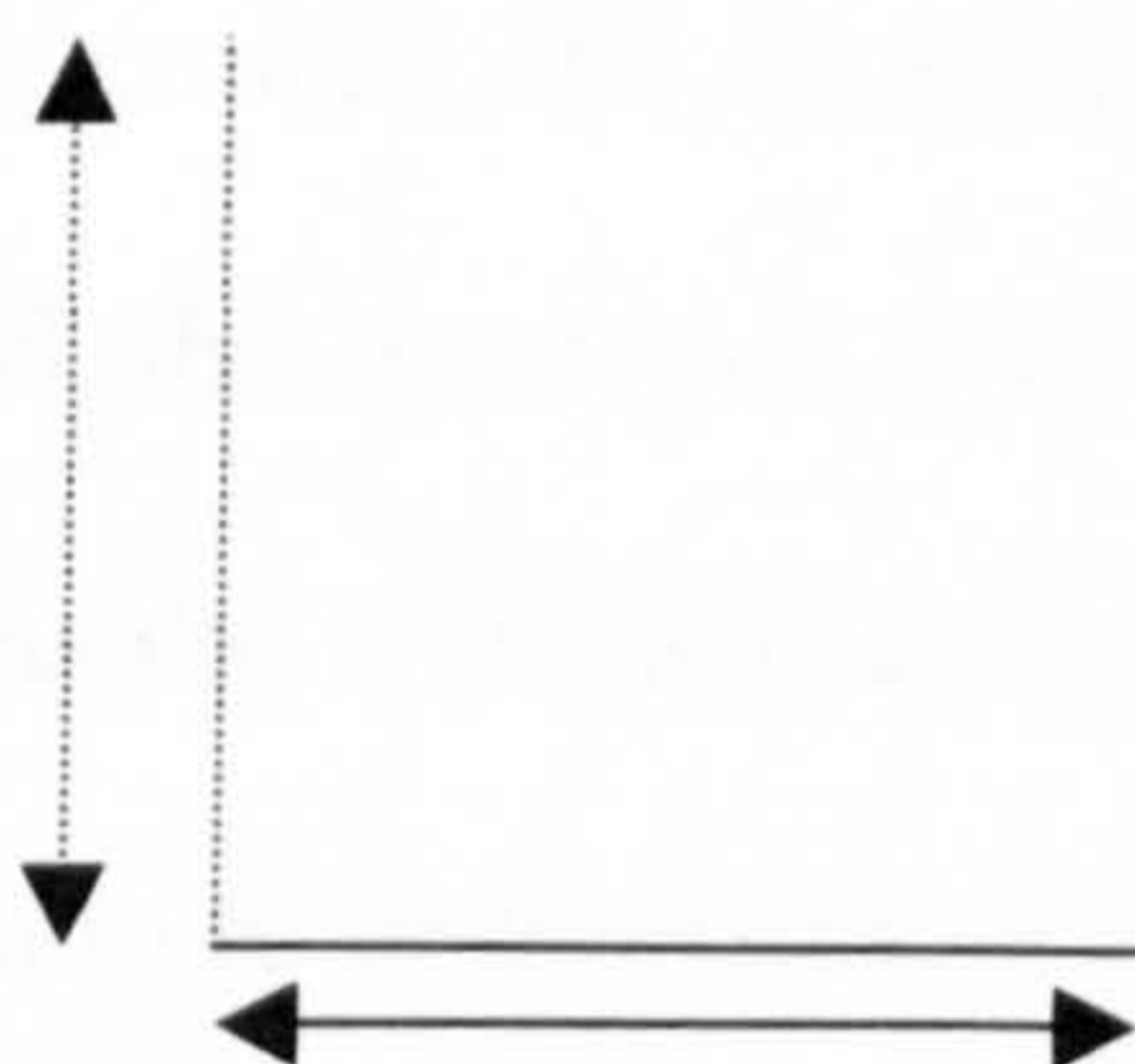
**First dimension**

The core skills give police officers an assessed range of ability regarding behavioural standards

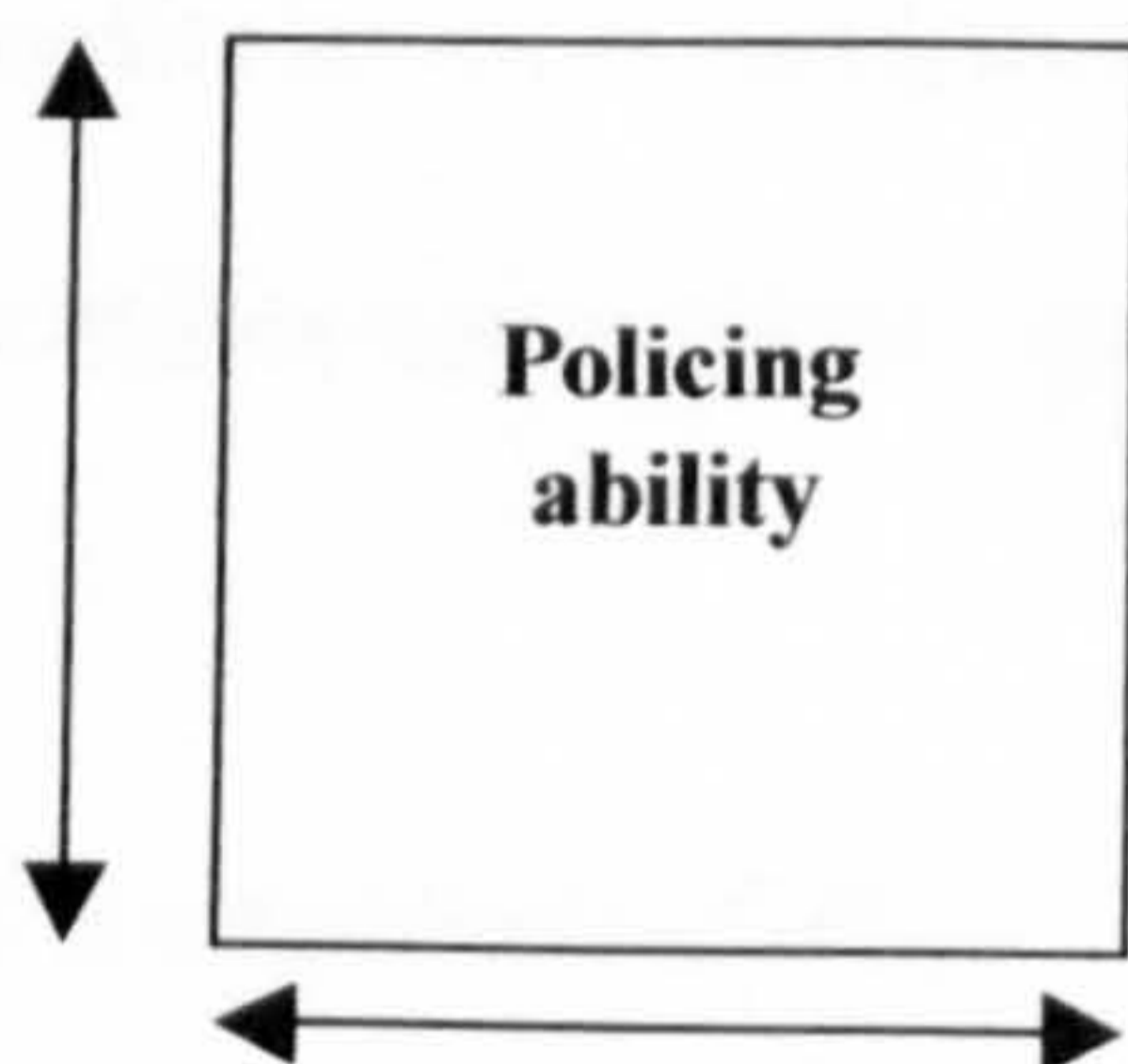


**Second dimension**

The core tasks add on to these to give a breadth of experience



To complete the all round picture this becomes a square incorporating the skills and tasks. This is perhaps shallow and without any depth



**Policing ability**

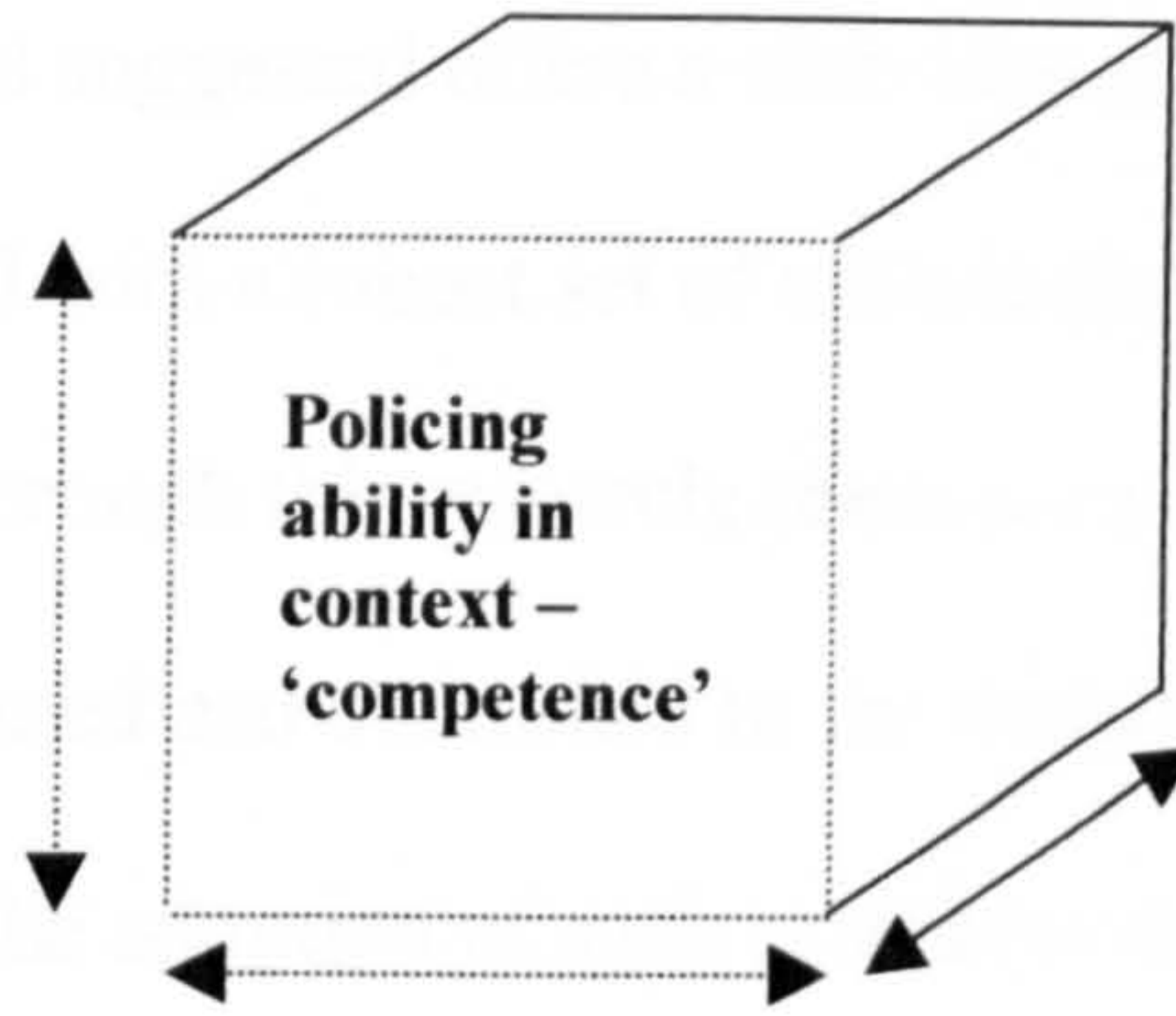
Skills and tasks are assessed, e.g. how we communicate when under the pressure of arresting a burglar



### Third dimension

The addition of the different contexts of policing add that depth which is vital to all round policing ability – also known as competence

The contexts of policing give the depth to the policing taking place



The application of this model to police officers and civilian employees should be based along harmonious paths. However, there is a clear need to recognise the considerable focus on personal development within a police constable's first two years, i.e. the probationary period. That recognition manifests within the context and occupational standards element of the emerging three dimensional model. To that end, the developed framework for probationary constables differs from that of other police employees as the focus is placed heavily on individual development, often at the expense of performance in relation to organisational priorities.

There are also many further benefits to an organisation adopting a competence model as an assessment tool. Fletcher<sup>139</sup> identifies some advantages as being: -

- Staff will know exactly what is expected of them
- Assessment systems can be used to identify training needs
- Standards will be accessible to all staff to enable continuous development to take place

<sup>139</sup> Fletcher, S. (1994) NVQs Standards and Competence. Kogan Page. Guildford.

- Supervisors and line managers can all become involved in workplace assessment

The three dimensional model suggested offers a clear design for a competency framework for the police. When this is coupled with a robust set of criteria for all the relevant dimensions in the model, as have manifested through this research, there is an opportunity for the performance of the individual officers to be directed and controlled to the mutual benefits of the officer and the organisation served alike. The adoption of such principles with the highlighted benefits should therefore result in an increased service quality to the public that is served by the police force.



## Chapter 6

### Development and performance within the probation

**“The development, via evolution, of a relatively large brain has provided us with an enormous mental capacity which has meant that learning has displaced instinct. Learning is also central to the explanation of behaviour in the workplace, where individuals need to acquire every specific response and skill to carry out the tasks that make up their jobs.”<sup>140</sup>**

The probationary period is for any police officer the genesis of what should be a thirty year career. Policing is one of few occupations that does not have fixed term contracts for all employees, and is an occupation that to date has not suffered, nor is it likely to suffer, from redundancies. It is therefore extremely important that the foundations laid within those first two years are solid and capable of supporting the future of the individuals concerned. Woodward (1996) argued that with regard to the need for a reliable dawn in a career: -

**“..there is no longer any serious argument that initial professional education alone is adequate to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills needed for their lifetime’s employment.”<sup>141</sup>**

The longevity trials conducted during this research clearly discovered that investment in an officer by middle managers in the organisation is often seen as a short-term inconvenience with little reward for policing operations, not as a long-term investment. This pattern of poor investment was

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<sup>140</sup> Fincham, R. and Rhodes, P. (1992) The Individual, Work and Organisation. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

<sup>141</sup> Woodward, I. Continuous Professional Development.

often repeated throughout the country resulting in, at best, mixed results amongst police probationer standards. This chapter outlines how the new PDP increases the strength of those foundations. It also details the processes now advocated nationally as best practice. The approach taken by the system that grew from this research, and became the PDP philosophy, is perhaps encapsulated in the question asked by Pfeffer (1998) when reviewing the key to organisational growth: -

“When you look at your people, do you see intelligent, motivated, trustworthy individuals – the most critical and valuable assets your organisation can have?”<sup>142</sup>

Previous research by National Police Training (1996) found that during the two, five week tutored elements of police officers training, which took place on operational duties, recruits were often suffering from unstructured experiences. It was not unusual for a recruit to experience ‘one week’s policing five or ten times’. This was especially prevalent in policing areas that regarded police recruits as a resource and saw them as a number to fill duty rosters. This was found to be the case in the West Midlands Police during this research where probationers were suffering from a lack of development opportunity as a result of policy. West Midlands Police, a large force covering both urban Birmingham and parts of rural Warwickshire, suffers greatly from a shortage of human resource with which to police the streets. To overcome this the short-term resolution was found to be the utilisation of probationers as the second crew member in response cars. During the tutorship period the probationer and the tutor, the response car driver, perform the operational role as dictated by incoming policing commitments. One officer involved in the research later stated:-

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<sup>142</sup> Pfeffer, J. (1998) The Human Equation. Boston USA. Harvard Business School Press.



“The tutor period didn’t prepare me for what was coming in any way at all. All of a sudden I was in a strange area, doing a strange job, on my own; I found this change very confusing and unsettling.”<sup>143</sup>

For some forces, such as Hampshire and West Midlands, the focus of the tutor period is on meeting operational demands at the expense of the development of the recruit. Upon successfully completing this phase of their ‘development’ the probationer would normally be deemed fit for independent patrol and placed on solo duties. This decision to patrol alone would be based upon the performance of the constable in the role of response car passenger and bore little if any resemblance to the role once patrolling independently. These solo duties are typically on foot patrol in a busy shopping area. This type of work would be relatively unfamiliar to the constable and in many cases the probationers’ would have to learn for him or herself.

Throughout the country, as found in the focus group work and interviews, the first line supervisors of probationers, the sergeants, often no longer actively develop their staff as part of their day-to-day duties. Thus, in the West Midlands and other forces (e.g. Lancashire, West Mercia), probationers regularly received poor initial investment from a tutor and little development for the remainder of their probationary period. The ‘success’ of such unstructured work was measured by the fact that officers ‘survived’ the experience, were deemed competent to patrol independently and the public rarely complained. When looking for critical success factors within probationer assessment, Dale (1992)<sup>144</sup> found that the tutored period of the officer’s probation, because it is not predictive in nature, serves as a direct indicator of the probationer’s ability to perform as an acceptable constable in the future. The value of this finding, and the subsequent prediction of potential performance,

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<sup>143</sup> Interview with police constable, West Midlands Police, 1998.

<sup>144</sup> Dale (1992) Ibid.

must however be reduced if the tutored phase takes place in the unstructured circumstances found in the West Midlands and other forces. In an interview with a Lancashire police sergeant, he stated that this lack of supervision of probationers was not recognised within the service. He established that due to the look of probationers, in bulletproof jackets, carrying side handled batons and 'kwik-cuffs', they: -

“look the part so convincingly they fool all around them, including other police officers, into believing that they are very competent at their job. The reality is that if anything out of the ordinary occurs they don't have a clue, and more's the point, there's no one around to help them.”<sup>145</sup>

Against that backdrop, this research undertook to ensure that the foundations laid within an officer's probation were robust and structured. As previously discovered, individual police managers recognised the requirement for them to support a clear system of organised police probation, even if at times this was not within the current practice of localised policy.

### **Tutorship period and supervision of probationers**

When the issue of supervision of probationers was discussed in an interview with the then training manager for West Mercia Constabulary, he offered that the Force's structure could not sustain regular supervision of probationers and that any such system put forward would be likely to fail.

In the PDP trial in Hampshire this issue was addressed. By approaching the topic of supervision with a team of supervisors, they found solutions themselves. Their resolutions included having

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<sup>145</sup> Interview with patrol sergeant, Preston, Lancashire. 1999



senior constables as mentors to stand in for them in their absence and they scheduled regular tutorials every month with each of their probationers. The combination of these resolutions had a profound effect upon probationer development and each probationer on the trial commented on the positive aspects of this management approach and dialogue. One officer from Hampshire commented: -

“My sergeant doesn’t always work with me. To get over this one day he took my PDP off me. He had it for a week, he checked my entries and claims of competence, checked the files and my pocket book, he talked with my colleagues and then interviewed me. In the end he was satisfied that I was competent, but he went to a lot of trouble.”<sup>146</sup>

Returning to the period of tutorship, the previous two elements of five week blocks of tutored patrolling was replaced with one ten week block when probationer training was reviewed in 1998. This stage of training, the fourth element of that process, has become known as Stage Four. One of the components of this research was to provide a complete structured experience for the probationer over those ten weeks, thus improving the strength of the foundations, allowing recruits the best available start to their career.

### **Core tasks for tutor constable period**

The need for a ‘structured experience’ and not one of random occurrences was clearly required for police probationers. This manifested in the relevant core tasks (outlined fully in appendix 4, pages XXIX - XLVII) that were derived from the focus groups and functional analysis undertaken within

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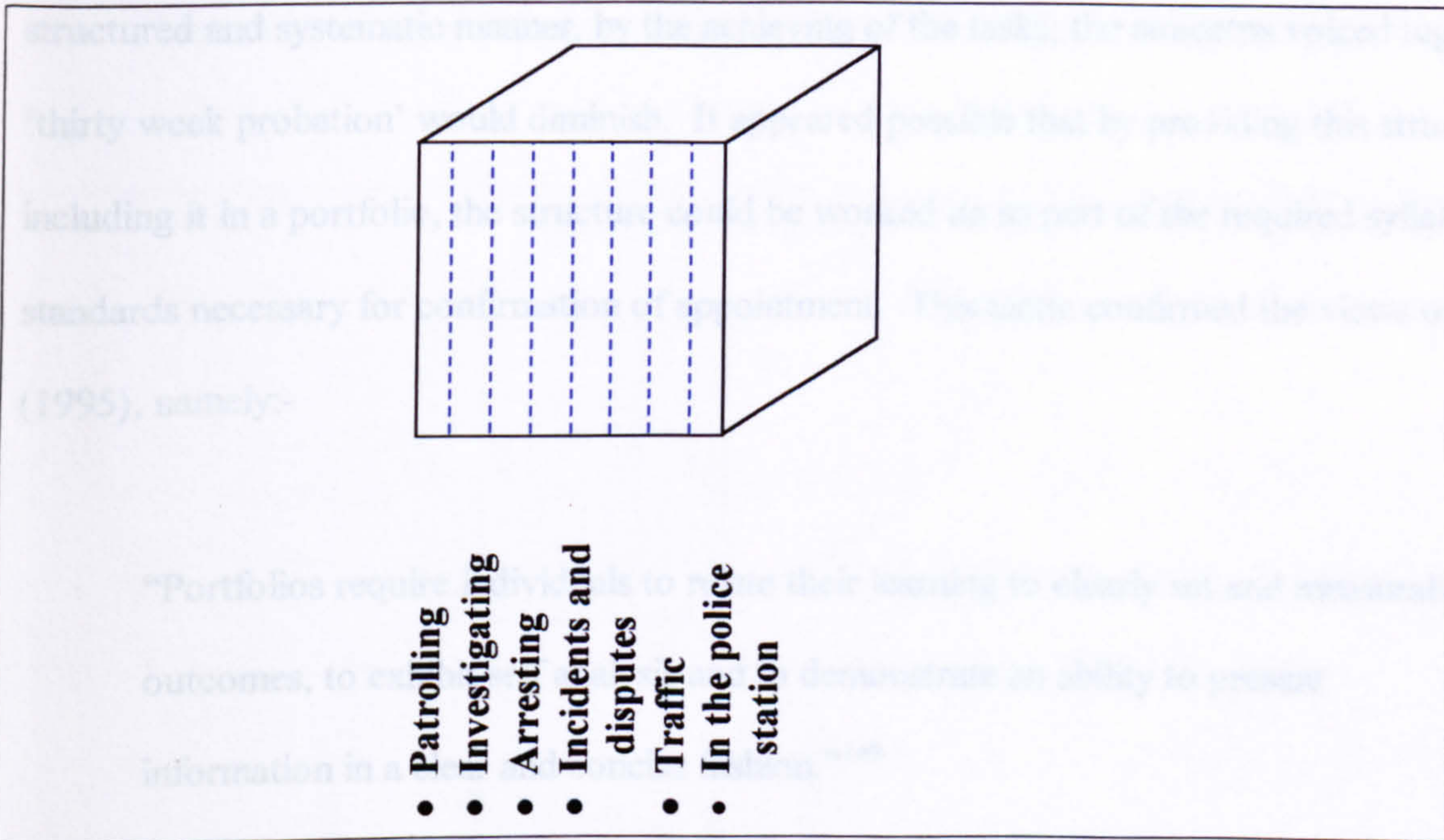
<sup>146</sup> Interview with constable, Hampshire Constabulary.



this research (see chapter one). These core tasks form one dimension of the three-dimensional model for police competency discussed in chapter four.

These tasks cover the role of a police officer from the formative days and follow a developmental path through to arresting offenders, providing support for victims and finally to providing evidence through the criminal justice system. These tasks appear in the model as follows: -

**Fig. 8**



Further to the findings of the functional analysis for the tutored period of development, two focus groups, Devon and Cornwall and West Mercia, confirmed that there was a need for the core tasks system to continue for the duration of the officer's probation. Many participants passed comment, typically as a tutor constable from Devon and Cornwall stated: -

“Currently the probation is really only the first thirty weeks [training school and tutorship], it needs to be the whole one hundred and two weeks. Achieving core tasks over that period could be the answer. As it is now, unless a probationer does



something criminal, once they are patrolling independently they are through, even if they are rubbish, there's no system anymore.”<sup>147</sup>

These indications that the core tasks should be continued throughout the probation, perhaps with two differing clusters (simple and more complex) reinforced the requirement stated as one of the original aims of this research. That was to provide two levels for probationers to reach; one for independent patrol and one for final confirmation of appointment.<sup>148</sup> By providing this in a structured and systematic manner, by the achieving of the tasks, the concerns voiced regarding a ‘thirty week probation’ would diminish. It appeared possible that by providing this structure, and including it in a portfolio, the structure could be worked on as part of the required syllabus and standards necessary for confirmation of appointment. This tactic confirmed the views of Clyne (1995), namely:-

“Portfolios require individuals to relate their learning to clearly set and measurable outcomes, to exhibit self analysis and to demonstrate an ability to present information in a clear and concise fashion.”<sup>149</sup>

### **Core tasks for independent patrol**

Further functional analysis provided additional core tasks (units 7 - 11); these covered more complicated tasks such as recruiting informants and escorting prisoners. (These tasks are replicated fully in appendix 4, pages XLVII – LVI). All the core tasks, both those for independent patrol and for confirmation of appointment, were examined and tested for relevance in focus groups in South Yorkshire and Thames Valley. Both of these focus groups found that although the two sets of core

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<sup>147</sup> Unidentified police tutor constable, Devon and Cornwall Police.

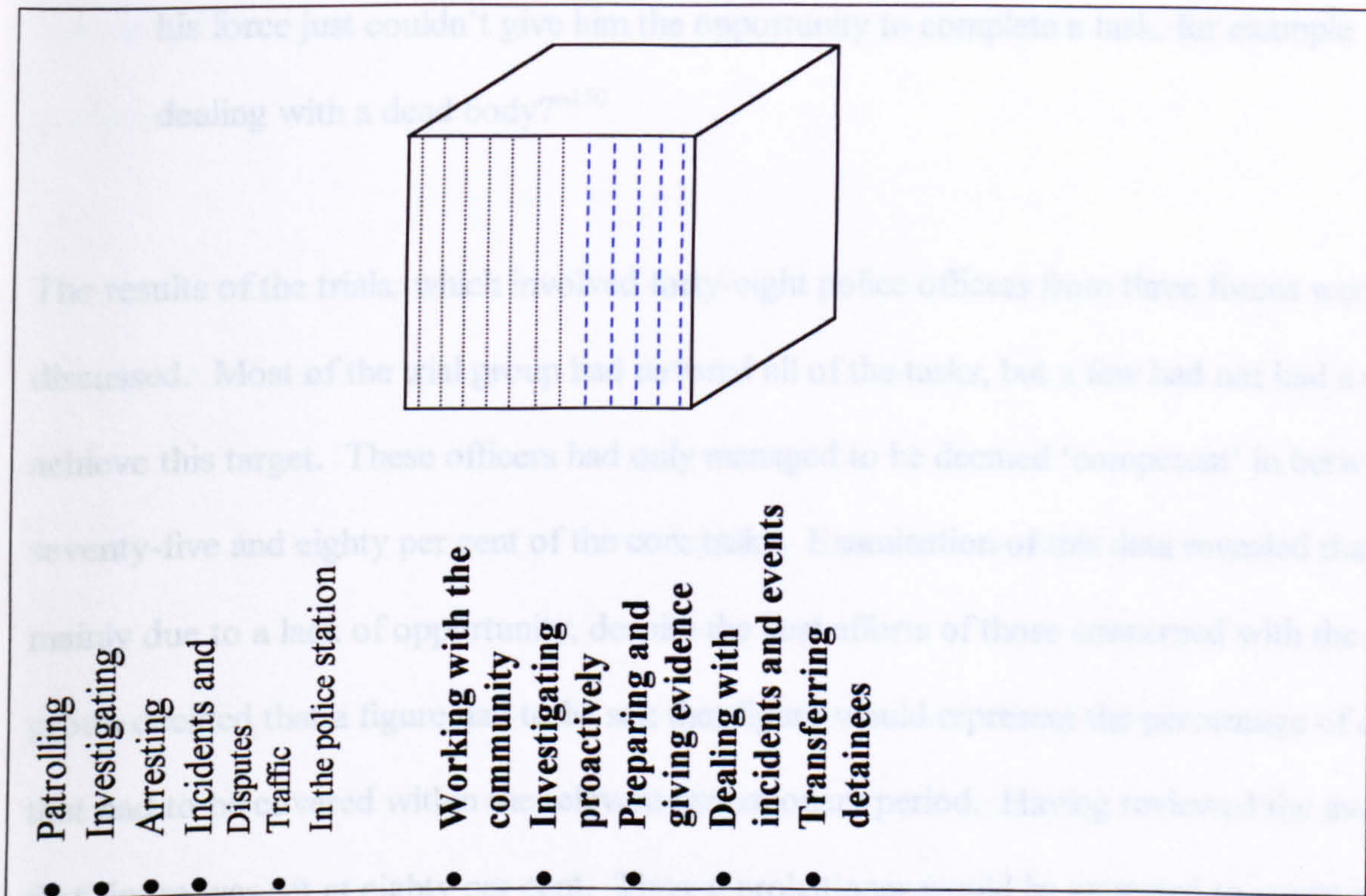
<sup>148</sup> NPT, Harrogate. (1996) The Probationer Training Review 1995 – Final Report. Harrogate. NPT.

<sup>149</sup> Clyne, S. (1995) Continuing Professional Development. London. Kogan Page.



tasks developed the probationer in a structured manner, following a simple to complex methodology, the latter set (units 7-11) were less challenging. There were fewer tasks to cover in relation to the length of probation available and the assumption was being made that the probationers would carry over their previous competence levels from tutorship into their independent patrolling stage. To resolve these obstacles, both groups recommended carrying over units 1-6 into the latter period of an officer's development. Thus, when patrolling independently, officers in their probation would have to re-complete units 1 - 6 and cover units 7 - 11 for the first time. These tasks when added to the 3D model for police assessment appear as follows:-

**Fig. 9**



### **Relevance of the core tasks**

Later in the research, a small focus group gathered at Bramshill Staff College, Hampshire to look at issues arising from the trials in Sussex, Hampshire and the West Midlands. A probationer and a manager from each trial force attended this, together with the officer from each force who oversaw



the trial. Apart from sharing best practice information and examining the issues that arose in each trial, this group analysed the trial data to calculate the relevance of the core tasks in their area. A concern voiced by a number of practitioners was that the whole list of tasks, whilst needing to be demanding for the officer and representative of a complete and structured probationary period, may have been too difficult to achieve in all policing areas. One participant, a sergeant from Hampshire commented: -

“Will it be fair to not confirm someone in the rank [of constable] just because he hasn’t covered all the tasks? He may be very able, he may have performed well, but his force just couldn’t give him the opportunity to complete a task, for example dealing with a dead body?”<sup>150</sup>

The results of the trials, which involved forty-eight police officers from three forces were then discussed. Most of the trial group had covered all of the tasks, but a few had not had a chance to achieve this target. These officers had only managed to be deemed ‘competent’ in between seventy-five and eighty per cent of the core tasks. Examination of this data revealed that this was mainly due to a lack of opportunity, despite the best efforts of those concerned with the trial. The group decided that a figure had to be set; that figure would represent the percentage of core tasks that had to be covered within the relevant probationary period. Having reviewed the available data that figure was set at eighty per cent. Thus, a probationer would be expected to cover eighty per cent of the core tasks from units 1 - 6 competently during their tutored period. During their independent patrolling phase they would be required to cover eighty per cent of the task as outlined

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<sup>150</sup> Interview with a Hampshire police sergeant.

in units 1 - 11 inclusive.

These findings were presented to a meeting of force training managers from the South East region of England. The delegates at this forum were representative of a wide variety of police forces from the small rural force to the larger urban forces, covering a variety of policing situations. They scrutinised the available evidence and observed that it was possible for a probationer to not cover the same twenty per cent of the unit 1 - 6 core tasks in both assessment periods. This could diminish the effect of the whole scheme and allow officers to progress through their probation with certain important and basic policing skills unchecked. The participants at the meeting resolved this matter and the decision was made to have different percentage figures for different stages of the probation, i.e.: -

During the tutored phase	80% of core tasks (unit 1-6) must be covered competently.
During the independent phase	100% of core tasks (unit 1-6) must be covered competently <b>and</b> 80% of core tasks (units 7-11) deemed competent also.

During training seminars in each police region of England and Wales, these matters were discussed and all delegates agreed with the percentage concept. It was felt that the percentage rules allowed for freedom and flexibility whilst still challenging the organisation to provide relevant foundations for the probationer's future. There were at least two delegates from each police force in England and Wales at these events and there were no dissenters from these views.

In the de-brief at the end of the Hampshire trial, when officers were in their ninetieth week of their probation, the issues of percentage of core tasks deemed competent and the supervision of the



process were discussed with the probationers and their supervisors. It was found that the provision of core tasks, core skills and contexts, gave constables, sergeants and inspectors a clear route map to follow with the individual probationer. Furthermore, as one sergeant mentioned: -

“There was no way I could abuse this lad’s time, he had to cover certain jobs that I never considered relevant before, and I had to supervise him doing it!”<sup>151</sup>

### **Police station suitability for police probationers**

At a training seminar held in Durham for the North East region the matter of where police probationers were stationed was examined in detail by the training manager from one large rural force. Having absorbed all the training inputs and taken part in training exercises, he took advantage of a final plenary session to state his final thought (this was in response to a question asking what all the delegates would be taking from the day). He stated: -

“I’m going back to my force knowing that a lot of the stations where we send probationers are no longer suitable for that purpose, in fact they may never have been suitable and I never knew. It’s a great system, but it will be difficult for me to manage.”

When that person was re-contacted later in the research the posting of probationers was discussed. He stated that faced with the structure and meaning of the PDP process, he changed the system of placing probationers and met little if any resistance from colleagues in the force. He further

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<sup>151</sup> Interview with a Hampshire police sergeant. 1999.

qualified this as a positive step in the overall management of probationers within his force.

The final Hampshire de-briefs (at week 104) highlighted an alternative approach to this predicament. Three probationers had difficulty attending road traffic accidents. This had not been possible within the make up of their policing area; most if not all injury road traffic accidents were dealt with by specialist traffic officers; minor damage only accidents were not dealt with by the police at all. To overcome this, their supervisor had posted the officers on to the traffic department for a short attachment. During this period the officers attended many accidents and were coached to a level of competence by the specialist traffic constable. As a result of this the probationers concerned not only gained competence in dealing with road traffic accidents, as assessed by the experienced traffic officers, but they also gained a working knowledge of a specialist department within their force area. Other anecdotal evidence has emerged detailing similar experiences with officers working with Group 4 on prisoner escorts and with custody officers to gain knowledge of prisoner detention.

In the Hampshire de-brief plenary session, one probationer challenged the relevance of this requirement; up to this stage he had not been asked to provide a prisoner escort. One of his colleagues replied by stating: -

“I felt like that, then I went and did an escort with the security firm. Two weeks later I was told to provide an escort from London. At least I had half an idea what it was all about and what paperwork to use.”<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Hampshire police constable.



Throughout the PDP training that took place regionally, covering all forces, the need for an adult approach to the probationer was constantly reinforced. The general ethos of this training followed the findings of Hunt (1992)<sup>153</sup> in so much as the search for independence rather than dependence, for control over self rather than control by others, was the key factor in the journey of self-development being introduced.

### **Core skills of policing**

Focus group work analysed the functions of police probationers and confirmed that as well as the core tasks, the behaviour of officers was paramount to their successful development and to successful policing. Prior to this research the behaviour of police probationers was governed by the set of skills and abilities that became known as the “thirty-six skills and abilities.”<sup>154</sup> These were the first ever attempt at identifying expected police probationers’ behaviour. As they satisfied the pragmatic requirements of all officers involved in training, they were embraced by the organisation and became perceived as robust and unchallengeable. (It has proven impossible to accurately identify the research methods and tests for validity that these thirty-six skills were based upon).

Although it could be argued that ten years on, the fact that the sets of skills were popular and (at the commencement of this research) still in use, made them therefore valid and reliable, the challenge that rises academically is that these behaviours are no longer suited to modern day policing. In an environment that requires problem solving, self actuating, adult police officers, these behavioural statements do not stand up to rigorous scrutiny. This is shown in the following table where the thirty-six skills and abilities have been analysed within the current police context and against the

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<sup>153</sup> Hunt, J. (1992) Managing People at Work. Maidenhead. McGraw-Hill.

<sup>154</sup> Central Planning Unit. (1989) The New Probationer Training System, A Note for Tutors and Supervisors. CPU. Harrogate.

behavioural criteria set out within this research. The analysis results are synthesised results from earlier research and focus groups carried out within this research. For clarity the behavioural criteria are restated.

To be a behavioural outcome the action must be: -

- Observable
- Capable of being written or spoken about
- Capable of being developed through feedback

### **Thirty-six skills and abilities**

### **Analysis against behavioural criteria**

Punctuality

A pedagogical approach to assessment

Pride in appearance

Pride cannot be measured

Reliability

Reliability is an outcome of behaviour

Concentration

Concentration cannot be measured, only assumed

Moral and physical courage

This is an outcome of behaviour

Creativity

This is a behaviour and should be retained

Self-motivation

This is a behaviour and should be retained

Attitudes towards others

Attitude cannot be measured, the resulting behaviour can

Professional & personal responsibility

This underpins everything else

Self-monitoring

This is common PDP practice

Stress

Managing stress is not an observable behaviour

Fitness/health

Being fit is an organisational requirement, not a specific behaviour

Learning from experience

This is common PDP practice

Consideration for the feelings of

This is common PDP practice



others	
Non-verbal communication	Communicating is an observable behaviour
Oral communication	Communicating is an observable behaviour
Effective listening	Communicating is an observable behaviour
Self-control	Self-control is not behaviour, the outcomes of self-control when viewed in a context are
Use of physical force	This is a tactical skill, not an observable behaviour
Relationships with others	This is a standard that should underpin all internal processes
Assessment of total situation	This is not an observable behaviour
Questioning	this is both a technical ability and a communication skill
Collation and analysis of information	This is not strictly an observable behaviour
Knowledge of law	This is not a behaviour
Knowledge of technical skills	This is not a behaviour
Knowledge of procedures	This is not a behaviour
Community awareness	This is not a behaviour
Decision making	This is a behaviour and should be retained
Planning	This is not strictly a behaviour
Flexibility	This is a behaviour and should be retained
Dealing with conflict and ambiguity	This not a behaviour
Initiative	This is a behaviour and should be retained
Confidence	This is not a behaviour
Responsibility	This is not a behaviour
Leadership	This is a behaviour and should be retained
Written reports	This forms part of communication

It is apparent that many of the thirty-six skills and abilities do not fully match any applied definition of behaviour. Furthermore, Home Office Circular (HOC) 43/96, which introduces behavioural standards into the organisation on a formal basis, uses totally different constructs and labels for this

aspect of policing skills. The original brief for this element of the research stated that HOC 43/96 should be referred to within the emerging work. However, if the 36 skills and abilities had proven to be robust and defensible the brief would have been revisited and perhaps re-defined. The overriding factor in the choice of behavioural statements was examined within the context of the probationer assessment forming a learning organisation. Campbell (1994) described this as:-

“a learning organisation, and its context, should be meaningful, manageable and measurable.”<sup>155</sup>

The existing skills were not defensible and this situation clearly gave rise to an opportunity for change. That change was made definite with a further direction from the ACPO Steering Group, who insisted that the behaviour of police probationers should fall into line with the Home Office Circular, as this governed behaviour beyond the officer's probationary period. The rationale for this direction was based on a premise that the behaviours and principles contained within HOC 43/96 were themselves valid and robust.

### **Core skills – HOC 43/96**

The position of these behaviours is examined within this research. In HOC 43/96 the behaviours were split into two categories, a general suite aimed at every police officer regardless of rank, and a suite of 'higher level' behaviours aimed at more senior police practitioners. The aim of the circular was to provide a set of behaviours that would be used to analyse performance in the workplace. The higher level of behaviours would be used if it were deemed that they were relevant to the officer's role. Focus group work in Devon & Cornwall and West Mercia gave rise to the fact that

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<sup>155</sup> Campbell, T. (1994) Developing and Measuring the Learning Organisation. In *Industrial and Commercial Training*, Vol. 26, no 7.



within probationary policing the general skills suite would be sufficient to analyse the role of the officer under development. It was found that to utilise the higher level of behaviours would over complicate probationer assessment. The general behavioural skills (as listed in HOC 43/96) are: -

- “Professional and ethical standards
- Communication
- Self-motivation
- Decision making
- Creativity and innovation”<sup>156</sup>

Each of the headings listed above was defined within HOC 43/96. These headings became labels for competencies with further explanatory notes outlining the actual behaviour expected. (Appendix 3). In an interview with a leading member of the team that developed the circular and its contents, it was stated that the headings were manipulated and written to satisfy the immediate needs of senior police managers and Home Office officials. He stated: -

“This was especially pertinent with the label of ‘professional and ethical standards’.

These statements in themselves could never constitute behaviour, however the political message that particular heading sent out was of the police striving to appear professional and ethical.”<sup>157</sup>

Within the heading the explanatory paragraph attempted to take the issue closer to becoming behaviourally based.

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<sup>156</sup> Home Office. (1996) Op. Cit.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with management consultant from Home Office Working Party on Performance Development Review.

**“Professional and ethical standards.**

Acts with integrity and impartiality. Takes pride in their work, presenting a positive image of the service. As well as achieving high standards of punctuality, appropriate dress, physical fitness and personal hygiene, is committed to meeting the needs and expectations of the community.”<sup>158</sup>

The subsequent lists of behaviours contained within the circular drilled down the issue of professional and ethical standards into individual examples of what satisfied those labels and explanatory paragraphs. These individual components<sup>159</sup> were listed as ‘effective and less effective performance’. Examples of the components within the core skill of professional and ethical standards<sup>160</sup> are: -

<b>Professional and ethical standards</b>	
<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
Sensitive to the needs/feelings of others without compromising authority	Disregards others feelings
Approachable and supportive to colleagues and others	Dismissive or uncaring of others; shows indifference
Maintains impartiality/fairness regardless of race/gender/age/sexual orientation/marital status/disability	Acts inconsiderately

<sup>158</sup> Home Office. (1996) Home Office Circular 43/96. London.

<sup>159</sup> Home Office. (1996) Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Home Office. (1996) Ibid.



Invests in time to consult with others	Inflexible when dealing with others
Tactful in discussion; sensitive in use of language	Alienates others by being self-centred, tactless or abrupt
Keeps temper under control; calm/confident under strength	Abuses authority; overbearing, bullying or threatening
Looks at a situation from other person's point of view	Creates friction; has a diverse effect on the team
Develops/maintains good specialist knowledge	Insensitive to the needs and expectations of customers
Maintains a good level of fitness	Tolerates/encourages low standards from others
	Sometimes displays biased or prejudiced behaviour
	Lacks integrity; seeks to undermine established procedures
	Takes no pride in own fitness or appearance

Within the physical layout of the printed circular, which is how the practitioner tends to see the contents, it is unfortunate that these two columns appear opposite each other. This gave rise to a high number of police personnel believing these were bipolar scales. When this point was put to the consultant from the developing team it was greeted with surprise. It is perhaps indicative of a



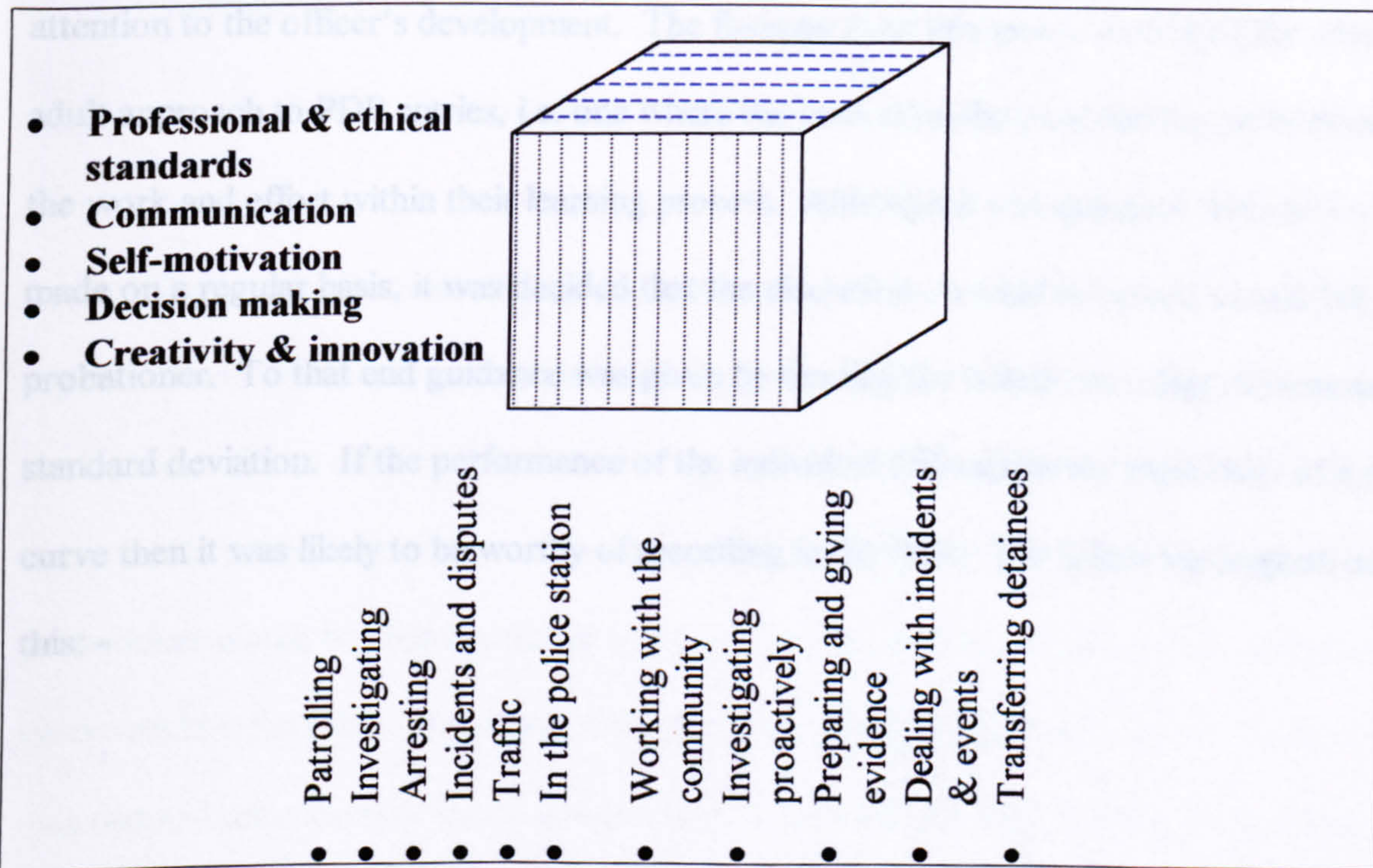
wider scale issue, that of the pragmatic requirements of the police interpreting the written word as it appears. The two lists although appearing as opposites were evidently not meant to so appear. In a focus group in Devon and Cornwall this topic arose; the solution from the group, which accepted the need to replicate the HOC, was to put the lists into one column, thus removing the visual appearance of polarity.

*Pragmatic approaches to FDP entries*

The remaining skills from HOC 43/96 are contained in the appendix 3 to this paper.

The employment of these behavioural-based labels when applied to the three-dimensional model of assessment adds further detail: -

**Fig. 10**



The ten week period of stage four allows a number of customs to be sown as seeds of common practice amongst probationers. Two key practices are those of reflective practice and the use of experiential learning. The belief amongst educationalists within the police service is that if these fundamental skills are firmly embedded in new recruits into the service, they will become life skills



and remain with officers for the remainder of their service.<sup>161</sup> There is also a desire for recruits to be educated by the service as adults using strong pedagogical principles, the continued use of reflection and experiential learning are less likely to succeed if they are not fully supported by adult methodologies.

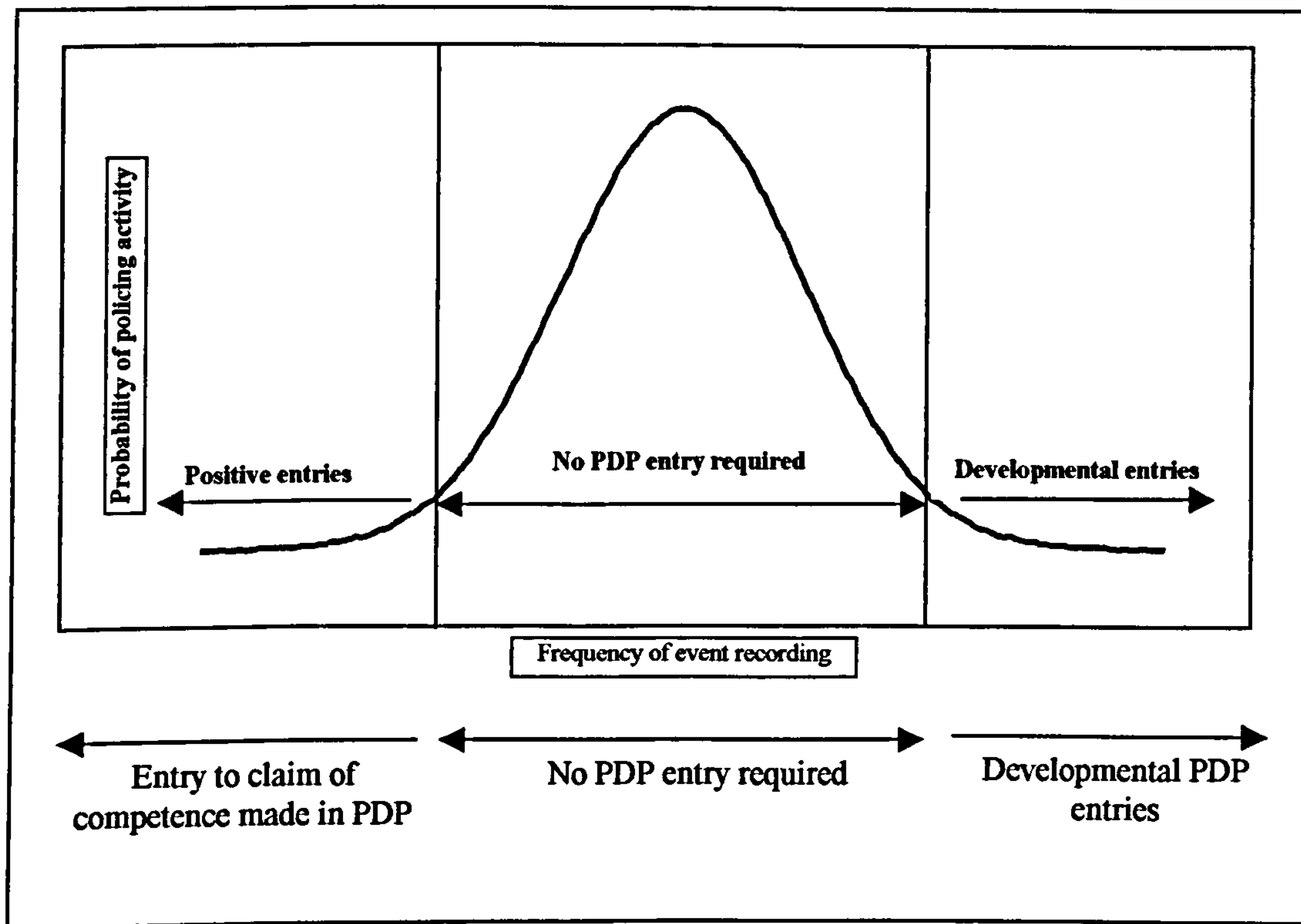
### **Pragmatic approaches to PDP entries**

Within the PDP the practitioner is required to record significant events in their police work, these events are included to provide a start to the application of reflective practice. A focus group worked with the concept of recording policing events and it was found that to record all events would be over burdening the police officer, what was required were the **significant** entries that would draw attention to the officer's development. The findings from this group confirmed the need for an adult approach to PDP entries, i.e. one where the onus is on the participating probationer to manage the work and effort within their learning process. Although it was apparent that entries had to be made on a regular basis, it was decided that the discretion on what to record should fall on the probationer. To that end guidance was given by treating the whole recording process as one of standard deviation. If the performance of the individual fell outside the main body of a distribution curve then it was likely to be worthy of recording in the PDP. The following diagram expresses this: -

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<sup>161</sup> NPT, Harrogate. (1998) Trainers Development Programme – Generic Guide. Harrogate. NPT.

Fig. 11



In accordance with the research regarding the volume of entries required in the PDP, these evidence capture sheets were designed to accommodate a minimalist approach to evidence logging. If performance fell to either distribution curve extremity, either positively or negatively, then a PDP entry would be required. If the entry were of a positive nature, there would be a likelihood that the probationer would be claiming the performance towards an overall claim for competence. Thus the entry would reflect this. If the probationer was already deemed competent in a particular area, it was deemed unnecessarily bureaucratic to continue to record entries in that area. Thus only positive performance in areas not deemed competent would be recorded in the PDP.

### Language and range statements within PDP assessments

Although the style of the PDP incorporates outcome based criterion for assessment, there was particular obstruction to many NVQ style processes. In focus groups this resistance manifested as



soon as the words 'NVQ style' were used in any opening presentation. Such was the strength of feeling regarding NVQs that all references to this form of assessment were removed from the language used throughout most of the research. When traced back it appeared that the participants in the focus groups lost sight of the benefits of the NVQ process due to the confusing layout of the actual standards and the sheer volume of evidence they were required to place in a portfolio prior to assessment. A common theme was that gaining an NVQ was more about the skills of portfolio building than the skills required for the particular qualification. Many participants had been exposed to NVQs through the National Police Trainers' Course or Customer Service NVQs sponsored by their forces.

### **Range statements and the policing context**

Beaumont (1996)<sup>162</sup> and Anderton (1997)<sup>163</sup> both found that range statements contained within NVQ 'standards' confused participants and served to generate debate around the skills of understanding the NVQ process being of greater importance than the skills under direct examination. The initial research in Devon and Cornwall led to the concept of range statements being considered in detail. The purpose of a range statement is to provide details of the expected contexts for performance. Only by performing to the required standard in a combination of these contexts could the practitioner be deemed truly competent. By way of a policing example, if a police officer arrests an offender using the correct judgement, the relevant level of force, uses restraints effectively and communicates appropriately, it would be a flawed assumption that the officer was 'competent' until those traits had been observed in differing contexts. These contexts could be, for example, the arrest of a compliant juvenile requiring a particular application of those skills through to, on the opposing end of the scale, a violent strong male who demanded a totally

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<sup>162</sup> Beaumont, G. Review of 100 NVQs and SVQs. London. DfEE.

<sup>163</sup> Anderton, P. (1997) Op. Cit.

different deployment of skills. Other examples of context could be the nature of the offence for which the arrest is made, or whether the arrest was made by virtue of a warrant or solely by investigations made by the constable. As can be observed from this example, the 'list' of range statements soon becomes lengthy and detailed. In the purist NVQ format these could appear on a page of standards as follows: -

**Range statements**

Subject demeanour	Violent-compliant
Arrest type	Warrant-statutory power of arrest-PACE
Subject profile	Elderly-special needs-juvenile

Although to the trained practitioner, academic or skilled observer, these range statements may appear straightforward, to the practitioner without those skills they seem over complicated and often serve to frustrate any efforts at understanding the assessment processes. The Devon and Cornwall participants were tasked to provide a solution to this issue, one that would be acceptable to them and the organisation as a whole which would still require clear evidence of contexts for performance to be deemed competent. The solution provided was to include all the details of the required contexts in a narrative statement at the head of each page of standards. The example from the PDP for arrests is as follows: -



### 3.1 Making arrests

*There will be times when you have to arrest a suspect in order to continue with your investigations. Whether the arrest is under the authority of a warrant or otherwise, people who have been arrested may be cooperative or resistant to you. They may be a juvenile or have their own special needs. You will have to conduct the arrest with due consideration for these diverse circumstances.*

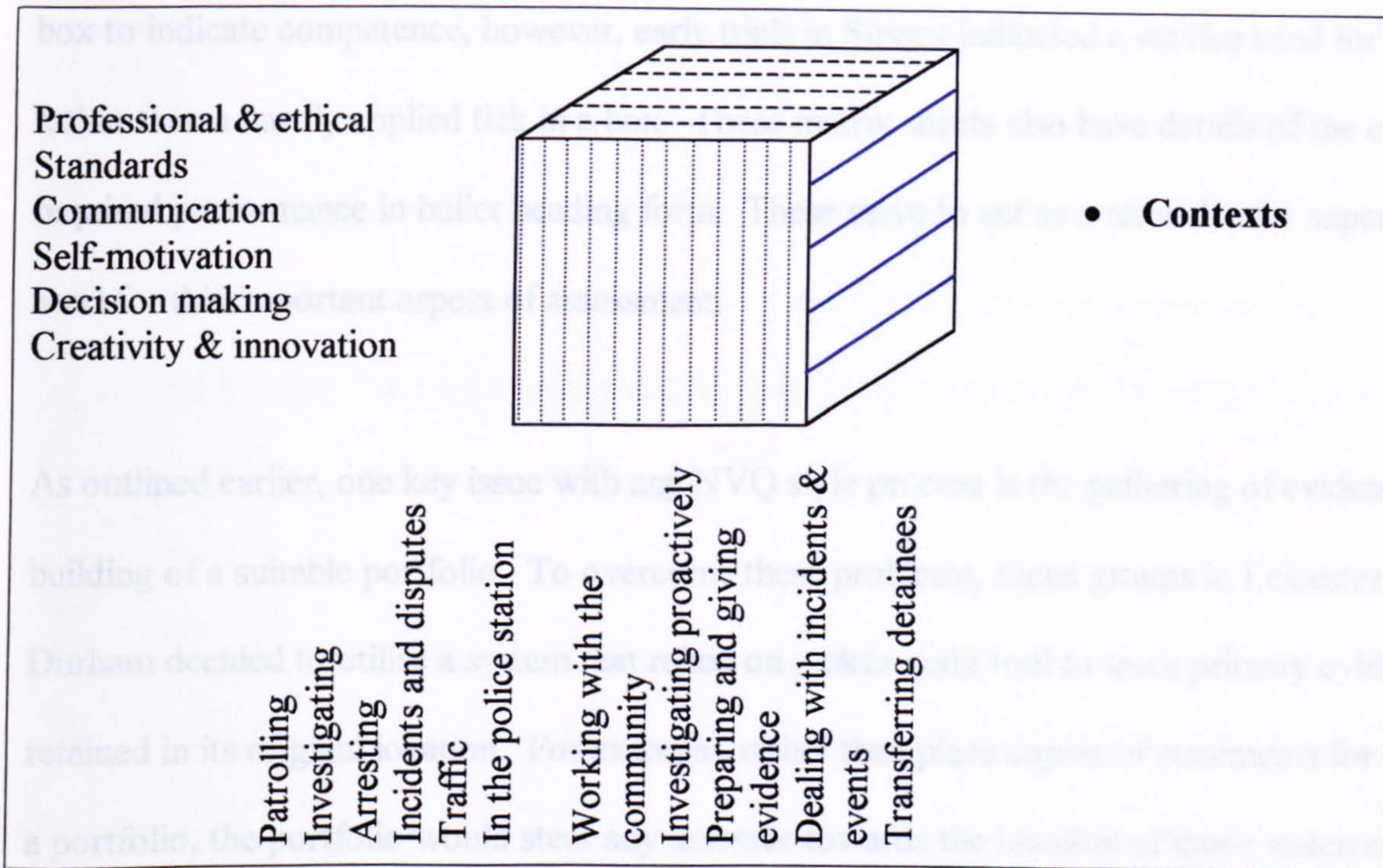
The group felt that this approach would format the details in a culturally acceptable way yet still provide clear unambiguous guidance for all participants in probationer training. The style of these contextual statements was further tested at later focus groups and interviews and found to be an appropriate method of dealing with the matter in hand. As the statements stepped outside the NVQ Guidelines<sup>164</sup>, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) were approached for support. They vindicated the development and agreed that as a solution to what had become a national problem (understanding range statements) the format would be promoted as an example of best practice and the rigid guidelines would be amended. Thus, range statements are no longer a requirement of NVQ style standards. When added to the 3D model of police assessment the context statements add the third and final dimension.

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<sup>164</sup> NCVQ. (1997) National Occupational Standards for NVQs/SVOs. London. NCVQ.



**Fig. 12**



Throughout the process of explaining the PDP and its approaches to assessment of police probationers, the use of the model has been of great assistance to probationers and assessors alike.

One divisional training sergeant said of the model: -

“This makes the whole thing make sense. Now I know what makes policing different, it also allows me to understand how the PDP works.”<sup>165</sup>

### **Matrix forms and evidence recording**

Within this research on the format of the future PDP, further focus groups, those in Lincoln and Leicester, identified the need for some form of quick reference within the portfolio to assist supervisors to gain a snapshot appreciation of the progress of their probationers. Thus, for each separate set of core tasks there is a matrix page with a space for signatures of appropriate staff to

<sup>165</sup> Divisional training sergeant. PDP Implementation classroom event. Lancashire. 1999.



indicate competent performance by the portfolio holder. This was originally a space for a tick in a box to indicate competence, however, early trials in Sussex indicated a service need for a signature rather than a hastily applied tick in a box. These matrix sheets also have details of the contexts for required performance in bullet heading form. These serve to act as a reminder for supervisors of the need for this important aspect of assessment.

As outlined earlier, one key issue with any NVQ style process is the gathering of evidence and building of a suitable portfolio. To overcome these problems, focus groups in Leicester and Durham decided to utilise a system that relied on a clear audit trail to trace primary evidence retained in its original location. For example, rather than place copies of statements for an arrest in a portfolio, the portfolio would steer any assessor towards the location of those statements within the criminal justice system. The responsibility is therefore placed upon the supervisor to locate and examine any relevant documents for assessment. Focus group participants also concluded that forms should be used for evidence of probationer reflections, comments by peers and supervisors regarding the performance of the probationer. The form that manifested from this research was therefore designed to capture the following information.

<p>Policing activity leading to PDP entry</p> <p>Location of evidence</p> <p>Core skills covered</p> <p>Core tasks covered</p> <p>Any claim of competent performance</p> <p>Any relevant action plan</p> <p>Signature or details of witness where appropriate</p>
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In reviewing the data from these focus groups it became apparent that the findings were congruent with the portfolio design rationale espoused by Clyne (1995) in which she stated :-

“Professional development portfolios are designed to assist in identifying training needs, to help us make and take learning and development opportunities, to record and monitor these experiences and to provide evidence for self-assessment or by peers on our competence.”<sup>166</sup>

Focus groups in Durham and Sheffield identified a servicewide need for entries to be brief and accurate, moving away from the previously cumbersome style of entry in long narrative formats. To facilitate this approach the forms were designed in an A3 style landscape format. Entries are made in boxes, which by nature of their appearance lead participants towards brevity, and by training, accuracy of entries. In workshops participants found the forms particularly useful. One sergeant from Sussex stated: -

“I can see why you have placed boxes on the form. For me the change to quick and small entries is difficult, the size of the boxes helps me.”<sup>167</sup>

Over one hundred serving police officers were led through structured exercises regarding the use of these forms and there was widespread approval regarding their layout and motives. If performance was deemed to be below the required standard, the probationer would be required to reflect upon this and produce an accurate action plan to assist their development. To this end the whole aspect of action planning was researched in focus groups.

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<sup>166</sup> Clyne, S. (1995) Ibid. — p.

<sup>167</sup> Unidentified police sergeant, Sussex. 1998.



## **Action planning and learning from experience**

Action planning forms an integral part of police probationer development. Without this form of action, reflective practice would be weakened if not meaningless. Utilising a PDP to manage action plans offers: -

“an exciting and challenging method of structuring individual and personal action plans.”<sup>168</sup>

Previous action plan styles engaged within policing called for action plans to be written at given stages of a probationer's development. These given times were dictated not by a development need, but by the calendar controlling police officers' progress. Thus, it was found (NPT 1997)<sup>169</sup> that action plans were not always relevant to any particular probationer need and the process had become one of organisational necessity not probationer need. Research findings in focus groups in Devon and Cornwall found an overriding need for action plans to become regular, short and extremely focussed. This represented a major cultural shift away from lengthy narrative action plans within the service. As one officer stated:-

“The old action plans were too long and lacked a focus. We need a shorter, snappy version that we can put into place straight away, not later in the course when it's forgotten.”<sup>170</sup>

This finding complimented the structure offered by HOC 43/96 for action planning. In HOC 43/96

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<sup>168</sup> Clyne, S. (1995) Ibid.

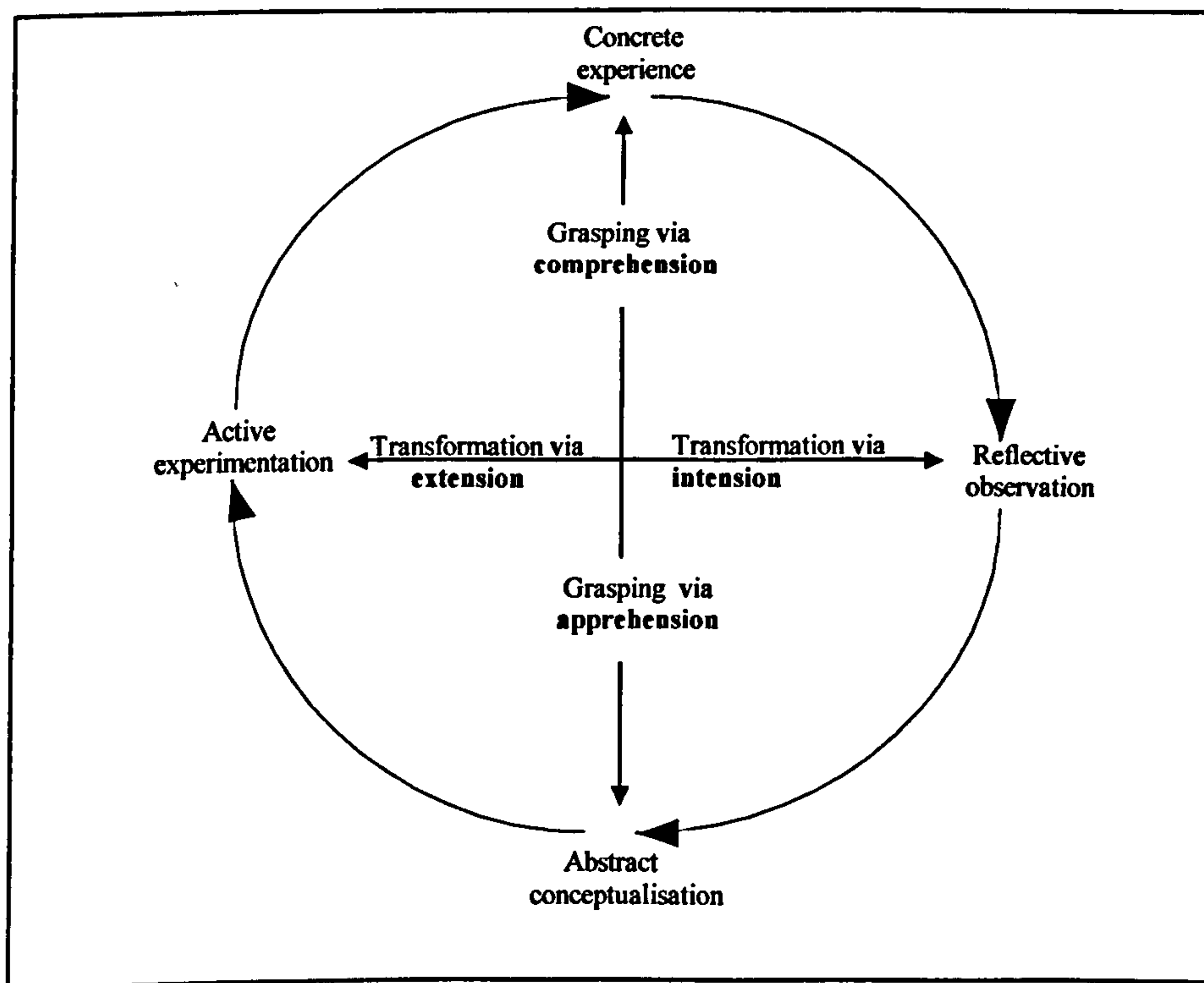
<sup>169</sup> NPT. (1997) Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Devon and Cornwall constable. Exeter. 1998.

the guidance on action planning led the practitioner to short, pragmatic and specific action plans. Although this circular dealt with pure skill development, the process was found by the West Mercia focus group to be congruent with the required direction. To this end the forms that manifested nationally from HOC 43/96 were utilised within the first design of the PDP.

National Police Training (NPT) advocates action planning and development through use of experience. In particular NPT espouses the use of the four stage process of reflection developed by Kolb.<sup>171</sup> In the simple version of this cycle used by NPT the stages of reflective practice appear as follows: -

**Fig. 13**



<sup>171</sup> Kolb, D. (1985) Experiential learning. New York. Prentice Hall.



Due to the level of importance placed upon the use of the experiential learning cycle (ELC) it was paramount that the design of the PDP allowed and encouraged this principle of developmental practice whilst also acknowledging the need for brevity and a non-bureaucratic process.

### **Recording experiences in the PDP**

To accommodate these requirements the event sheets and action plans were designed to work in harmony. When a probationer undertakes a policing event the details of the occurrence are entered into the events sheets as a form of work log. The form captures the 'what' stage of the students reflections by way of the policing event and the 'so what' stage by asking the officer, and any supervisor witnessing the occurrence, to consider whether that event was a competent performance. If it was not the case, the practitioner is encouraged to consider why not and formalise that consideration as an action plan.

Although the process is formulated within the concepts of pedagogical principles, many training managers from around the country (e.g. Cumbria, Greater Manchester) stated that within the culture of the police service, experience led them to believe that this adult-adult process often broke down. They stated that this breakdown sometimes manifested itself in police probationers not facing up to their personal development responsibilities and adopting a more adapted child response of hiding their inability and action planning areas of strength. The current situation of a lack of direct supervision amongst police forces, caused by structural and operational systems, often permits this by having supervisors and junior staff working alternative working patterns.

With the general agreement of training managers from around the country, the PDP sought to require sergeants to monitor and note all action plans and discuss with the police officer the relevance of the plan and the relevance of that plan to the organisation's overall requirements.

Whilst discussing these issues in a number of training manager meetings, an anecdote was discussed which although on face value appears humorous, the reality of the situation highlights the potential lack of organisational direction that previous action plan styles actually had. The anecdote was as follows: -

The probationer attended a report of a burglary in progress at factory premises. As is typical for a young officer he went to the front of the building. It came as no surprise that the burglars left the premises upon his arrival by the back door. They made their escape and later the incident was de-briefed by the probationer's supervisor. The result of the de-brief was that the probationer needed to gain a greater overall perspective when attending such incidents, hopefully this would assist in covering different entrance and exit points from the standard norm, the front door. The probationer dutifully went away, reflected on the need for this action plan and wrote up the plan in his PDP. He stated that if he were to spend time attached to the helicopter unit of his force he would be able to gain a greater perspective; and by his interpretation of the principles of the 'helicopter principle of management' gain a much more professional view. This action plan appeared in the PDP and remained in the file with no effective supervision and no direct consequential action for the remainder of the officer's probationary period.

### **Specifications of action planning**

To overcome the situations that this anecdote typifies, all action plans in the new PDP have to be agreed by a supervisor and must be brief and specific. Police training monitors action plans under the mnemonic SMART (specific, measurable, achievable realistic and governed by a time period). The previous action plan methodology, which was long, narrative and calendar driven, reduced the



effects of the SMART principles. In PTC workshops at Cwmbran and Durham, training staff frequently asked how forms that left only a small amount of space for an action plan could capture all the relevant details. This question was answered by using an example of how SMART should be used in the new PDP context.

A typical example of an action plan from a PTC would be 'following the role play on stop and search, week 4; I have been informed that I did not know the relevant law and therefore didn't exercise my powers correctly. I therefore need to develop my skills of putting my knowledge into practice'. In focus groups, examples such as this were examined in detail. The action plan outlines a number of factors. There was a role play, in week 4 of the PTC course, during which the officer's lack of knowledge led to a subsequent lack of performance. All these facts are now captured in the 'events sheets' in the new PDP as part of the probationer's reflections. The action plan highlights the need for knowledge and the application of this to be developed. The questions that arise from this typical case are: What knowledge? By when? How will this be achieved? Has anyone agreed the relevance of this action plan to the needs of the officer and the needs of the organisation?

Particular attention must be paid to the actual issue being addressed. If this is too broad, effective action would prove difficult. For example, if the action plan highlighted 'improving knowledge' this would clearly be too broad. This would have to be broken down and focussed into the actual knowledge required. In a focus group discussion with a trainer at Bruche PTC, this process took the stages of; knowledge, knowledge of crime, knowledge of theft and then knowledge of the definition of property under the relevant theft act. Only then did it become clear to the participants in the focus group how specific an action plan should be, and how easy it would then be to measure the success or lack of progress achieved by that action. Therefore the actual design of the PDP is aimed

at making the action planning process easier to operate and measure whilst at the same time ensuring that sergeants supervised the development of their probationers.

### **Policing by objectives**

As discussed earlier (chapter 2) policing currently takes place in an environment based on performance and targeted activities aimed at preset objectives. These objectives are typically contained in annual plans. During stage four of the probationer's development the focus is, and it is argued should be, on the development of the individual to allow them to build strong foundations for their new career. Only when these foundations are built should the individual become a resource that is available for deployment to meet these targeted actions.

The time for this change of role is designed to be around the time that the officer is declared fit for independent patrol. This change of role is designed to take place gradually over the period of stage four whilst the probationer is working in company with their tutor constable. There are a number of key stages within this transformation of effort.

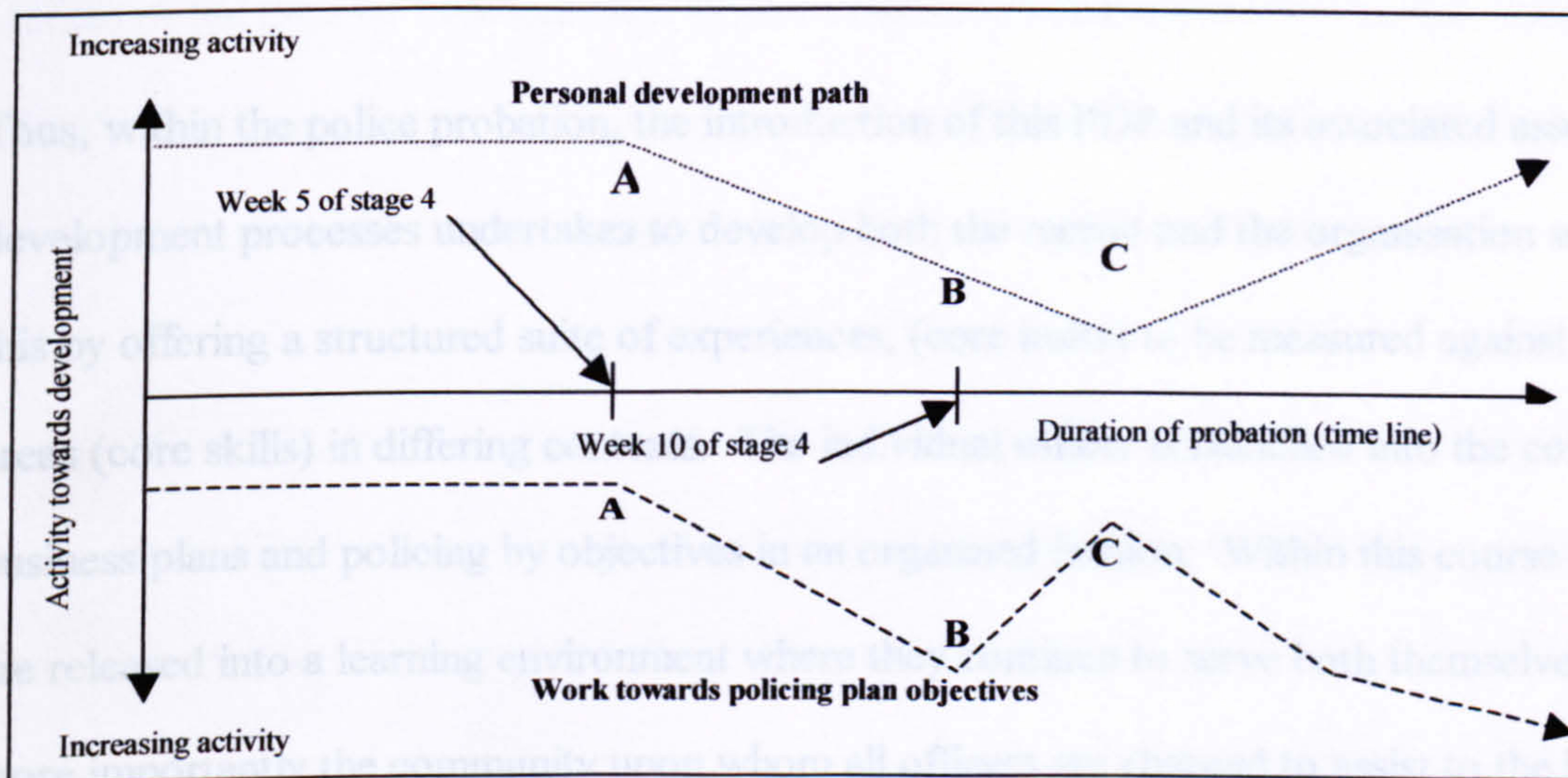
- At the beginning of stage four the tutor and probationer work together to maximise on the opportunities for the probationer to develop their core policing skills through the PDP core tasks in as many contexts as possible.
- At week five of stage four, the tutor introduces the concept of working towards policing objectives to their partnership. At this point the focus of their activity shifts. The totality of their endeavours is no longer upon personal development, this reduces as attention is also given to the needs of the policing area.



- From week ten of stage four, the probationer patrols independently. At this point there is an anticipated fall in performance of both personal development and activity aimed at policing plans. As the officer's confidence increases this performance drop is normally overcome and the officer learns to work jointly for their own and the organisation's needs.
- After fifteen weeks, and then every fifteen weeks thereafter, their supervisor reviews the officer's development and performance and all policing objectives are renewed.

The mechanics of this transformation are expanded in the following diagram.

**Fig. 14**



**Legend**

- ‘A’ – mid way point of tutor period less personal development, greater focus on localised policing
- ‘B’ – end of tutor period, all round performance drops

**Development beyond stage four**

Patrolling independently introduces the probationary officer to the harmony of their own needs and the needs of the organisation, as well as making choices on how and where to undertake their role whilst patrolling alone. The officer works within a team structure and becomes directly responsible



to a sergeant for the first time. The new PDP aims at securing a balance between these three factors and in doing so aims to increase overall organisational performance by linking business strategy to the development of the key employees. Williams (1998) contrasted this style of performance management with more formal control and reward mechanisms that characterise contemporary practices. Williams states:-

“... for the sceptics who see such thinking as unduly altruistic, there is increasing evidence to indicate that organisational benefits are to be obtained.”<sup>172</sup>

Thus, within the police probation, the introduction of this PDP and its associated assessment and development processes undertakes to develop both the recruit and the organisation served. It does this by offering a structured suite of experiences, (core tasks) to be measured against detailed skill areas (core skills) in differing contexts. The individual officer is launched into the complexities of business plans and policing by objectives in an organised fashion. Within this course of action they are released into a learning environment where they continue to serve both themselves and perhaps more importantly the community upon whom all officers are charged to assist to the best of their ability.

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<sup>172</sup> Williams, R. (1998) Performance Management. International Thomson Business Press. London.



**“Performance appraisal has remained an unsolved and perhaps unsolvable problem in human resource management. The amount of thinking, writing and debating that surrounds the topic is truly massive.”<sup>173</sup>**

The 1995 evaluation of police probationer training (NPT)<sup>174</sup> found that the supervisor appraisal section of the existing Personal Development Portfolio left considerable room for improvement. Specifically the evaluation found that supervisors’ assessments, as well as those completed by the probationer, were too lengthy, repetitive and often lacked a specific focus. The report stated: -

**“Generally there is a perceived need to comment on all aspects of the thirty-six skills and abilities currently outlined as assessment criteria, even when the comments have no real developmental benefit for the student.”<sup>175</sup>**

Traditionally, probationers were writing summative assessments on their own performance at key stages in their period with a tutor constable and the remaining probationary period that followed. The guidance on writing these reports contained specific requirements for all assessments to be relevant and evidenced towards the development of the probationer concerned. It transpired that the assessments written, especially by operational police sergeants, were short of evidential content, limited in their relevance and had actually become a cultural chore rather than an opportunity for a

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<sup>173</sup> Patten, T. (1982) A manager’s guide to Performance Appraisal. The Free Press. New York.

<sup>174</sup> NPT (1995) Op. Cit.

<sup>175</sup> NPT (1995) Ibid.

supervisor to review staff performance. The NPT evaluation report (1995) commented: -

“Assessments were often historical, with action plans based upon them being out of date, lacking frequent use and thorough monitoring necessary to achieve the benefits expected.”<sup>176</sup>

This research aimed to include improvements to the situation outlined in the NPT report by creating a new style of PDP. Specifically, the aims were therefore

to: -

- produce an appraisal system for completion by supervisors that reflected the organisational need to regularly review and develop the constables performance
- reduce the assessment burden placed on sergeants
- retain clarity of purpose
- build on the existing good practice within police supervision.

This chapter explores the literature regarding staff appraisals and details the results of the active research that took place. In particular this chapter highlights the benefit of an accurate appraisal section in any performance and developmental review and does so in a natural progression to the preceding chapter that focussed on the day-to-day development of an officer's competence. The research led to the inclusion of appraisal in the format discussed, within the new PDP.

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<sup>176</sup> NPT (1995) Ibid.



## **Analysis of the ‘problem’.**

The former PDP was the first system within policing in the UK to include evidenced criteria within the appraisal structure. The ‘thirty-six skills and abilities’<sup>177</sup> were the guiding assessment criteria upon which supervisors were basing their appraisals of probationers. One of the research findings from NPT (1995) stated that supervisors were having difficulty discerning which of these criteria to report on; furthermore, rather than reporting on those relevant to the constables’ needs, in times of uncertainty they reported on all thirty-six. This caused lengthy and unwieldy reports that few people gave credit or time to. Many entries were found in the PDPs that supported these findings, for instance: -

‘You are a smart officer who has always had clean shoes and sharply pressed trousers. Your shirts are always pressed well and are a credit to you.’<sup>178</sup>

One would question the relevance of such an entry made in the PDP of a constable with over eighteen months police service. When the matter was discussed with supervisors in South Wales, South Yorkshire and Durham, they invariably reported that this type of entry was indicative of not having sufficient evidence to write a meaningful report and using all the available skills areas to ‘pad the report out’.

One sergeant reported: -

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<sup>177</sup> NPT (1989) Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> PDP entry. Sussex. 1997.

“It’s OK to ask us to do these reports, but when and how can I record my evidence along the way. I may go out with them but I won’t then find the time to write my evidence in a book, it just doesn’t happen.”<sup>179</sup>

There appeared, therefore, to be a number of key issues emerging in support of NPTs findings. The lack of evidence being ‘captured’ by supervisors was an area for development, the number and volume of skill areas to be reported on was worthy of examination and the method of writing the reports was also found to be of relevance to this research. These thoughts and views were shared with a focus group in Devon and Cornwall and agreed as pertinent to the research goal of a meaningful PDP. One participant who commented on this stated: -

“Sergeants just don’t gather relevant evidence, they should do. This new system needs to take account of the difficulties in this area and address them from the start.”<sup>180</sup>

A high number of PDP entries examined consisted of over eight full sides of A4 paper, written in support of a period of work often not taking place over more than five weeks. The content and substance of these portfolios was sub-standard and of little developmental value to the constables concerned.

One police probationer who was interviewed at length put forward his views on this subject: -

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<sup>179</sup> Interview with a South Wales police sergeant. 1998.

<sup>180</sup> Interview with a Devon and Cornwall police constable. 1998.



“I have to complete a report spanning my last five weeks or so on division. My sergeant will not accept this report from me unless I have written at length about all the thirty-six skills and abilities. I have over twenty months in this job now, she should know what my development needs are, so why am I, and ultimately her, writing so much for so little purpose, what’s the point.”<sup>181</sup>

As discussed within chapter five, HOC 43/96 recommended a whole new suite of behavioural skills for police officers and these were chosen to supplant the existing thirty-six skills and abilities. It was presumed that the automatic effect of this would be a reduction in the work of sergeants and constables with the appraisal portion of the new PDP.

However, in early focus groups that took place in West Mercia and Leicester, sergeants when reviewing the ‘core skills’ contained in HOC 43/96 often asked if they had to comment on each and every example given for each skill area. Despite frequent interventions to reassure participants that this was not the case, most sergeants felt comfortable commenting on an established list of behaviours rather than interpreting the core skill in the most pertinent way that was relevant to the constable under scrutiny.

This focussed the research on examining exactly what the role of the sergeant was during not only the appraisal period, but also the whole period under observation. One of the initial stages of this research element was to define the purpose and examine the relevance of supervisors’ appraisals of police probationers. It was becoming clear that in doing so, the actual marketing of the PDP could become easier upon official launch of the product across the nation.

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<sup>181</sup> Interview with a Lancashire police constable, 1997.

## Defining appraisal

The concept of appraisal is not new to managers and employees. 'Darius the Great' is applauded by introducing staff appraisal into his management of governors in the fifth century B.C. By keeping evidenced records systematically over a period of time he was able to judge all the prospective clients for positions in his kingdom with some objectivity and success. Some theological supporters comment it was probable that Adam appraised Eve before even the most basic of interactions took place between them.

In more modern times, appraisal has become synonymous with career progression, lateral development and an endless chore that is placed upon most if not all managers. Marchington and Wilkinson (1996)<sup>182</sup> argue that appraisal can be viewed as a technique for assessing and rewarding performance, whilst Clyne (1995)<sup>183</sup> commented upon appraisal having a major purpose of identifying future development needs. Marchington and Wilkinson (1996) define appraisal as: -

“the process whereby current performance in a job is observed and discussed for the purpose of adding value to that level of performance.”<sup>184</sup>

This explanation clearly states two purposes to any appraisal process, firstly the actual observation of performance and secondly the discussion, presumably between the directly interested parties on how that evidence can be used for improvement. What is not fully disclosed within this definition are the key components of what should actually be included within the appraisals and exactly with

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<sup>182</sup> Marchington, M. and Wilkinson, A. (1996) Core Personnel and Development. IPD. London.

<sup>183</sup> Clyne, S. (1995) Continuing Professional Development. Kogan Page. London.

<sup>184</sup> Marchington, M. and Wilkinson, A. (1996) Op cit.



whom the main responsibility for the appraisal should rest. Tyson (1995) defines appraisal as a sophisticated way of ensuring that:-

“either people’s performance is monitored or their potential is identified (or both).”<sup>185</sup>

Tyson also identifies that any appraisal process, irrelevant of its design and functional capability, is weakened if it is conducted half-heartedly. It is further recognised that within many multi-national companies any attempts at staff appraisals employ a number of approaches rather than attempting a single defining approach.

A secondary function of any appraisal procedure is one of controlling the workforce. Gallagher et al (1997)<sup>186</sup> categorise appraisal in this manner drawing the inference that by giving feedback to a subordinate on the achievement against set targets the organisation actually has cultural values and norms reinforced.

As well as functioning as an organisational control mechanism, appraisals can, and perhaps always will be, primarily seen as a system where the parent organisation seeks to improve productivity, in whatever form that may be, by developing and enhancing the skills of staff. This development is often measured against a published list of competencies. Clyne (1995)<sup>187</sup> discusses the success of appraisal schemes and concludes that only when an appraisal is included as part of continuous professional development will the scheme be lucrative. She goes on to state:-

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<sup>185</sup> Tyson, S. (1995) Strategic Prospects for HRM. IPD. Exeter.

<sup>186</sup> Gallagher, K et al. (1997) People in Organisations – an Active Learning Approach. Blackwell. Oxford.

<sup>187</sup> Clyne, S. (1995) Op Cit.

“People can only reach their targets if they are continually developing their competences in a structured way and if this competence growth is linked directly to their performance targets.”<sup>188</sup>

Armstrong and Dawson (1989)<sup>189</sup> highlight key concepts of the role of appraisal. In so doing they appear to bring together the previously discussed appraisal designations. The key objectives for appraisal, as so stated are:-

- “Communication to each employee the way his performance is judged by his superiors
- Discussing with the employee his strengths and weaknesses in the performance of his existing job
- Identifying training and development needs of an employee which would make him more effective in his existing job
- Identifying an employee who is either ready for promotion, or has potential for promotion within the organisation
- In some cases, identifying the performance or level of performance for which the employee may be further financially rewarded.”<sup>190</sup>

There are therefore a number of factors to be considered when planning any new appraisal system. The purpose of appraisal should be agreed, the objectives of the practice should appear logical and connected to the business objectives, and the whole appraisal should be established within a continuous development arrangement. If this is the case, evidence would suggest that the chances of success are likely to be greater than if assessment decisions went ahead without such a

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<sup>188</sup> Clyne, S. (1995) Ibid. p. 1

<sup>189</sup> Armstrong, P. and Dawson, C. (1988) People in Organisations. Elm. Cambridge.

<sup>190</sup> Armstrong, P. and Dawson, C. (1988) Ibid.



composition.

## **Appraisal for the Police**

Throughout this research there were many discussions with tutor constables and sergeants. Some of these discussions (Sussex, Lancashire and Devon and Cornwall) were especially focussed on their role in probationer development. It became clear that without the participation of these officers in the assessing and reviewing of performance, any new system would be viewed as folly and likely to fail. Typical of the strength of feeling identified was the comment: -

“The tutor has to play a vital role in whatever system is introduced. Our professionalism should be recognised and we should be allowed greater freedom to make decisions about probationers’ skills.”<sup>191</sup>

It was therefore prudent to recognise the findings from the NPT review, assess the academic opinions upon appraisal processes and attempt to fit these into the police culture and working environment. One of the guiding principles was to recognise these elements but in doing so construct an appraisal process that was pragmatic and acceptable to the service as a whole. In doing so, the question of motivating probationers to actually want to complete their PDP entries also became a focus.

## **Motivation**

James (1998)<sup>192</sup> discovered that performance appraisal has its roots in three well substantiated principles, people work / learn / achieve more when they are given:-

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<sup>191</sup> Interview with a police tutor constable, Devon and Cornwall, 1997.

<sup>192</sup> James, G. (1988) Performance Appraisal. Occasional Paper 40. ACAS Work Research.

- a) Clear, attainable goals
- b) Involvement in the setting of goals and tasks
- c) Adequate feedback as to how they are performing

This simple list has a greater significance than merely highlighting the path to greater individual performance. It suggests that an appraisee can become motivated and committed to the appraisal process, and therefore the objectives of the organisation, particularly when the manner of assessment is truly participative.

Many studies have taken place into motivation and motivational factors within the workplace. Many offer comments upon the nature of work and how that can be managed by active, observational management (Taylor 1947)<sup>193</sup> Mayo 1949).<sup>194</sup> In contrast, McGregor (1960)<sup>195</sup> offers that the ability to become motivated lies with the individual's persona at the relevant time, (theory X and theory Y). The most commonly used motivational theory within police training is that of Maslow (1943).<sup>196</sup> Maslow's hierarchy of needs is perhaps relevant to this research as it concentrates upon the release of energy and enthusiasm that can occur within an individual when the supporting circumstances are appropriate. The following table compares Maslow's original hierarchy (labelled on the left) with the suggestion of how the new PDP philosophy also needed to satisfy the needs for 'self-actualisation' (labelled on the right).

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<sup>193</sup> Taylor, F. (1947) Scientific Management Harper and Row. London.

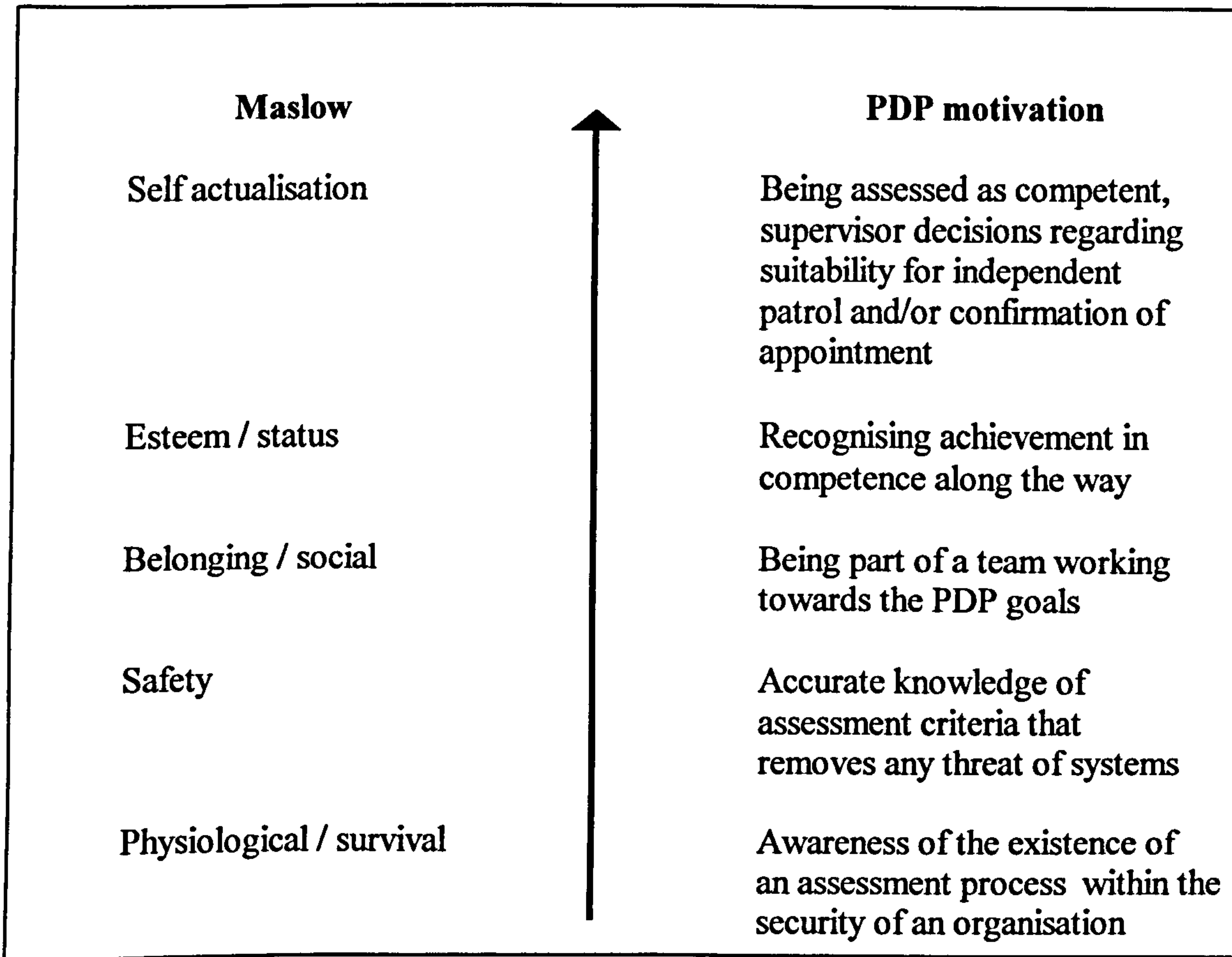
<sup>194</sup> Mayo, E. (1949) The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilisation. Routledge. London.

<sup>195</sup> McGregor, D. The Human Side of Enterprise McGraw-Hill. London.

<sup>196</sup> Maslow, A. A Theory of Human Motivation. Psychological Review 50 in People in Organisations, Gallagher et al. Op. Cit.



**Fig. 15**



Maslow wrote of self-actualisation that it is the desire within an individual to develop into everything they believe they are capable of becoming. Clearly, within all employees there may be this desire for self-fulfilment, however the managing of that precept causes further analysis of other motivation factors.

Continued examination of motivational theory leads to a scrutiny of the roles of managers and their organisations. Hertzberg (1968)<sup>197</sup> found that further to the need for motivation within the employee (Maslow), the actions of managers and the environmental situation brought about within the workplace also acted upon the strength of motivation. To this end his two-part theory, hygiene

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<sup>197</sup> Hertzberg, F. (1968) One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees. Harvard Business Review, No. 46.

and motivating factors, is often perceived as relevant to organisational studies. The following table examines these factors and offers explanation of the role of appraisal within the PDP and the Police Service when measured against this theory.

<p><b>Hygiene factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job security</li> <li>• Quality of supervision</li> <li>• Acceptable company policies</li> <li>• Acceptable administration</li> </ul> <p><i>All of which when absent will lead to dissatisfaction within employees</i></p>	<p><b>Appraisal within policing and the goals of the new PDP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers a secure future determined by a fair, ethical assessment process</li> <li>• Offers acceptable assessment and development processes</li> <li>• Offers transparent systems of development and appraisal</li> </ul> <p><i>All of which if not included within a system of appraisal would lead to dissatisfaction and mistrust of the procedure</i></p>
<p><b>Motivating factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Advancement</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> </ul> <p><i>All of which lead to job satisfaction which leads employees to perform well</i></p>	<p><b>Motivating factors within policing and the goals of the new PDP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of core tasks and skills</li> <li>• Recognition of development issues and progress</li> <li>• Advancement through the core task list and through independent patrol to confirmation of rank</li> <li>• Responsibility to manage development of self through the process including self-appraisal</li> </ul> <p><i>All of which allows the individual to seek satisfaction through the appraisal processes and thus become focused on their own performance</i></p>

Hertzberg (1968) also stated that job simplification, and thus workplace performance increases, could be revised and implemented by three simple factors:

- Job rotation



- Job enlargement
- Job enrichment

Within the confines of appraisal in the Police, especially during the probation when the PDP is the primary assessment and development tool, job rotation and job enlargement are not easily manifested. At best, job rotation can be achieved through attachments to specialised departments and job enlargement comes about through increased responsibility, allocated as a result of successful appraisal. Job enrichment is perhaps more realistic as the PDP structure itself allows a constant enhancement of the working day when more complicated core tasks are undertaken as development occurs.

Reviewing this theoretical status within the proposal of a new PDP, the assessment/appraisal aspect of the portfolio is clearly required to act as a motivating feature. As well as this utility, the PDP requires a purpose that relates to the earlier NPT<sup>198</sup> review findings and takes cognisance of existing motivational theories. Within the motivational context, the organisational perspective, often stated as 'why bother doing this' also had to be considered.

### **Aims of appraisals**

One of the most frequently cited aims of appraisal is to enable an assessment to be made on the performance of an employee (Fletcher 1993);<sup>199</sup> this clearly indicates a historic perspective to appraisal. Spangenberg (1994)<sup>200</sup> when discussing appraisal problems noted that a historic perspective clashes with managerial preference for up to date and current information. It would

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<sup>198</sup> NPT (1995) Op. Cit.

<sup>199</sup> Fletcher, C. (1993) Appraisal London. Institute of Personnel Management.

<sup>200</sup> Spangenberg, H. (1994) Understanding and Implementing Performance Management. Cape Town. Juta.

appear when reviewing these perspectives that the views held align with the fundamental principles of either using appraisal to develop staff, thereby motivating them towards increased performance, or directly monitoring performance through an appraisal procedure. The former appears to concentrate on a holistic outlook whilst the latter on a harder, more task centred, stance.

Patten (1982)<sup>201</sup> favoured an appraisal style that solely concentrated on employees' previous performance. He stated that any review on a more than annual basis would be a "mere administrative convenience."<sup>202</sup> Managers, however, have the right to exercise their prerogative to manage their workforce. In that context, Patten identifies the essential condition that with probationary employees there may be a need for managers to draw up and administer a review of performance when appropriate. This would be deemed especially appropriate as a tool to improve performance within the manager's province.

Police supervisors clearly required some form of input into a probationer's development portfolio. The question to be satisfied was whether this would be on an historic basis or on a more pertinent and timely footing.

The PDP uses an iterative procedure to gather performance evidence about probationary constables. As discussed in the chapter 'Development within the Probation', regular portfolio entries are made on 'events sheets' that capture the constables' occurrences and reflections. These are based upon the use of experience to highlight progress and development needs. Both tutor constables and sergeants are encouraged to make comment upon their charges as and when they witness any performance they feel worthy of note. The research indicates that this encouragement does allow

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<sup>201</sup> Patten, T. (1982) Op. Cit.

<sup>202</sup> Patten, T. (1982) Ibid.



supervisors to fulfil this role. In one set of PDPs that were examined the 'events sheets' had been completed by not only the officer under scrutiny but also their supervisor. However, the purpose of the 'appraisal' element of the PDP was, as already stated, to reflect an organisational need, reduce administrative burden, retain clarity of purpose and build on supervisors' good practice.

In doing so, these immediate and informal 'terms of reference' gave further credence to McGregor's (1960)<sup>203</sup> findings regarding the objectives of appraisal, namely:-

- They should be administrative, providing an orderly method of determining progress
- They should be informative, supplying data on subordinates weaknesses and strengths
- They should be motivational, creating a learning experience that motivates staff to develop themselves and increase performance

#### **Focus group findings on appraisal within the PDP**

Having designed and formed the 'events sheets' technique of gathering evidence, the matter of appraisal was debated in a focus group in Thames Valley Police. In this session it became clear that sergeants and tutors felt that a report of an appraisal style was definitely required within the proposed PDP. Typically comments were made such as :-

“They [the probationers] need to have someone review their progress to let them know how well they are doing.”<sup>204</sup>

A probationer's perspective was offered as :-

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<sup>203</sup> McGregor, D. (1960) Op. Cit.

<sup>204</sup> Interview with a police sergeant, Thames Valley Police. 1997.

“The idea of a report by the tutor or sergeant had a positive effect on me. It made me feel that someone cared about me. The whole thing would work better if it was shorter and quicker to do though.”<sup>205</sup>

This group was exposed to the ‘events sheets’ system. The suggestion that came from their work, which was to search for a suitable appraisal process that met the indicated needs, was both functional and at face value appropriate for the Services requirements.

That proposal was as follows. At the end of a given time period the events sheets entries should be reviewed and amalgamated into a report. This report should be short, and focus upon the actual extremes of performance, i.e. those areas where competence has been claimed and those areas where action plans have been created. If the system of event sheets entries functioned correctly, e.g. entries were regularly reviewed for accuracy and relevance, forcing the supervisor to actively participate in managing the probationer, then this exercise would be without a heavy burden for the report compiler. The group suggested that the most relevant person to complete these performance reviews was the actual probationer undertaking the development process.

The role of the supervisor, whether that was the sergeant or tutor constable, would be to review that report and report purely on its accuracy and relevance. The group in Thames Valley Police believed that in doing so, the burden upon the supervisor would be reduced in three ways.

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<sup>205</sup> Interview with a police constable, Thames Valley Police. 1997.



- I. The need to keep records of constables' performance, in order to provide evidence for the reports they historically wrote, would be removed. These would appear on a regular basis in the 'events sheets'.
- II. The requirement for supervisors to write lengthy reports that repeated much of what was already written would be removed. The supervisors' purpose would be an addition to the work undertaken by the constable, not a duplicate.
- III. The work required of the probationer would be on a day-to-day basis, the actual exercise of reporting progress would be shorter, quicker and of greater relevance to their status as a developing constable.

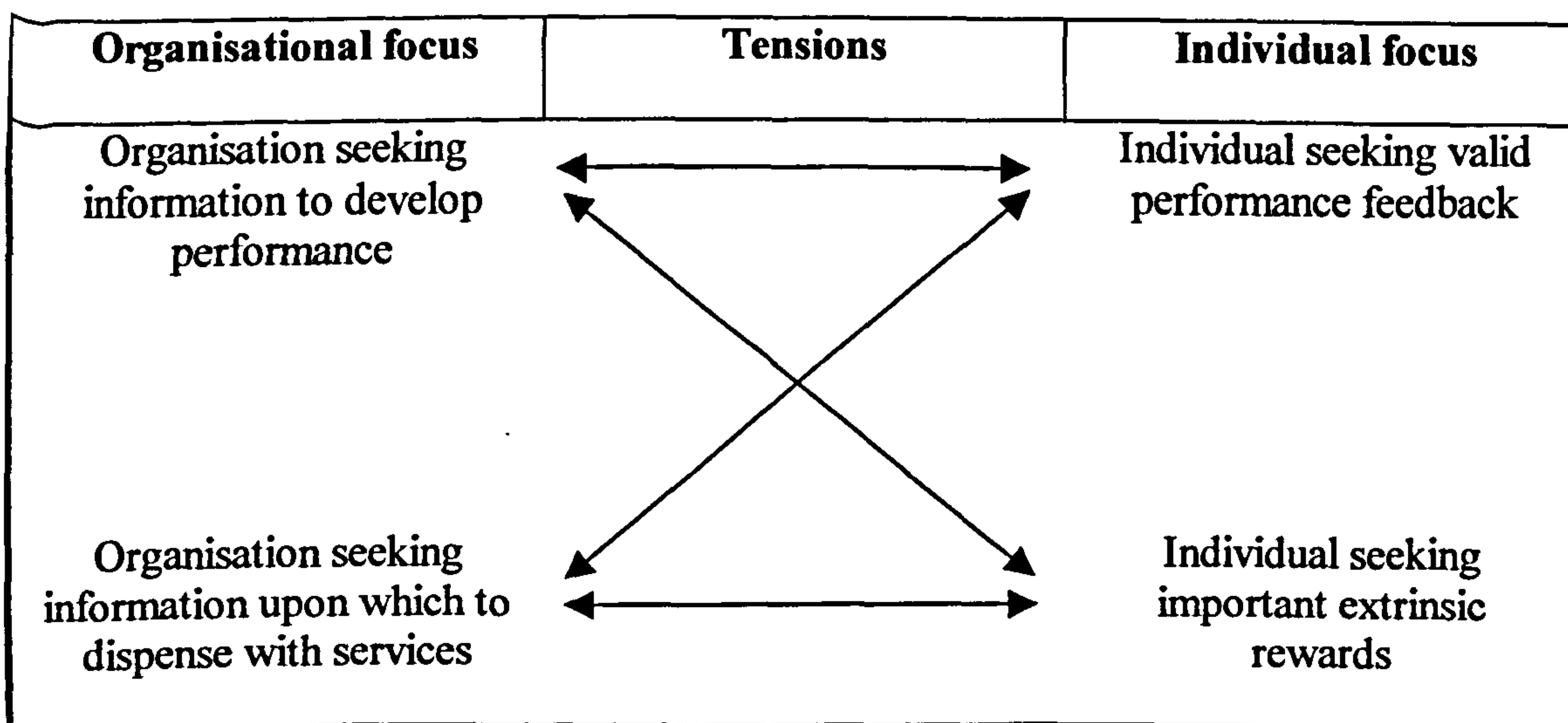
One constable in explaining this work to the focus group likened it to a school comprehension exercise. A passage of written work, in this case the events sheets entries, was read, reviewed and paraphrased into a short, balanced report that gave the reader a true picture of the actual content of the original work. In later focus groups, (Leicester, Lincoln) this theory was shared and developed. The style and purpose of this report was agreed as valid and generally well received. Sergeants accepted that as a process it would force them to take an active role in supervising their probationers on a regular basis. Only by doing this would they be able to remove their burden of appraisal report writing that they currently suffered.

This process became known as the 'Performance Review' and specific paperwork was designed to accommodate these principles. It thus became the practice within the PDP that there were two assessment processes within the portfolio structure. One, based upon a formative style, incorporated regular entries that could be made by the portfolio holder or a supervisor. The second, a more summative approach, was a comprehension exercise based upon the previous entries made on a frequent basis.

The combination of two styles of reporting within one document clearly gave rise to an opportunity for conflict. On one hand the PDP was a tool for capturing evidence of performance and thus would be used as a motivational instrument. From another perspective, the PDP was a tool of management that could be utilised within procedures for admonishment or even dismissal.

These tensions represented diagrammatically appear as follows:-

Fig. 16



To overcome the likelihood of these tensions becoming reality an approach advocated by Holdsworth (1991)<sup>206</sup> was adopted. Holdsworth drew attention to the modern day practices of organisations using performance appraisal systems to bring about cultural change. To minimise the tensions caused by the appraisal methodology as advocated by Holdsworth, the PDP encourages openness and frank relationships as a condition for effective performance. In doing so, the appraisal practice for probationers is becoming increasingly recognised as two way and more participative. This is beginning a cultural shift within policing. One constable from the Hampshire

<sup>206</sup> Holdsworth. R. (1991) Appraisal in F. Neale (ed.) Performance Management. London. IPM.



Constabulary PDP trial group commented:-

“I feel happier writing honest reports in my PDP as my sergeant is out there with me more. It means she actually sees my mistakes in context and isn’t reading my notes and drawing up false conclusions.”<sup>207</sup>

A sergeant in Lancashire commented: -

“It’s brilliant. It makes sergeants actually do their job of supervising probationers. It takes the secrecy out of assessment and forces them to be honest with the lads.”<sup>208</sup>

### **Defining appraisal and performance outputs**

As previously discussed, HOC 43/96 has become the foundation for most police performance appraisals, although it doesn’t directly govern the probationary period for constables. The circular includes within its text the aim of directing police performance towards the published goals and objectives of the organisation. (Discussed fully in chapter five). The concept of managing by objectives (MbO) is not new, nor was it created for the Police Service.

Rodgers and Hunter (1991)<sup>209</sup> advocate the involvement of appraisees when setting performance goals. Without this level of participation they identify that:-

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<sup>207</sup> Interview with a Hampshire constable. 1999.

<sup>208</sup> Interview with a training sergeant, Lancashire. 1999.

<sup>209</sup> Rodgers, R and Hunter, J. (1991) Impact of Management by Objectives in Journal of Applied Psychological Monograph Series. No 76.

“Managers who rely on only their own ideas are more like a one person orchestra rather than a conductor of musicians.”<sup>210</sup>

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HOC 43/96 requires police personnel to identify up to five key areas of their performance that will support the current business plan of the policing activity area they work within. Recalling the fact that this research was given a remit of recognising the national status of this report, it was prudent to include this aspect within the PDP structure.

There are many perceived benefits of including MbO within the appraisal structure of the PDP. Baguley (1994)<sup>211</sup> states that the actual overall task of any organisation is to arrange, manage and control the available resources to maximise on the attainment of objectives. To accomplish this Baguley states that it is vital therefore that the organisation's overarching goals and objectives are communicated to all employees clearly. This communication is best transferred from a strategic level to an operational level through regular contact with managers. It is therefore contended that the frequent performance review appraisal process within the PDP would meet this need.

Williams (1998)<sup>212</sup> advocates the strength of MbO rests solely with the functionality of the cascade process. Only by a purposeful and efficient system can strategic organisational goals be aligned with individual objectives. Most systems for carrying out this process appear to be one-way, top down methods of communication. There appear to be very few differences in the imposition of top down systems and this appears at variance with the expected two-way communication promoted in appraisals generally. Common practice would appear, from reviews of forces' appraisal systems, to

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<sup>210</sup> Rodgers, R. and Hunter, J. (1991) Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Baguley, P. (1994) Improving Organisational Performance. Maidenhead. McGraw-Hill.

<sup>212</sup> Williams, R. (1998) Ibid.



be at best, employee involvement that reaches shared agreement about their own performance goals.

The principles outlined within HOC 43/96 replicate national practice, that is a top down process of deciding business plan objectives within the overarching spectrum of strategic performance management. Thus it was expected, and found, that there were tensions between these two approaches.

In the final de-brief of the Hampshire PDP trial it was found that business planning and MbO as contained within the PDP was crude, disorganised and had a piecemeal approach. Within a review of over forty PDPs in the Lancashire Constabulary these facts were also found to prevail.

One of the difficulties that appeared to exist was in the translation of strategic organisational goals into meaningful personal objectives. McConkie (1979)<sup>213</sup> found that some observers could view objectives in a sterile way; requiring specific, measurable results with a clear link between those of the individual and the organisation. His work, a study of over forty authorities on MbO drew attention to other considerations, namely:-

- Objectives should be reviewed
- Objectives should be flexible, changing as conditions warrant
- The indicator of results should be quantifiable or at least verifiable.

Despite all of these mechanisms being built into both 43/96 and the PDPs operational stance on MbO, the difficulties outlined earlier still prevail. This is perhaps an indicator of the scale and

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<sup>213</sup> McConkie, M. (1979) A Clarification of the Goal Setting and Appraisal Processes in MbO. Academy of Management Review 4(1)

nature of the cultural divide between espoused practices within the Police Service and the actual routines that exist in reality.

### **Measurement of performance within the PDP**

Observers of the failings of MbO have frequently sought a viable alternative to this aspect of performance management. Within the PDP it must be stressed that the MbO characteristic is introduced as an ancillary measure that supports organisational performance, whilst the individual police probationer concentrates on their own development needs.

One aspect of performance management that is cited as an alternative to MbO is the use of behaviourally anchored rating scales (BARs). BARs were in constant use in the earlier PDP but were found to have a number of failings. The NPT review (1995)<sup>214</sup> found the use of the scales contained within assessment to be unscientific and haphazard. Patten (1982)<sup>215</sup> found that BARs were often espoused as a viable alternative to MbO by managers who couldn't work within an MbO performance appraisal structure. Patten, who appears clear on his preferences indicates a better solution would be further training and coaching in the manner in which to use MbO effectively.

BARs were rejected within the PDP appraisal process for a number of reasons. They have fallen into disrepute amongst police performance management. Any new PDP would have to be seen as a major transformation away from the unsuccessful norms; retaining BARs would have diminished this possibility. Previous research into police assessment (PAA Consultants, 1995)<sup>216</sup> also found

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<sup>214</sup> NPT. (1995) The Probationer Training Review. Harrogate. National Police Training.

<sup>215</sup> Patten, T. (1982) Op. Cit.

<sup>216</sup> Horncastle, P. and Allcock, S. (1995) An Independent Evaluation of Appraisal Related Pay for the Police Service. London. PAA Consulting.



That the use of behaviour rating scales, themselves stable and robust, were ineffective and too complicated to succeed.

Without BARs and with the less than effective MbO approach promoted by HOC 43/96, the appraisal section of the new PDP could appear to lack a formal, identifiable performance management structure. However, it is contended that within the proffered system of regular formative entries, themselves reviewed by the portfolio owner and supervisor, there is a robust and defensible system of managing the development and performance of the police probationers involved in this style of assessment.

### **Appraisal subjectivity**

Throughout the cycle of PDP training and focus groups that took place, one question that was frequently asked centred around the issue of subjectivity in assessment. The manifestation of this issue was normally based upon supervisors having to face the reality that they would be expected to gauge and judge whether or not an officer in their charge was 'competent'. In previous PDP systems supervisors had the aforementioned BARs which some claimed assisted the decision making process. Observers, as discussed earlier, pointed to the failings of these systems within police assessment.

The main factors that direct police assessors away from subjective decision making principles are the exposure to complaints of bias, prejudice, inconsistency and inaccuracy. It is impossible to remove subjectivity from the human assessment of human behaviour. It was likened, by way of explanation, by the following anecdote.

If the question were to be asked whether the light in the room is on or not, all those present would be able to confirm whether the light is actually on or indeed switched off. If the question were asked for all those present to give their judgement on whether the room was light or dark, on a scale of 1 to 10, there would be a whole range of results. Yet all those present are witnessing the same room at the same time. Subjectivity is a factor of human life and cannot be totally removed. Therefore, to a calculated degree, the Police Service has to accept a measure of subjectivity within its assessment procedures.

Philp (1990) captures that theme when discussing the realism of appraisal systems by observing that: -

“We must face the facts of life: everyone may strive for perfection, but it is not possible to achieve this very often.”<sup>217</sup>




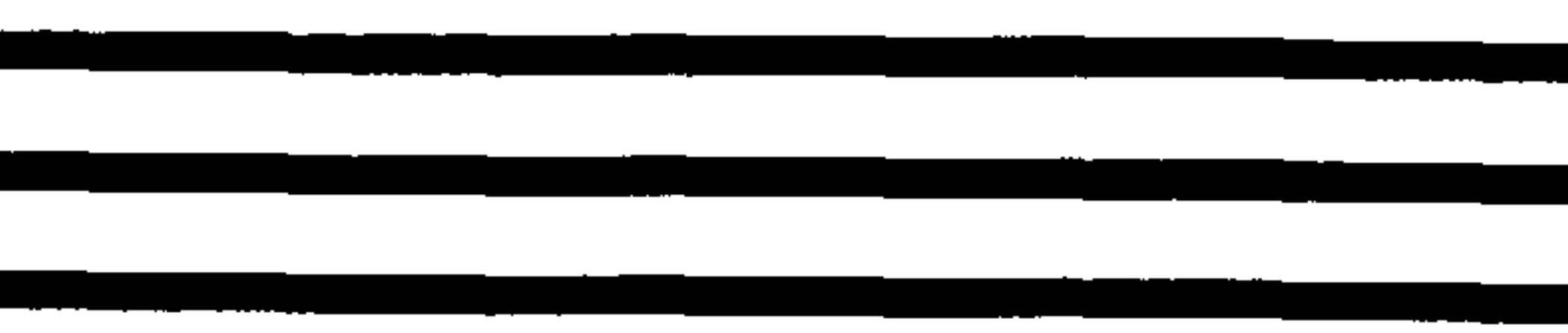
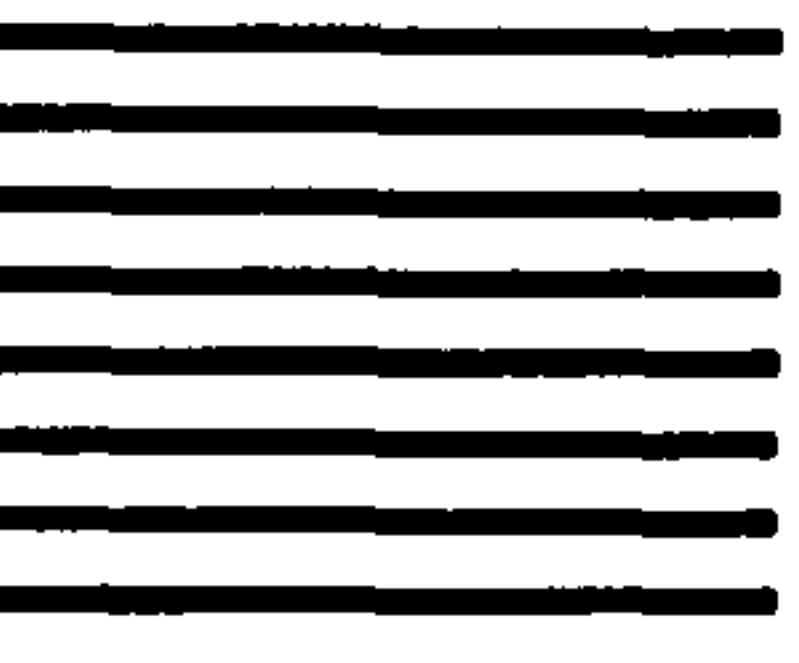
The PDP structure, by having a host of individual core tasks, core skills and policing contexts improves assessment and takes away some of the effects of subjectivity. It does this by requiring many individual decisions to be made, each a judgement in their own right. The following table outlines that progressive attitude.

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<sup>217</sup> Philp, T. (1990) Appraising Performance for Results. Berkshire. McGraw-Hill.



**Fig. 17**

Decision making style	Increasing propensity for subjectivity 
	
	Less subjectivity <span style="float: right;">More subjectivity</span>
One single, 'macro' decision on overall suitability	
Apparent use of BARs to assist judgements in specific areas of skill	
Frequent and numerous assessment decisions made against 'micro' performance objectives (core tasks/skills etc.)	

Thus, the chances of subjectivity are broken down from one overall decision, which is clearly open to abuse and all the associated decision making dangers, to many smaller decisions based upon more frequent occurrences. These decisions are made in each of the core tasks, applying the core skills and contextual situations to the decisions before competence is acknowledged. Any number of people can be involved in these separate decisions, thus reducing the opportunity of one person's prejudice over another.

At the time of the 'performance review', all of these individual assessments are brought together to finalise either suitability to patrol independently or for confirmation of appointment. The following table illustrates this practice: -

Core tasks deemed competent Entries by PDP reference Number e.g. 1.1a)	By whom	Performance review / appraisal by: -
1.1 a,b,c,d,	Sergeant 'A'	
1.2 c,f,e,a	Sergeant 'B'	
2.1 a,b,d,e,f,	Constable 'C'	
2.2 c,d,e,f	Sergeant 'B'	PDP 'owner' and Sergeant 'B'

By adopting this piece by piece approach to assessment the chances of mis-understandings occurring are also reduced. Philp (1990)<sup>218</sup> also highlights how subjectivity can often lead to disagreement between the appraiser and the appraisee.

It is recognised that were performance to be set in clear quantitative terms some of these debates on subjectivity would be absent from this research. A number of focus group attendees, who had all progressed to their current positions through NVQ style qualifications, enquired why a number could not be set that represented exactly when competence would be displayed. The heart of this debate was that if a core task was performed, for example three times, would that fact alone not indicate competence. Thus it was offered that a quantitative process could totally remove subjectivity from the appraisal of performance. The foundation of this claim lies within guidance for assessors offered for NVQ assessments (1997).<sup>219</sup> That guidance states for example that performance criterion demonstrated two times indicates sufficient evidence for competence.

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<sup>218</sup> Philp, T. (1990) Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> NCVQ. (1997) Op Cit.



Other, non-NVQ based focus group participants challenged this premise. It was widely believed that demonstrating a particular policing function a number of times would not guarantee competence. As one sergeant in South Yorkshire stated:-

“I am qualified in the rank of sergeant, tutors are trained to be tutors. I may say that a probationer is competent at dealing with victims of crime having seen him only once. I may also require him or her to show me that he can do it five times with different victims before I make that decision. The 3D effect overcomes subjectivity as long as people do their job and make lots of decisions based on observations of performance.”<sup>220</sup>

The overwhelming belief was that despite the NVQ based contentions, the 3D model of assessment went as far as practicable in removing subjectivity from the PDP assessment procedure. To some degree, broken down as stated above into smaller relevant pieces, there has, within this system, to be a degree of trust. Philp (1990) highlighted this by stating: -

“Anyone who reports to a truly professional manager should not have any concerns here, as shortfalls in performance will be analysed for the real cause.”<sup>221</sup>

### **The effects of management upon appraisal**

The consequences of management styles are of extreme relevance to the outcomes of appraisals. What managers do on a day-to-day basis will ultimately have a bearing on the appraisals of staff

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<sup>220</sup> Interview with a sergeant. South Yorkshire. 1997.

<sup>221</sup> Philp, T. (1990) Ibid.

that person deals with. Performance appraisals do not happen in vacuums, they happen within the contexts of existing attitudes.

Whereas a reduction in appraisal and assessment subjectivity can increase the effects of objective management approaches, the true influence of management style is also a factor to be considered at the design stage of any new appraisal process. Lefton (1977)<sup>222</sup> discusses managerial strategies that measure the 'dominance' or 'submission' and how much 'warmth' and 'hostility' managers display within their working practices. Lefton later details how the behaviour of managers dictates directly the behavioural characteristics of subordinates: -

“..subordinates anticipate how you're going to act in a performance appraisal; their anticipations are based on their experience, on their daily encounters with you.

These anticipations influence their behaviour during the appraisal.”<sup>223</sup>

Within policing practices the actions of managers are also indicative of the style of police work that is visible in the immediate surroundings. In the post Scarman years that have required constant cultural change, this managerial mentoring effect is perhaps not an effect that can be relied upon to produce positive change. In many national enquiry reports (HMIC 1999<sup>224</sup>, 1998<sup>225</sup>) the requirement for changes in managerial practice within the Police Service culture was made quite apparent. Fincham and Rhodes (1992)<sup>226</sup> appear to oppose the views of Lefton. In their analysis of the effects of work upon the worker they state that people do not respond directly to managerial stimulus but to the meaning of the stimulus within the environment they are in. Experience has

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<sup>222</sup> Lefton, R. (1977) Effective Motivation through Performance Appraisal. Wiley and Sons. Chichester.

<sup>223</sup> Lefton, R. (1977) Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> HMIC. (1999) Op. Cit.

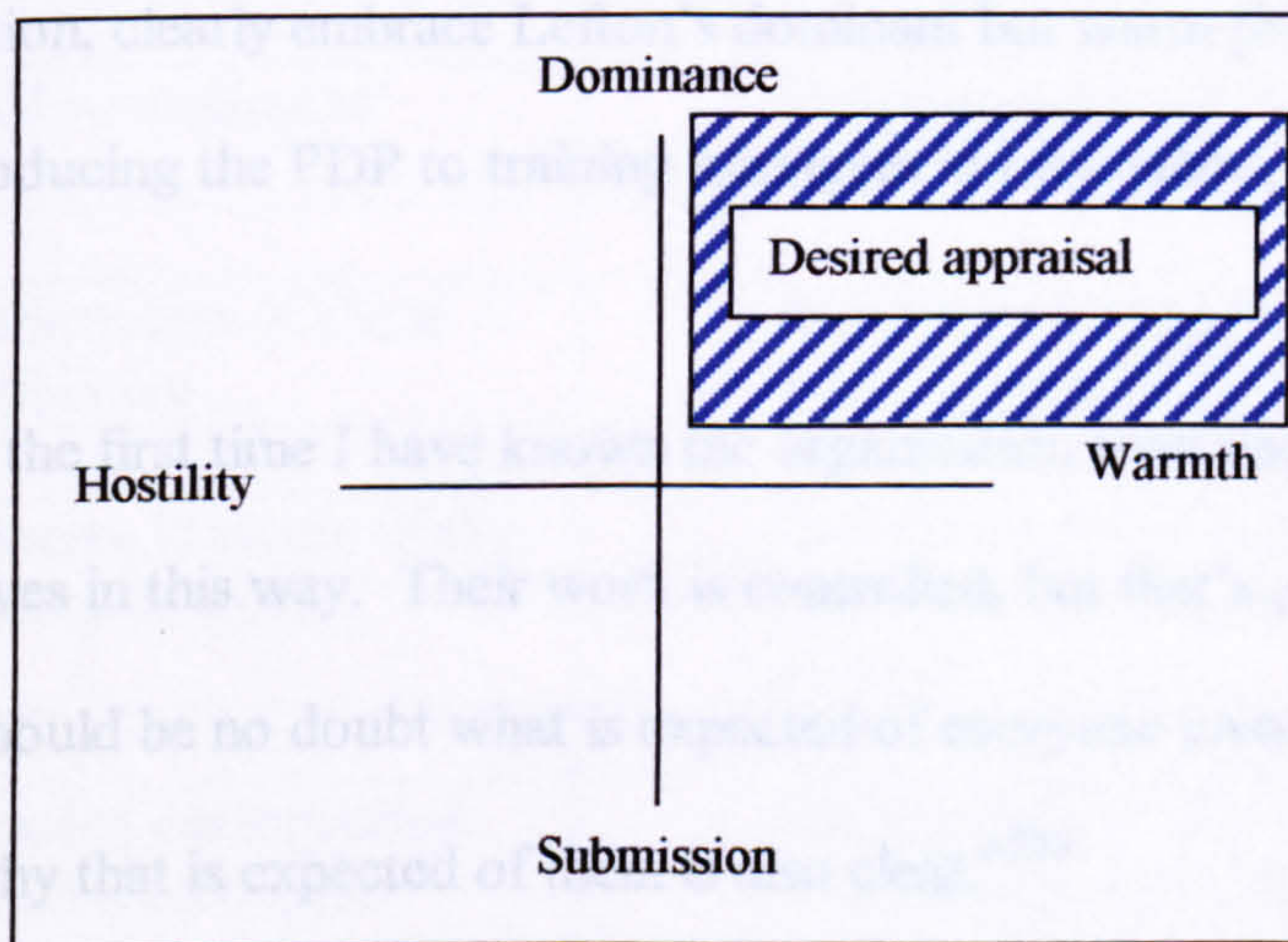
<sup>225</sup> HMIC. (1998) Op. Cit.

<sup>226</sup> Fincham, R. and Rhodes, P. (1992) Op. Cit.



shown throughout this research that there is a correlation between the views and attitudes of managers of police officers and those of their subordinate constables and sergeants. In Sussex the fact that the Inspector resisted the change to the new PDP system was directly reflected in the views of those working in subordinate roles. In Hampshire, where the attitude of the managers was entirely the opposite of that in Sussex, the mindset of more junior staff appeared to reflect this. It became a natural step that within the PDP the need to minimise managerial influence upon the PDP procedure was crucial to the anticipated and essential cultural transformation. The use of the formative and summative style of data collection reduced the effect of managerial power over a one-off appraisal process where influence could be brought to bear. Lefton (1977)<sup>227</sup> when utilising his two scales of appraisal types produces a simple paradigm that explains his rationale for the ideal appraisal: -

**Fig. 18**



By harmonising the two scales into a paradigm and bringing the more functional aspects together Lefton arrives at his 'dominant-warmth' management style which he describes as: -

<sup>227</sup> Lefton, R. (1977) Ibid.



“This is the get-the-best-out-of-them management (or let’s-produce-maximum-benefit-for-everybody-involved management). This approach normally produces positive commitment (a willingness to stretch).”<sup>228</sup>

Within this explanation Lefton appears to confirm that people work at their best when they can see the fruits of their labour helping them to achieve their own goals. Management control comes from creating understanding of job goals, independent thinking is increased and encouraged, decisions are based upon mutual and open debate and any conflicts are faced up to, acknowledged and resolved having identified the causes. Within the PDP philosophy, especially that section of the rationale relating to appraisal, it is desired that these management values transfer into everyday organisation of police probationers’ working life. The underlying principles of an adult process of assessment, founded upon mutual and agreed performance plans with the acute focus on the goals of the organisation, clearly embrace Lefton’s dominant but warm philosophy. In confirmation of this, whilst introducing the PDP to training managers in Lancashire, one sergeant commented: -

“This is the first time I have known the organisation trust people to manage themselves in this way. Their work is controlled, but that’s purposeful and clear. There should be no doubt what is expected of everyone involved, and more is the point, why that is expected of them is also clear.”<sup>229</sup>

Within this style of managing people in an appraisal process, Lefton identifies further that this approach insists on a two-way route to self-discovery and allows real insight into how the subordinate is actually performing. In doing so, and adopting the characteristics found in the PDP,

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<sup>228</sup> Lefton, R. (1977) Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Interview with a sergeant. Lancashire. 1999.



the ultimate goal is to reduce evasion of liability, game playing and make believe by the superior, and eliminate these characteristics in the police probationer.

Patten (1982)<sup>230</sup> describes the annual appraisal as a psychological jousting ring in which all kinds of rituals and interpersonal games can be acted out. Within that context the suggestion is put forward that gamesmanship, the rituals and the common superficial approaches to appraisal need to be understood by managers and methods for coping with them need to be utilised. The new PDP removes the responsibility away from managers for creating that strategic approach to probationers' appraisals, it does this by building the requirements into the overall tactics of assessment. Patten produces a guide for managers, which is reproduced below and compared against the relevant design features of the PDP.

<b>Patten's guide to reducing gamesmanship in appraisal</b>	<b>How the PDP philosophy the answers these needs.</b>
Determination of subordinates' responsibilities	The core tasks and policing objectives outline these requirements
Day-to-day confirmation of these specific responsibilities	Regular contact and entries in the 'events sheets' ensure this
Ensure the employee is aware of the quantity and quality of work required	The 3D model of assessment ensures both quality and quantity are clearly outlined
Ensure that recorded performance incidents, trends and on the job behaviour covering the entire period constitute a representative sample	The regular use of events sheets, the accurate use of the distribution curve to record evidence ensure this
Ensure previous development needs have been met	Reviewing action plans and agreeing future developmental activity embraces this

<sup>230</sup> Patten, T. (1982) Ibid.

In removing some, if not most, of the 'jousting opportunities' and psychological preparation from managers, the actual probability of the appraisal becoming less challenging, and therefore less confrontational, increase. In introducing this concept to a group of tutor constables in West Mercia one officer said: -

"If I do my job right from day-to-day, collecting evidence and being honest, all I have to do at the time of the performance review is allow my probationer to review their own work and write an accurate summary. This is certainly easier than a load of writing that used to cause arguments and upset at appraisal time."<sup>231</sup>

One of the criticisms of the previous PDP (NPT 1995)<sup>232</sup> was the lack of control and therefore accuracy over the action plans discussed at the time of the appraisal. By involving the supervisor throughout the developmental route to a review of performance, the opportunity for action plans being drawn up that lacked meaning and purpose is greatly reduced. Again in West Mercia a sergeant stated: -

"I no longer have to accept their action plans when I write their appraisal. There will be lots of them, they will be evidenced and they can no longer try to play a game with me. It's great that the dishonesty that came with action planning is being tackled."<sup>233</sup>

By having a system of appraising staff that reduces the opportunities for conflict, and diminishes

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<sup>231</sup> Interview with police constable. West Mercia. 1998.

<sup>232</sup> NPT. (1995) Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Interview with police sergeant. West Mercia. 1998.



the chances of the appraisal meeting becoming a verbal and psychological battle ground, the PDP engages in some of its ultimate goals, namely providing a system of developing staff and improving organisational performance. In doing so the PDP embraces the need for a changing police culture that meets the challenges required of the Service both politically and organisationally.

It has also been prudent to adopt an appraisal system that is of benefit to the supervisors and managers charged with undertaking the appraisal function. Conscripted and disinterested appraisers can tend to treat the process as a game or contest with little if any due regard for thoroughness or equity (Goodworth 1989).<sup>234</sup> By involving tutor constables and sergeants throughout the design, trial and implementation stages of the PDP it is sincerely hoped that the designed appraisal stage of the PDP process reflects their pragmatic requirements. The comments passed at seminars and focus groups appear to reflect this, as witnessed in the qualitative statements included in this chapter.

In concluding this chapter it is perhaps relevant to revisit the concept of an appraisal. In the terms identified within the new PDP the appraisal section is that part of the portfolio clearly aimed at reviewing past performance with a view to assisting the future development of the constable concerned. What sets this approach aside from the general definition is the reliance on the iterative work recorded in the PDP (discussed in chapter 6) and the reduction of the impression that the manager is “playing at being God.”<sup>235</sup> Armstrong (1994)<sup>236</sup> concludes that the word ‘appraisal’ implies a top down process; the expression used within the PDP is ‘Performance Review’, an idiom that attempts to remove such a stigma.

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<sup>234</sup> Goodworth, C. (1989) The Secrets of Successful Staff Appraisal and Counselling. Oxford. Heinemann.

<sup>235</sup> McGregor, D. (1957) An Uneasy Look at Performance Appraisal. Harvard Business Review, May-June.

<sup>236</sup> Armstrong, M. (1994) Performance Management. Kogan Page. London.

### Performance beyond the probation period

**“For the individual, the experience of being unable to cope with a set of job demands will be a bruising one and can lead to a massive loss of self confidence. For the organisation, the immediate costs will be poor performance and staff wastage. Failure to identify and utilise human potential is ultimately a competitor’s gain.”<sup>237</sup>**

Having researched the needs of police organisations with regard to their probationary constables and included these findings in the new PDP, there was a natural desire to extend these deliberations. This research extension focused on the challenging spectrum of post probation police assessment and development. ACPO intimated at a national level that they were considering a National Competency Framework and the research into police probationers was felt to be an advantageous starting point for the new work.

Two police forces had already committed themselves to competency frameworks, namely West Yorkshire and Kent. Most forces were attempting to commence some form of framework based upon HOC 43/96. It became very obvious from early discussions with members of ACPO (Personnel Management Committee) that the actual definition of a ‘Competency Framework’ was in their mindset, undefined. A member of that ACPO group passed a comment in open forum, in response to a question posed by the researcher: -

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<sup>237</sup> Fincham, R. et al. (1992) The Individual, Work and Organisation. Oxford University Press. New York.



“I have no idea what this [the National Competency Framework] will look like, or indeed what purpose it will serve. It will be for you as a researcher to design it and make it happen. I will agree with whatever you suggest to our committee.”<sup>238</sup>

This element of the work outlines the research that was undertaken and highlights where the findings caused disagreement within ACPO, especially where, as will be seen later, the premise of a National Competency Framework as a ‘stand alone’ characteristic of police assessment is challenged.

Throughout this research, Home Office Circular 43/96 has been cited as the leading article and principal agent of change within police assessment and development. Without this guidance, the nation’s policing was at the hands of a previous circular, 104/91.<sup>239</sup> This gave police officers, and their employing forces, the belief that if officers were to perform adequately in the workplace they could expect, by right, either vertical or horizontal development. There was no room within the ethos of this circular (104/91) for officers to believe that they could rely on being satisfied with their role without the possibility of any change, either laterally or vertically in their workplace circumstances. The dawn of 43/96 heralded a new start, a complete transformation in police ‘appraisals’ and was accepted without precedent as the answer to the great police assessment dilemma. As one manager stated: -

“Prior to 43/96, police appraisal, call it what you will, was going nowhere. We had

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<sup>238</sup> Deputy Chief Constable (member of ACPO P&M) to the initial meeting of National Competency Working Group. Harrogate. 1998.

<sup>239</sup> Home Office. (1991) HOC 104/91 Career Development of Police Officers. Home Office. London.

no effective system at all. We couldn't get IiP [Investors in People] status, we were failing to identify training needs and we were letting both our employees and our public down badly. On face value this report solved those problems.”<sup>240</sup>

In practice the circular proved to be difficult to put into practice and left many practitioners floundering having attempted to put into place the mechanics of 43/96 amongst their workforce. The difficulties those forces were having are also detailed and the research findings offer what was found to be a meaningful solution to the 'problem' of assessing and developing police employees. The final section of this chapter offers a framework for the future and comments upon the reaction that it received from key stakeholders within the Service.

### **Defining a competency framework**

It was felt prudent to consult the Service in order to involve police managers in defining what a national competency framework actually embraces.

The initial part of this research was to use a focus group to define the parameters for subsequent explorations into the defining principles. It was felt necessary for representatives of the Service to guide the research, especially by highlighting the possible areas for future considerations. The focus group was made up of representatives from twelve different forces, all the staff associations, the Home Office and National Police Training. The diversity of the groups allowed for it to be considered representative of the national policing picture. The work on that occasion took a number of key themes and directed the group into debating and discussing the issues surrounding those

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<sup>240</sup> Interview with training manager, Southern Counties Police Force. 1999.



topics. The themes were: -

Why do we need a generic competency framework?

What is a generic competency framework?

How would a generic competency framework be used?

What are human resource functions of a generic competency framework?

The results from the day were analysed and then re-analysed as a quality assurance mechanism by a second facilitator who was present on the day observing the whole proceedings. These results were then positioned in a questionnaire that expanded upon the themes of the focus group session. Four questions were asked regarding the requirements of a generic competency framework. Within each question there were sets of example answers which respondents were asked to mark on a five point scale. The responses that were to be available ranged from 'Very Important' through to 'Not Very Important' along a Likert scale. The available example answers were generated from the data provided by the focus group. The questions were: -

- A generic competency framework should be:
- A generic competency framework should:
- A generic competency framework should apply to:
- A generic competency framework should assist with:

The questionnaire was sent to the training manager for each of the police forces of England and Wales. Forty-five questionnaires were distributed and thirty-five were returned, a response rate of 78%.

When placed on the questionnaire, complete with the given criteria, the questions were: -

- **A generic competency framework should be:**

- Practical and user friendly

- A useful reference to job skills

- Standards applicable to all

- Capable of being maintained/developed

- **A generic competency framework should:**

- Set measurable/achievable standards

- Guide individual expectations

- Be adaptable to organisational change

- Be capable of being accredited

- Be agreed and accepted within forces

- **A generic competency framework should apply to:**

- Training and development strategies

- Working in partnership with outside agencies

- Personal development for individuals

- Organisational development of individuals

- **A generic competency framework should assist with:**

- Demonstrating good management principles



Decision making processes

Building and changing the organisation

Identifying strengths and weaknesses of individuals

Addressing the needs of the organisation

Developing management style, ethics and values

Providing a diagnostic health check of the organisation

Providing guidance principles for recruitment, selection and promotion

Providing quality assurance of training and development

The results from this questionnaire yielded some fundamentally important data. The following table illustrates some of the findings.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents who felt the question to be very important</b>
<b>A generic competency framework should be:</b>	
Practical and user friendly	Very important (80%)
A useful reference to job skills	Very important (26%)
Standards applicable to all	Very important (40%)
Capable of being maintained/developed	Very important (63%)
<b>A generic competency framework should:</b>	
Set measurable/achievable standards	Very important (51%)
Guide individual expectations	Very important (9%)
Be adaptable to organisational change	Very important (37%)
Be capable of being accredited	Very important (14%)
Be agreed and accepted within forces	Very important (54%)

<b>A generic competency framework should apply to:</b>	
Training and development strategies	Very important (49%)
Working in partnership with outside agencies	Very important (14%)
Personal development for individuals	Very important (54%)
Organisational development of individuals	Very important (51%)
<b>A generic competency framework should assist with:</b>	
Demonstrating good management principles	Very important (23%)
Decision making processes	Very important (20%)
Building and changing the organisation	Very important (11%)
Identifying strengths and weaknesses of individuals	Very important (71%)
Addressing the needs of the organisation	Very important (57%)
Developing management style, ethics and values	Very important (40%)
Providing a diagnostic health check of the organisation	Very important (11%)
Providing guidance principles for recruitment, selection and promotion	Very important (29%)
Providing quality assurance of training and development	Very important (31%)

Some of the guiding principles that emerged from that questionnaire were that any generic competency framework should: -



- Be user friendly
- Be capable of being maintained
- Set national and measurable standards
- Identify individual strengths and weaknesses whilst at the same time providing individuals with development opportunities

Whilst the findings from these respondents also revealed that a generic competency framework should not: -

- Work in partnership with outside agencies
- Be capable of being accredited
- Build and change the organisation
- Provide a diagnostic health check of the organisation

Therefore, at this stage of the research, there was a sense of what practitioners wanted from a competency framework. Further consideration had also to be given to the views of other stakeholders, especially those working directly for the overall governing body, namely the Home Office. In chapter five the matter of ‘competency’ within the Police Service was discussed. Research led to the use of the 3D model to provide a foundation upon which the competency of police officers could be assessed. The question was asked, ‘How does this model relate to the questionnaire findings and how does this then translate into the national picture?’

### **National perspective on police competency frameworks**

Both the HMIC report<sup>241</sup> and the Home Affairs Committee (HAC) Report<sup>242</sup> into police training

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<sup>241</sup> HMIC. (1999) Op.Cit.

<sup>242</sup> Home Affairs Committee. (1999) Fourth Report – Police Training and Recruitment. Stationery Office. London.

placed significant value on the future of a police National Training Organisation (NTO). Of this the HAC reported: -

“We welcome the setting up of a National Training Organisation and hope that it proves a useful body in coordinating police training and providing the National Strategy needed.”

In order to understand the coordinating role of an NTO it is prudent to examine what the actual remit of an NTO is. An NTO is set up to: -

“..enhance and improve the performance of people involved in the development, management, health and safety and representation of people in the workplace.”<sup>243</sup>

The following objectives for a police NTO were included in the reports that published and communicated the concept to the Service<sup>244</sup>: -

- Management and ownership of standards developed for the Service
- Prevention of fragmentation of the police estate
- Development of training and education
- Promoting occupational standards, in the form of NVQs

HMIC (1999)<sup>245</sup> defined an NTO for the Police Service as: -

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<sup>243</sup> Employment NTO. (1998) Employment NTO – A Briefing. Employment NTO. Leicester.

<sup>244</sup> Holding, I. (1998) The Police National Training Organisation. ACPO (Personnel and Training Committee). London.

<sup>245</sup> HMIC. (1999) Managing Learning. Op. Cit.



**“Independent, employer owned, government recognised organisation taking a national and strategic approach to the education and training required for employment and remitted with improving business performance and competitiveness by developing the knowledge and skills of all people in all sectors of the industry.”**

**It is clear that with a few minor exceptions, e.g. the accreditation of standards, the role of an NTO is congruent with the findings of the early research (detailed earlier in chapter five) into a competency framework. By providing a vehicle and mechanism that could ‘own’ a competency framework within the police sector, one of the fundamental difficulties of a framework could be avoided, namely: -**

**“Competencies can actually reduce an organisation’s ability to adapt to the future, creativity and innovation may be reduced.”<sup>246</sup>**

**Any framework would therefore be within a managed system, controlled and monitored by a prescribed body with that function high on its organisational priorities. Without such a body a competency framework could fall by the wayside. There was a clear drive towards a police NTO and on face value the existence of this could only serve to enhance any emerging competency framework.**

**NTOs are managed under the auspices of the Department for Education and Employment. This aligns the basic assessment assumptions of NTOs with the current government rationale of vocational qualifications in the form of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). As was**

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<sup>246</sup> Incomes Data Service Ltd. (1997) Study 639 Developing Competency Frameworks. IDS. London.

previously discussed (chapter five 'Competency') these qualifications are outcome based, task focussed and barely cover generic behavioural skills. Thus as an all encompassing assessment criteria this research finds them flawed, hence the 3D model of police assessment. However, NVQ style qualifications are of relevance to any occupational standards as they provide a standardised format and widely understood assessment process. Such is the enthusiasm for standards of this type that many ACPO committees (e.g. Traffic, Criminal Investigation) are pursuing occupational standards in this configuration. Thus occupational standards, in an NVQ style, managed by the forthcoming NTO, have direct significance to a generic competency framework.

### **Skills within a framework definition**

HOC 43/96 offered a suite of skills upon which police officers could be assessed. These skills have been incorporated, by remit, into the new PDP. They were further examined as a result of this continued research. The Police Service was at the time of this work also utilising other sets of behavioural skills, namely: -

- Those from HOC 104/91
- Those created for extended interviews (EI) for accelerated promotion
- The Bramshill Eight - a suite of competencies formed for police assessment centres

If any generic competency framework was to succeed throughout the Service it was clear that the purposes and objectives of all these competency sets had to be matched in terms of quality and be robust enough to stand any defensive scrutiny by other competency exponents within the Service.

Although there was no format to this skills suite, there was a clear need for the second dimension of the 3D model to apply to the generic competency framework.



## Values and ethics within a framework of competency

Whilst researching this aspect of police assessment it was prudent to keep a watchful eye on the continually emerging political environment. Of note were the McPherson Report into the killing of Stephen Lawrence<sup>247</sup> and the HMIC report into police ethics and integrity.<sup>248</sup> The then chairman of the Police Federation, offered in his evidence to the HMIC team on integrity: -

“The appraisal system is in complete disarray. Nobody tells the truth on appraisals, people are always written up too well. For the sake of the Service, we have got to get honesty into the system.”<sup>249</sup>

Given that a framework for competency will embrace these issues it became appropriate to include recognisance of integrity issues within the emerging definition. As a result, the definition of a generic competency framework for the Police Service should be: -

**“The glue that binds the organisation together, in doing so, calling upon behavioural based standards, occupational standards, organisational and individual values and ethics, all of which have increasing performance as their mutual goal.”**

As can be observed from this definition, two of the elements of the 3D model are contained in this

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<sup>247</sup> McPherson, W. (1999) The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report of an Inquiry. Home Office. London.

<sup>248</sup> HMIC. (1999) Op. Cit

<sup>249</sup> HMIC. (1999) Op. Cit.

definition, the third that of the 'context' does not, at this stage, fall into the competency framework remit.

### **Home Office Circular 43/96**

HOC 43/96, as reported earlier, formerly introduced the concept of Performance Development Review (PDR) to the Police Service. In this report the guidance states that the Home Office are anxious to see the new appraisal process demonstrably linked to the skills police officers require to help achieve their policing objectives. The report goes on to list those skill areas as: -

#### **Core skills (for every police officer)**

- Professional and ethical standards
- Communication
- Self-motivation
- Decision making
- Creativity and innovation

#### **Role specific skills**

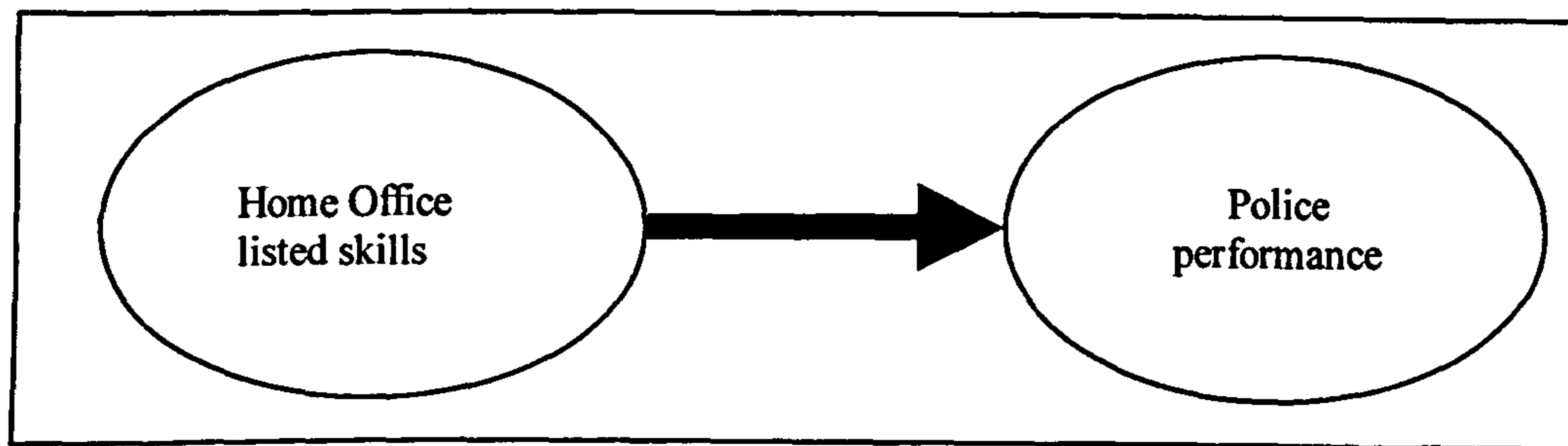
- Leadership
- Managing and developing staff
- Operational planning
- Strategic planning

By supplying the above skills and outlining that these skills are what is required of a police officer to perform their given role, the Home Office is committing the Service to one single dimension of



the 3D model. In doing so there is anticipation that this will be sufficient. In diagrammatic form this appears as follows: -

**Fig. 19**



This premise, although carrying validity in terms of the skills probably performing a partial responsibility in improving performance, does not appear to take account of other principle factors.

This is acknowledged within the same circular in the following paragraph: -

“Appraisal cannot alone succeed in motivating performance; the extent to which it does so will largely be determined by the extent to which it is integrated within an overall approach to performance management.”<sup>250</sup>

On face value, HOC 43/96 appears to be making two statements, which could be interpreted as contravening one another. The next stage of this research was therefore designed to analyse this fact in greater depth and to seek if the Police Service had managed to overcome this dichotomy. All police forces were contacted in writing and asked to provide evidence of their current appraisal/PDR systems. Although four police forces were not able to give details of their processes as they were still in the early stages of designing some form of appraisal, the following chart

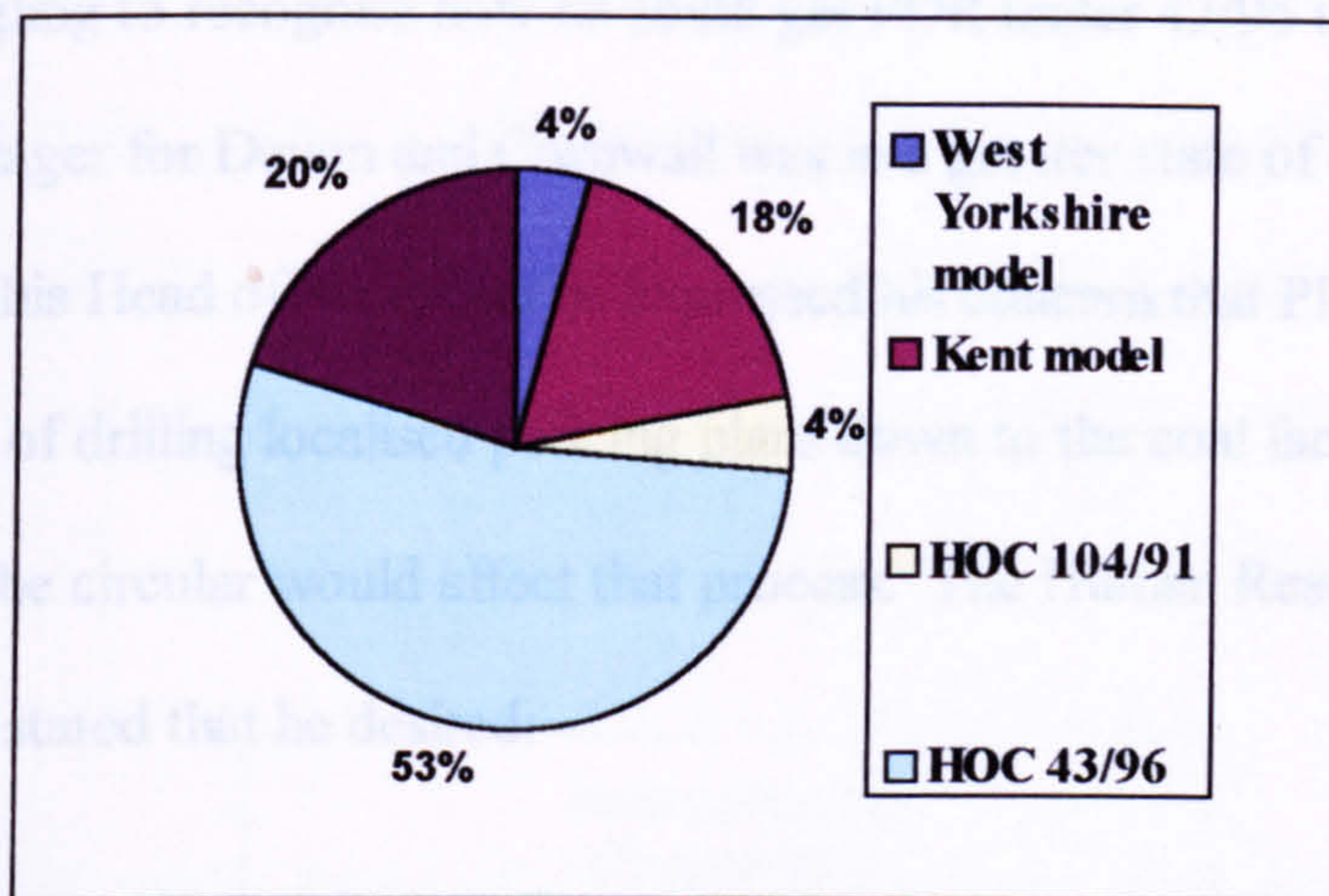
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<sup>250</sup> Home Office. (1996) Op.Cit.



outlines exactly the position in England and Wales (as at January 1999).

**Fig. 20**



Fifty-three per cent of forces (twenty four in total) in England and Wales were using or attempting to use the appraisal processes recommended by HOC 43/96.

The use of the suggested appraisal procedure was found to be very varied. The purpose and style of the appraisals undertaken differed greatly from force to force. Some forces used it for development of staff; some used it for historically appraising staff. Some forces used rating scales, some relied on qualitative statements. Some forces had annual reviews of performance; some held regular meetings between appraiser and appraisee on a monthly basis. There was no discernible pattern amongst forces in either the objective of the PDR system or the methodology to achieve those outcomes. As a result of these findings, follow up visits were then conducted in most force areas. By doing this the particular nuances of their interpretation system could be discussed in detail.

### **Field visits regarding HOC 43/96**

It soon became clear that although forces were implementing some form of appraisal under the



guise of 43/96, most were struggling with the concept or the actual pragmatics of the system. In Dorset, the Training Manager stated that despite all the assistance he had received from other forces he was struggling to recognise how he could get PDR under 43/96 to work in his force. The Training Manager for Devon and Cornwall was in a greater state of disorientation. In a joint meeting with his Head of Personnel he expressed his concern that PDR under 43/96 was mainly an effective way of drilling localised policing plans down to the coal face, he felt unsure how the skills contained in the circular would affect that process. The Human Resources Manager for Wiltshire Constabulary stated that he desired: -

“..a process that was driven by people, not as in this case, a process that drives people.”<sup>251</sup>

These thoughts were repeated in many further interviews (Gloucester, Humberside, and Merseyside). It also became clear that Kent County Constabulary had put into place a competency framework based upon HOC 43/96 and were in the process of offering this for sale to other forces. The next and perhaps most natural stage of this research was to examine in detail the framework presented by Kent.

### **Kent Competency Framework**

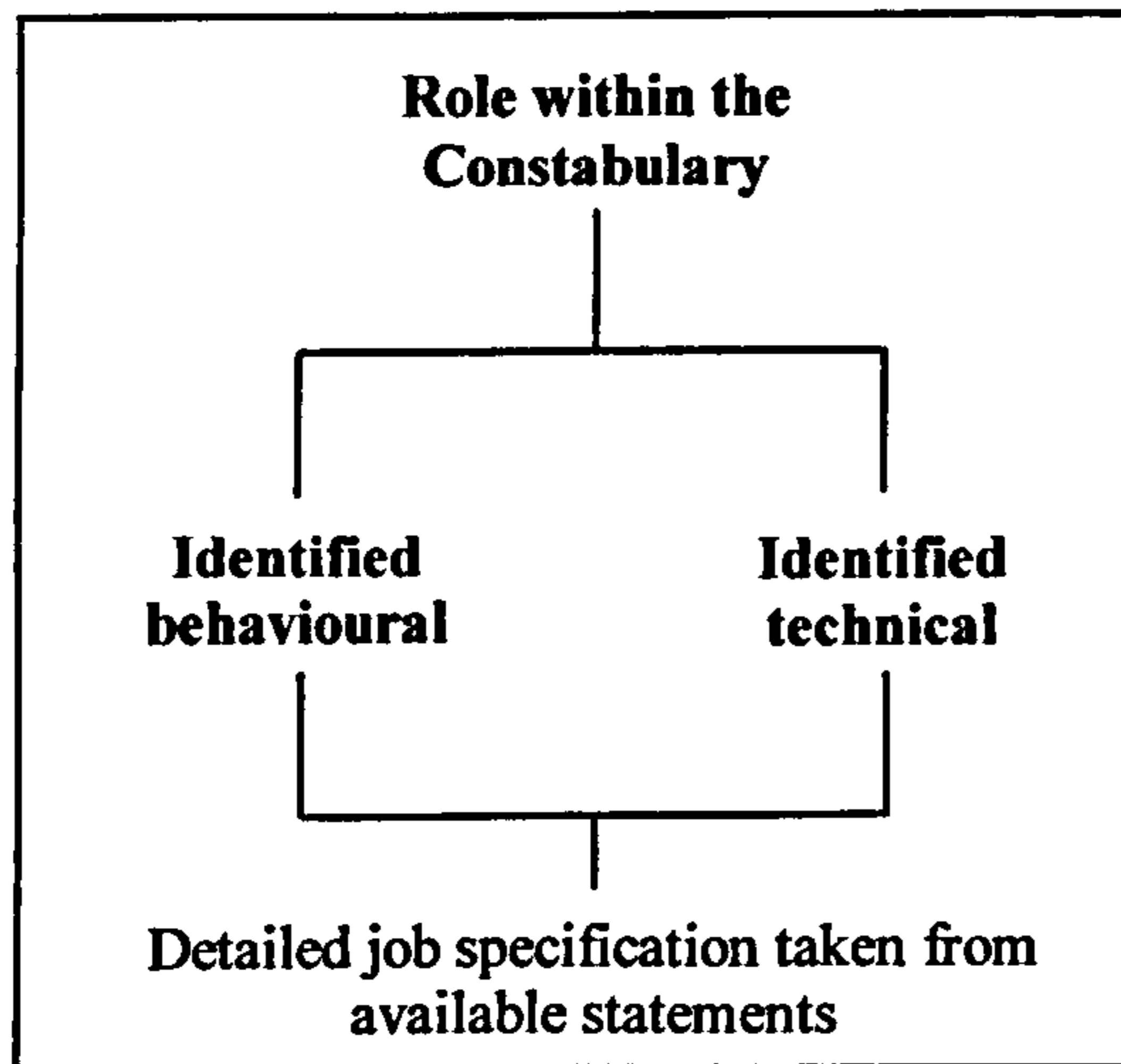
The Kent model uses two aspects in its framework of competence. It brings together behavioural statements with technical competence. As such it offers a two-dimensional model of a framework. The scale of the work undertaken by Kent was immense. Each and every role within the Constabulary was broken down into its constituent parts and these ingredients were used to form a

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<sup>251</sup> Interview with HR Manager, Wiltshire Constabulary. (1998).

large suite of 'technical skills'. Each particular 'job specification' was then rewritten in the language and format of the 'technical skills'. The net effect of this was a large directory of technical skills and role specifications that offered a corporate approach across the Force. A suite of behavioural skills was then produced that appeared to have its pedigree from HOC 43/96. The overall aim of the model was to provide a framework that could be fully utilised within each and every role in the Constabulary. In simple diagrammatic form it appears as follows: -

**Fig. 21**



This vast suite of technical and behavioural skills was then used within performance analysis in an appraisal scheme. It was this method of pragmatic deployment of the framework that appeared to be concerning future purchasers of the model.

Each of the behavioural statements was measured on a seven point Likert scale. Each of these showed 'least effective performance' at 1 and 2, 'adequate performance' at 3 and exemplary performance at 4,5,6 and 7. In an interview with a member of the design team there was no rationale offered for this, nor was any explanation available for setting the level of adequate performance at 3.

Further examination of the model highlighted that within the design team there was an expectation



for members of police ranks to achieve particular scalar points to be deemed to be performing adequately. These expected performance levels appear as follows: -

Constable	Level 3
Sergeant	Level 4
Inspector	Level 5
Chief Inspector	Level 6
Superintendent	Level 7

If the expectation was for certain officers to achieve the levels listed above, this leads to the natural conclusion that the Kent model of competency is rank specific. When the question was raised with the design team 'what would happen to a constable, who performed well, worked hard and obtained a 4-7 within the range' there was a suggestion that this could not happen. It was explained that it would not be possible for an officer to step outside a threshold 1 or 2 point above or below their range. One would therefore have to question the validity of an appraisal system that based its rationale on performance linked to actual position in the organisation above genuine accomplishments over a period of time.

Further evaluation of the Kent model allowed a comprehensive review of the use of the programme to vary the force's culture. A member of the design team was proud to state how the model had confirmed the existence of the right people with the right skills in the right jobs, as he explained: -

**“Our appraisal programme has confirmed that in behavioural terms we have, in the main, the right behavioural attributes amongst our staff.”**

Analysis of this could only really bring about tentative agreement with this statement; most staff had been appraised at the level of behavioural skill commensurate with their rank. When a sergeant from a custody office was asked about this detail she replied: -

“That’s probably the case. Why should we challenge people’s behaviour in an appraisal, it causes friction, distrust and leaves the appraiser out in the cold. We are expected to point out failings to our subordinates, it is more prudent to point out their failure in their technical skills.”<sup>252</sup>

Thus the foundation of behavioural skills matches, being delivered as a success of the actual competency framework and appraisal process, appears to be based upon foundations that are not valid. Investigation of the technical skills and their use, from data made available by Kent Police, revealed that this aspect of the framework was indeed frequently utilised in appraisal interviews. It was often the case that technical skill deficiencies led to some form of training or development intervention.

It was therefore apparent that this framework, as a model that harmonised appraisal with a competency suite, was not managing the behaviour of Constabulary employees but was acting as a large scale training needs analysis in relation to technical abilities to perform a specific role.

Although this was clearly meeting the requirements of the particular police force employing it, this model could not unite the evident needs of the forces consulted in this research and the emerging national appraisal picture.

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<sup>252</sup> Interview with a Kent Constabulary Sergeant. (1998)



In a further interview, a training sergeant from Kent made the following statement when asked about the need for cultural change in his force: -

“Our PDR, the Kent model, has not made any significant difference to the behaviour of lads on the street. It’s done little for improving quality of service to the public except make sure lots more people have training courses to bridge the gaps in their technical skills.”<sup>253</sup>

The Kent Competency Framework, as well as dealing with perhaps only two of the dimensions of the 3D model, made the assumption that a combination of behavioural and technical skills alone would have an impact upon police performance. A review of the quantitative figures available<sup>254</sup> supports the conclusion that performance improvement was not occurring to any noticeable extent during the period under review.

### **Quality management**

In chapter 3 attention was given to the continued and expanding use of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model for business improvement. Having researched both HOC 43/96 and the Kent model and concluded that both models relied on the assumption that policing skills alone could lead to improved police performance, a hypothesis that is challenged by this exploration, it was felt appropriate to seek an alternative solution to this issue. Campbell (1993) who discussed this aspect of managing performance at length concluded that: -

“Obviously performance differences can also be produced by situational effects such

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<sup>253</sup> Interview with a Kent Constabulary Sergeant. (1998)

<sup>254</sup> HMIC. (1998 and 1999) Annual Reports 1998 and 1999 Home Office. London.

as the quality of equipment, degree of staff support, or nature of the working conditions.”<sup>255</sup>

Although this theory expands the concept of performance improvement beyond the level of personal skills, in practice it would appear to require further expansion to be relevant in today’s policing environment. There is little doubt that personal and system factors influence work behaviour and therefore performance results. Demming (1986)<sup>256</sup> subscribes to the supposition that all people in the working environment work at a constant performance level and that variations in their outputs are caused by systems and processes out of their control. Masterson and Taylor (1996)<sup>257</sup> discussed the reality of people not being passive in the workplace; they react to external stimuli and the ways they are treated. Therefore, as the EFQM model of business improvement was widely in use in policing performance examinations, the possible use of this philosophy in a competency framework was then researched.

EFQM is a model of business improvement that ensures: -

“..development of ongoing improvement plans and actions that can be implemented and their progress monitored.”<sup>258</sup>

In common accord with the desired principles of any competency framework and appraisal system, one of the fundamental concepts of the EFQM model is, in relation to people: -

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<sup>255</sup> Campbell, J. (1993) A Theory of Performance. In N. Schmitt, W C Borman and Associates, Personnel Selection in Organisations. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco.

<sup>256</sup> Demming, W. (1986) Out of Crisis Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, USA.

<sup>257</sup> Masterson, S. and Taylor, M. (1996) Total Quality Management and Performance Appraisal: an Integrative Approach. Journal of Quality Management 1.

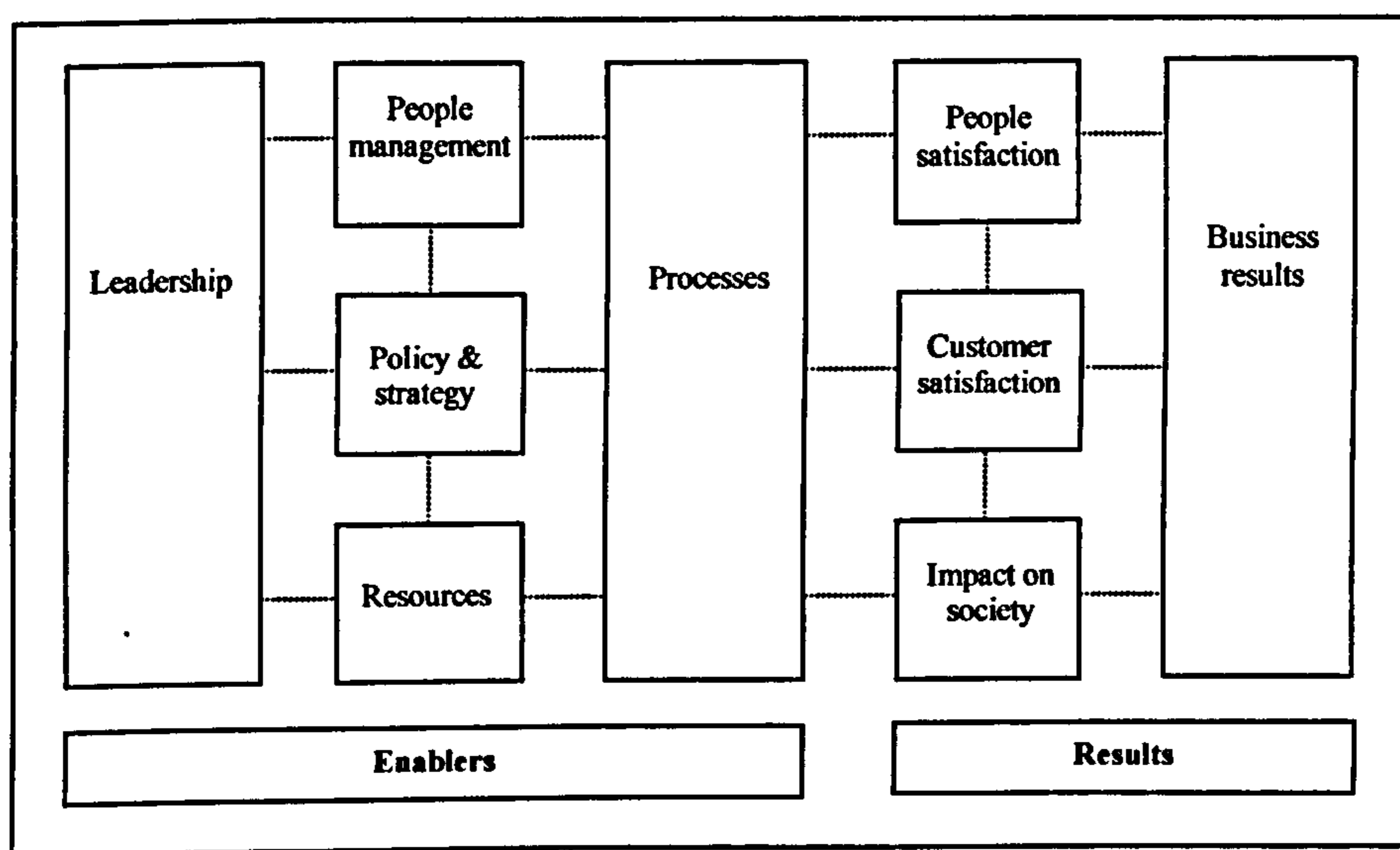
<sup>258</sup> British Quality Foundation. (1998) Guide to the Business Excellence Model. British Quality Foundation. London.



“The full potential of the organisation’s people is released through shared values and a culture of trust and empowerment. Communication and involvement are pervasive and supported by opportunities to learn and develop skills.”<sup>259</sup>

The EFQM model analyses business performance in a number of key areas. These key areas fall into two main categories, those of inputs (enablers) and those of outputs (results). The model is often introduced in diagrammatic form.

Fig. 22



This model places emphasis on a number of facets of the business that build towards greater effectiveness and efficiency. As well as ‘people management,’ a criterion that includes the management of staff through appraisals, the analysis also seeks to improve in the areas of leadership, policy, strategy, resources and processes. The amalgam is stated as being: -

“A sequence of steps which add value by producing required outputs from a variety of inputs.”<sup>260</sup>

<sup>259</sup> British Quality Foundation. (1998) Ibid. — P.

<sup>260</sup> British Quality Foundation. (1998) Ibid. — P.

The sequential steps normally take place in a cycle of self-inspection that occurs within the business on a regular basis. With an overall goal of improving results, i.e. performance, the question that remains is ‘would this model increase performance even further if it were built into any forthcoming competency framework?’ To many observers the system factors that surround their employment may appear to be fixed and outside their control. Work systems already in place may appear difficult to change, equipment may be difficult to replace or modify. However, if an organisation is employing the principles of EFQM, then the organisation is already highlighting the effects of such issues upon performance and acknowledging the need for change in order that performance can be increased. Rummler and Brache (1995)<sup>261</sup> assert that: -

“..about eighty per cent of performance improvement opportunities reside in the environment.”

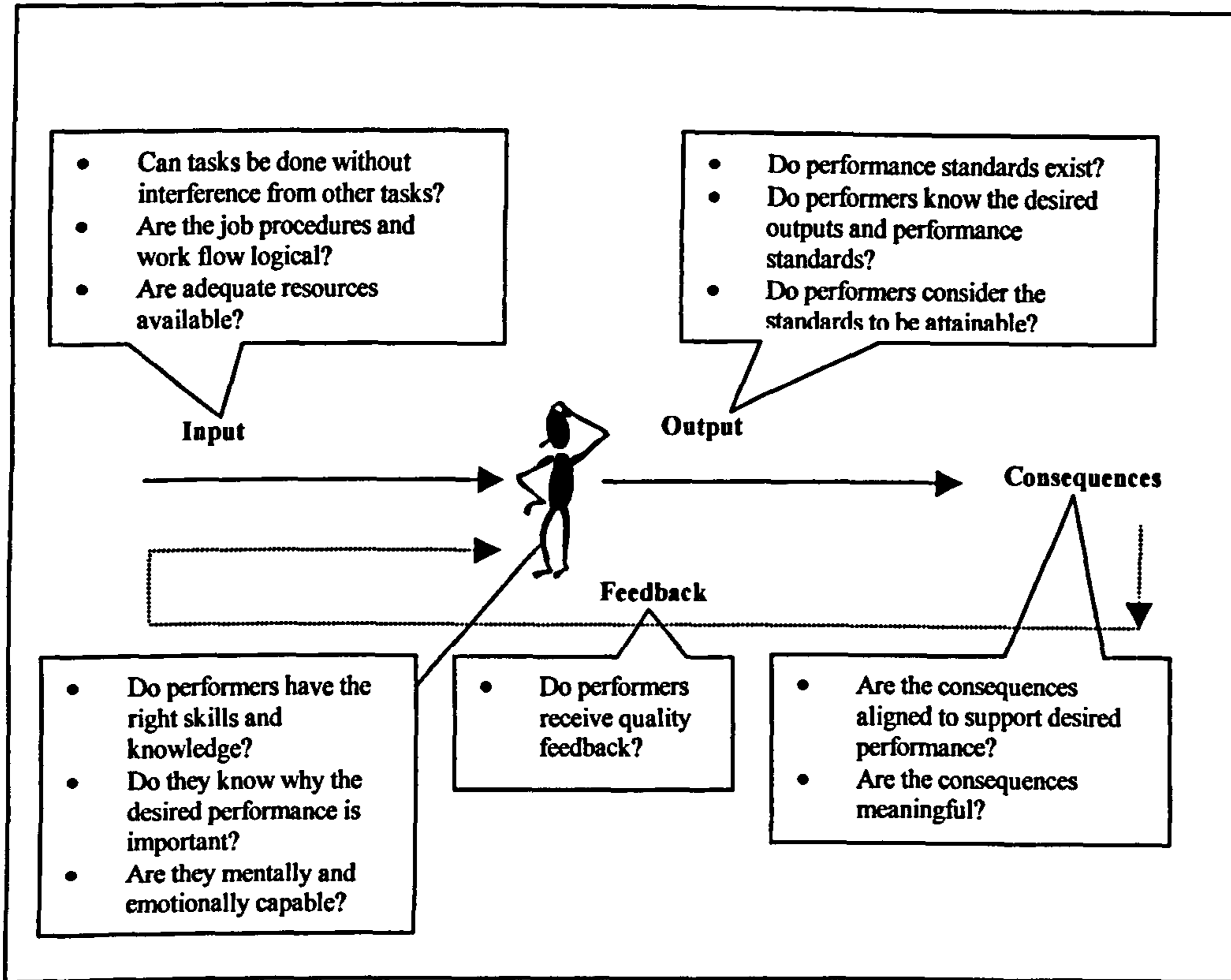
Rummler and Brache display their theory of the human performance system in diagrammatic form. In doing so they confirm some of the hypotheses already forming as a result of this research. There are a number of significant statements in Rummler and Brache’s theory. It acknowledges the need for support for any organisational performer and it identifies the necessity for clear performance specifications, both of which are required, before any performance measurement can take place.

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<sup>261</sup> Rummler, G. And Brache, A. (1995) Improving Performance. Jossey Bass. San Francisco.



**Fig. 23**



Following any measured performance the model seeks to qualify the relevance of the emerging outcomes, offers feedback to all parties concerned and continues to assess whether the perpetrator of the work is still competent to continue to work towards these goals. There are a number of common trends between this model and the available elements of the EFQM example.

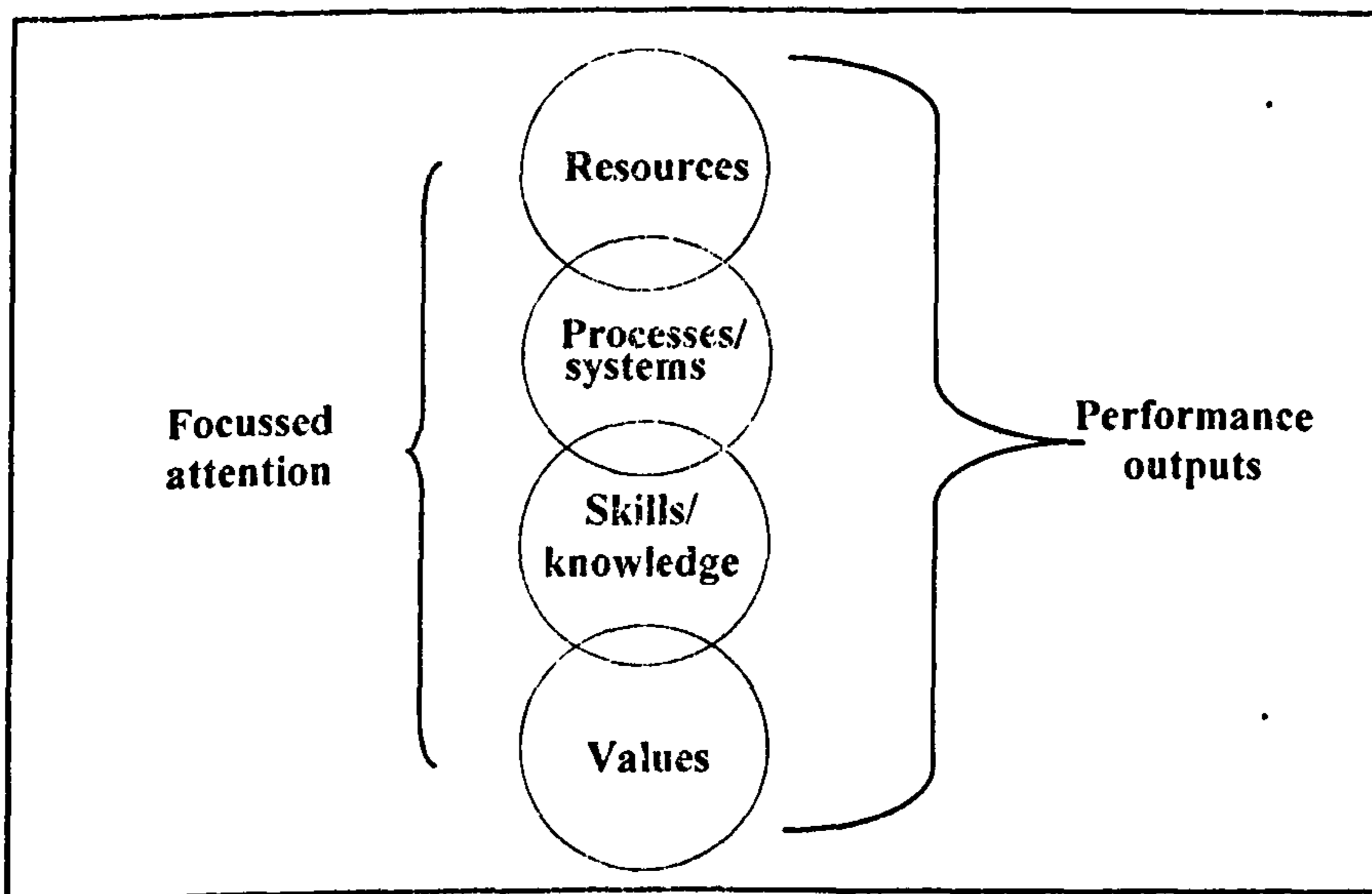
EFQM	Rummler and Brache
Leadership	Performer's knowledge of expected outputs and standards
People management	Feedback, emotional well-being
Policy and strategy	Consequences, performance specifications
Resources	Task support - are the resources available?
Processes	Procedures and workflow – are they logical?

Placing this theory into any competency framework requires further analysis of the actual definition of that framework. Reiterated, the chosen definition was: -

“The glue that binds the organisation together, in doing so, calling upon behavioural based standards, occupational standards, organisational and individual values and ethics, all of which have increasing performance as their mutual goal.”

The emerging structure for the management of performance within a competency framework appeared therefore to bring together some of the key elements of EFQM with other defined academic rigours. In simple terms, the elements of the concept appear as follows. When appraising this model it should be compared with the original context of skills alone leading to improved performance.

**Fig. 24**



The outcome of adopting these principles within a staff appraisal element of a competency framework leads to a frequent and focussed review of not only the individual's contribution towards



the business practices of the organisation, but also a detailed review of the practices of the organisation that have affected that performance. Values are included within this model because without shared and congruent values between the employee and the organisation served, there would be little purpose to assessing or focussing on the other performance elements. Ravlin (1995) defines values as: -

“A set of core beliefs held by individuals concerning how they should or ought to behave over broad ranges of situations.”<sup>262</sup>

Williams (1998)<sup>263</sup> discusses the fact that values are rapidly becoming regarded as property of the organisation. He describes how all the employees are expected to subscribe to a particular set of values that are prescribed and articulated by the leadership of the organisation concerned. These values are often seen in the form of mission statements and visionary proclamations. Campbell and Yeung (1991)<sup>264</sup> refer to the process of bringing about a congruence of individual and organisational values as creating a ‘sense of mission’. Inevitably there could be a possibility of disagreement or even conflict between the value base of the employee and those of the organisation’s published mission statement (Williams 1998).<sup>265</sup> Nevertheless Styles (1997)<sup>266</sup> discussed the fact that if these values are forced into the ‘sharp end’ via the appraisal system, the opportunity for monitoring and evaluating the employee/employer values contract becomes more

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<sup>262</sup> Ravlin, E. (1995) Values. In Blackwell Encyclopaedic Dictionary. Blackwells. Oxford. pp.

<sup>263</sup> Williams, R. (1998) Op. Cit.

<sup>264</sup> Campbell, A. and Yeung, S. (1991) Creating a Sense of Mission.

<sup>265</sup> Williams, R. (1998) Op.Cit.

<sup>266</sup> Styles, P et al. (1997) Performance Management and the Psychological Contract. Human Resource Management Journal 7.

meaningful and the gap could be reduced or removed. After lengthy and protracted research the appraisal element of the emerging competency framework began to manifest itself in the above format. This occurrence caused some observers, especially at ACPO level, to comment upon the recognisable shape and function of a ‘competency framework’ becoming distorted. As one protagonist commented: -

“I didn’t believe that a competency framework had anything to do with appraisal systems. Why is there a focus on this end of the process? What is needed is a framework of competence.”<sup>267</sup>

This feedback, although appearing misplaced in its judgement regarding the sterility of competency frameworks, was appropriate regarding the appearance and format of the research findings to date. Although the work was being navigated as a result of the research findings, the original purpose, to seek a ‘Generic Competency Framework’ was to the ill informed, not being accomplished with clarity. This timely intervention led to a presentation being produced and marketed to the national stakeholders who had expressed interest in the research. This information was conceived in the shadow of the research findings that had emerged to this point, namely: -

- There existed within policing many different forms of ‘framework’
- There is no national picture
- Behavioural characteristics appear to be paramount
- There is a drive for National Occupational Standards
- There is a need for any new framework to have strong links to performance

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<sup>267</sup> Interview with ACPO (Personnel and Training) member. 1999.

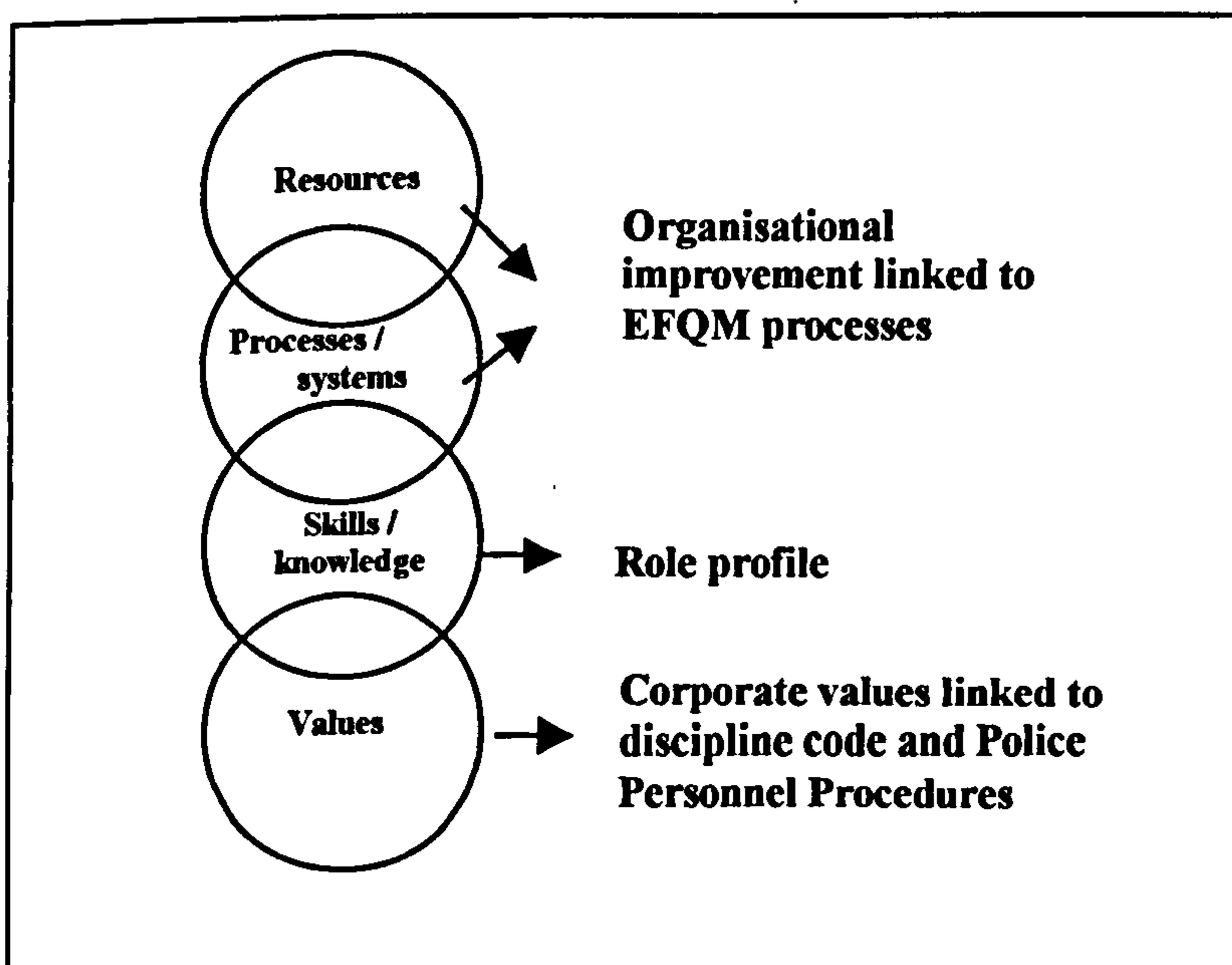


The argument that was offered to the ACPO representatives was that to become an efficient competency framework for the organisation, the process had to include a strong element of organisational review, which it was further contended was best suited to correspond with regular appraisal reviews. Without this overt link, any desire for organisational growth and development is unlikely to be totally successful, as the aspiration becomes reliant on individuals' impact alone. It was therefore suggested that without a holistic stance that incorporates the competence of the individual and the competence of the organisation, the likely success of any competency framework is likely to be diminished. The emerging visual representation of the competency framework, as defined, appears to become an amalgam that is perhaps best represented in a chart that displays all the required dimensions.

Before doing so it is sensible to review the manifestation of the research in a simple list. Those dimensions are therefore: -

- The need for occupational standards (managed by any future NTO)
- The requirement for behavioural skills
- The link, through EFQM, to improved organisational performance
- The re-enforcement of espoused cultural values
- The recognisance of the 3D police assessment and development model

**Fig. 25**



## **Defining purpose and role**

Traditionally, workplace performance was measured by tools that had their origins in financial management, and thus were a form of organisational control (Stamp 1995).<sup>268</sup> Typically an employee is directed and told what to do at work and then the measurements are taken to see to what extent the employee complied. In the present methods of performance management there appears to be a different approach, one that respects the individuality of the employee and “puts vision and strategy at the core of the measurement process.”<sup>269</sup> Quantitative measures, such as performance indicators (PIs) for response time and the number of activities performed, have previously been the backbone of recent police performance measurement (Audit Commission and ACPO Key Performance Indicators). These are slowly being complimented and even replaced by more qualitative approaches, such as problem solving and customer satisfaction results. In previous approaches to performance measurement, satisfaction was taken from increased inputs and outputs and there was little examination of outcomes.

For instance, where a policing area was recording increased vehicle crime it was the norm to offer extra resources to the area, demand a higher number of stop and search checks and measure these alone as the policing response to the higher crime. If crime did not fall or was merely displaced on a temporary basis this was neither acknowledged nor measured. In appraisal terms this form of occupational measurement provided easy data and allowed for frequent target setting and performance reviews. The dilemma that has recently arisen that challenges this established mechanism, is how to measure the work of the police officer that delights and excels in the more qualitative approach to policing.

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<sup>268</sup> Stamp, D. (1995) The Invisible Assembly Line. AMACOM. New York.

<sup>269</sup> Stamp, D. (1995) Ibid.



Given the same example of a policing area that is suffering rising vehicle crime statistics the problem solving approach is harder to measure in relation to short term appraisal reviews. A typical policing approach under the Problem Orientated Policing (POP) philosophy would be to tackle the 'problem' from a more robust stance allowing a point of view spread over a longer duration. The approach may involve redesigning car park environments, increasing lighting, or altering the parking laws, the list is vast. What is immediately apparent is how long these strategies could take to come to fruition. In the meantime, performance measurement on traditional quantitative lines is both difficult and lacking in relevance.

Performance measurement techniques often require many different approaches to guarantee a 'complete' performance analysis. Yukl (1994)<sup>270</sup> suggested that there are eight diverse methodologies available to a manager. Those methods are: -

1. Analysis of computerised performance data
2. Inspection of quality examples of work
3. Surveying clients or customers
4. Reading written reports
5. Market surveys to assess customer needs
6. Observations of workplace operations
7. Progress review meetings
8. Holding meetings at the conclusion of projects to review success (or lack of)

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<sup>270</sup> Yukl, G. (1994) Leadership in Organisations. New Jersey USA. Prentice Hall.

These eight approaches appear to cover both a quantitative (1-5) and qualitative (6-8) technique. Those qualitative styles of measurement appear to correspond with the debated needs of modern policing performance measurement. The supervisor that accompanies the officer to meetings with the council, to alter parking laws or to obtain better street lighting, or who reviews progress on a particular POP initiative and then debriefs that initiative at its conclusion, would clearly still be in a position to evidence the individual's performance at work. Taken one step back from performance measurement, goal setting could take place not only on a quantitative basis but also on a longer term, qualitative foundation as well.

To continue with the vehicle crime example, any target setting process could therefore bring together a number of approaches to reducing vehicle crime in a specific area, e.g.

<b>Policing problem</b>	<b>Quantitative approach</b>	<b>Qualitative approach</b>
<b>Rising vehicle crime</b>	Increased police presence	Improved street lighting
	Higher number of targeted stop checks	Removal of obstructing road side furniture
	More foot patrols in effected areas	Staffed car parks rather than unstaffed

After a given period of time the supervisor could, having utilised a number of different approaches to data capturing, review the whole performance of the individual officer. In doing this the process could also lead to another distinct organisational advantage and an important message for the



employee as outlined by Larson and Callahan (1990)<sup>271</sup>: -

“The frequency with which a manager monitors a subordinate’s performance may help shape that subordinate’s beliefs about the relative importance of his or her various work activities.”

This delicate balance between the two different attitudes to setting and measuring performance goals is designed to pull people, both managers and those managed, towards the collective vision of the organisation whilst respecting individual values. This can only be achieved by allowing each worker the latitude to be creative in setting and arriving at the desired outcomes in the constantly changing work environment (Stamp 1995).<sup>272</sup> Quite naturally this should occur within the regular appraisal processes that include goal setting.

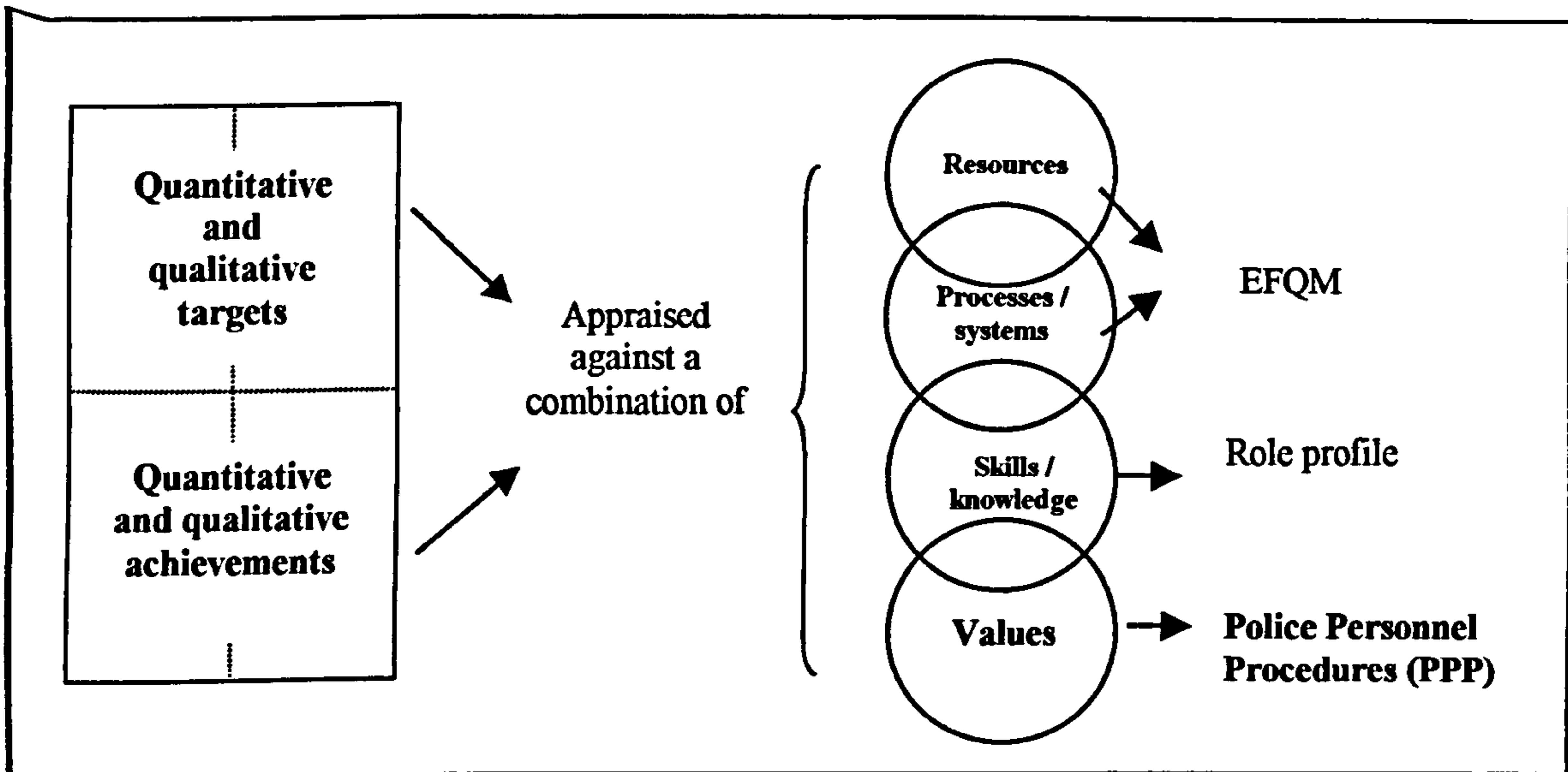
The diagrammatic representation of the whole performance management system, therefore should be reviewed in light of this increased knowledge. In doing so it appears as a system involving quantitative and qualitative goal setting within an overall performance management system: -

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<sup>271</sup> Larson, J. and Callahan, C. (1990) Performance Monitoring – How it Affects Workplace Productivity. Journal of Applied Psychology 75(5).

<sup>272</sup> Stamp, D. (1995) Op. Cit.

Fig.26



That overall effect of defining a competency framework in this manner was described by one observer as: -

“This means putting the appraisal, call it what you will, at the front end of any performance framework, usually it’s the last thing to be considered, if at all.

Normally we monitor performance then see what skills from the list of competencies have played a part.”<sup>273</sup>

Another observer commented: -

“By making the officer set both numerical performance measures as well as more subjective ones there’s no choice but to work hard in the agreed areas, there’s no get out any more. I suppose this will make the first line supervisor get involved a bit

<sup>273</sup> Interview with a chief inspector, South Wales. 1998.



more as well.”<sup>274</sup>

The process should then become one of a cyclic series of events. Goals and targets should be set; performance measures should be put into place that should be quantitative and qualitative. Over the agreed period the actual workplace activities should take place, these, especially the qualitative approaches, should involve the first line supervisor. At the end of the period in question this whole process should be reviewed. This review would examine the officer's values and skills, and the processes/resources/systems within the organisation that have enabled or disabled that performance. In completing this cycle, new performance targets and measures should be put into place with both the organisation and the individual having been examined from a performance measurement perspective.

This proposed performance system was outlined to a number of managers from Thames Valley Police and Lancashire Constabulary. Overall the response was positive, in the words of a senior human resources manager from Thames Valley Police: -

“This system appears to be asking the job to review itself as well as the individuals within it. The idea of more subjective performance measurements appeals as it fits in with the newer way of doing our job, e.g. problem solving.”<sup>275</sup>

One of the observers from Lancashire Constabulary, having made favourable observations in the vein of her Thames Valley colleagues, offered the following comment: -

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<sup>274</sup> Interview with a West Yorkshire inspector. 1998.

<sup>275</sup> Interview with senior Human Resource manager, Thames Valley police. 1999.

“What is missing from this, the only dimension that isn’t covered, is the performance of the first line manager. You’ve woken me up to the EFQM perspective of assessing the organisation through the performance of the individuals as opposed to making them believe that any deficits in results are a direct consequence of their skill base. However the only base that hasn’t been covered is that of the first line manager. If everything else was right, a bad manager would also disable performance.”<sup>276</sup>

### **Multiple appraisal**

The concept of what is known as 360-degree appraisal is well known and frequently used throughout the business world. Williams (1998)<sup>277</sup> comments that subordinates are often in a strong position and well placed to comment on certain aspects of their manager’s behaviour. Fletcher (1997)<sup>278</sup> observes that there are a number of strengths of a multi-faceted appraisal process, namely multiple appraisals: -

- Encourage a teamwork philosophy through involvement
- Increase empowerment by giving appraisees influence on their managers
- Overcome the potential for bias from a single appraiser
- Communicate how the organisation takes performance and management seriously

Bernardin (1986)<sup>279</sup> when writing specifically about upward appraisal gave a number of objections

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<sup>276</sup> Interview with the Human Resource Manager. Lancashire. 1998.

<sup>277</sup> Williams, R. (1998). Op. Cit.

<sup>278</sup> Fletcher, C. (1997) Appraisal – routes to Improved Performance. IPD. London.

<sup>279</sup> Bernardin, H. (1986) Subordinate Appraisal: a Valuable Source of Information about Managers. In Human Resource Management 25.



to the upward appraisal concept. These objections were: -

- Lack of skills in subordinates to make valid ratings
- Subordinates may lack skills in upward appraising and rating
- Subordinates will not be trained to perform this function
- Inflation of ratings to avoid retaliation from managers
- Managers will focus on pleasing subordinates
- The authority of managers will be undermined
- The existence of upward appraisal may cause managers to avoid the particular organisation
- Subordinates would rate harshly managers who were demanding
- Subordinate ratings are nothing more than a popularity contest

Fletcher (1997) poses the question: -

“Is the accuracy and quality of the assessment ratings provided in a 360-degree feedback *really* better than what tends to come out of a traditional appraisal system? Or are we just swapping one set of biased perceptions for a whole raft of them, which, far from arriving at some objective truth, simply obscure the picture?”<sup>280</sup>

Latham and Wexley (1993)<sup>281</sup> argue that peer appraisals have higher predictive values than supervisory ones, but recommend that subordinate appraisals should always be completed anonymously.

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<sup>280</sup> Fletcher, C. (1997) Op. Cit.

<sup>281</sup> Latham, G. and Wexley, K. (1993) Increasing Productivity Through Performance Appraisal. Addison-Wesley. USA.

The observations made by the Lancashire Constabulary employee were confirmed as a common placed opinion in other forces, such as Dorset and Wiltshire, where some managers were said to be a major risk to the integrity and success of the otherwise robust appraisal system developments.

One manager stated: -

“It’s a great idea, but there is no way it will take off in the climate of our force!”<sup>282</sup>

These observations, both for and against the principle of multi-level appraisal take the debate one step further. What was vital when assessing the validity of these arguments was to place them in the context of police management of competence, especially as this fits into the proposed framework. It is important to recognise that the debate came from a desire to improve the efficiency of the organisation, both through examination of the individual employee AND through the relevant components of the organisation. To that end it was the enabling function of the first line manager that brought about the original debate for this research. In that context, upward appraisal, giving a 180-degree perspective, may not attract some of the critical observations offered by Bernardin. The emphasis would not necessarily be placed upon the skills of the manager but more the application of the manager’s skills to assist the subordinate in their everyday function.

The benefits outlined by Fletcher (repeated above) would therefore appear to be of relevance. If the concept of multi-level appraisal were then taken into the 360-degree perspective by having senior managers utilising the original 180-degree information there would be a truer and perhaps more

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<sup>282</sup> Interview with a training manager. Dorset. 1998.



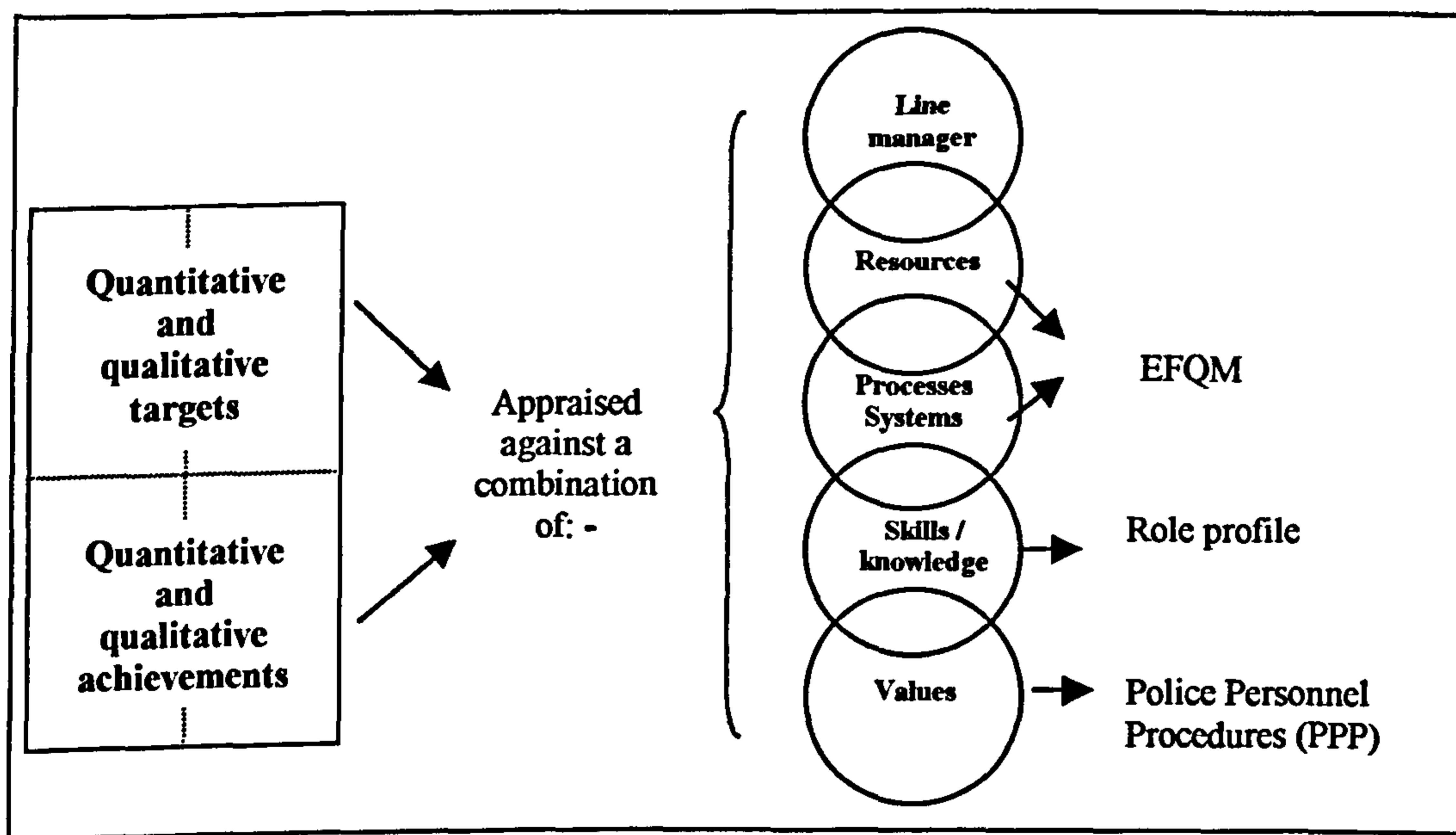
complete outlook to the appraisal processes of any subsequent framework. These findings were shared with a number of police managers in Devon and Cornwall and The West Midlands Police.

One typical comment that was passed was: -

“By doing this you are also ensuring that the middle manager, often a sergeant, actually carries out both their day-to-day role by making things happen for the troops as well as ensuring that the appraisal takes place. The inspector will want to use the information from them for his own needs.”<sup>283</sup>

The developed structure for the whole process of measuring and developing competency therefore took on the following appearance: -

Fig. 27



<sup>283</sup> Interview with police trainers, West Midlands Police. 1999.

## **Policing skills**

As stated above, within different policing environments and the various police forces there were a number of different suites of policing skills being used. They were: -

- Those from HOC 43/96
- Those from HOC 104/91
- Those created for extended interviews (EI) for accelerated promotion
- The Bramshill Eight - a suite of competencies formed for police assessment centres

In introducing the concept of a holistic approach to competency there was a desire for there to be only one set of skills for the Service, this was put into words by an occupational psychologist employed by National Police Training (NPT) who stated: -

“It appears dysfunctional to have so many different skills sets in existence. What about the officer who is selected for a job under the Bramshill eight, managed in that job by the skills in 43/96 then attends extended interviews and is assessed under the specific competencies for that process?”<sup>284</sup>

To that end all the skills in these different suites were examined. The intention of this process was to review their content, remove any duplication and form one complete skills suite that met all the identified needs. This work was of such high significance and profile that a small team was put together for that purpose. Within the team were an occupational psychologist, a human resource manager and a senior police manager.

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<sup>284</sup> Interview with an occupational psychologist, NPT. 1999.



As this process took place and the results began to manifest it became clear that one suite of behavioural indicators was achievable and this listing could become the definitive skills profile for all the acknowledged functions. This work when completed was passed to the senior occupational psychologist for National Police Training, who verified the structures as robust and functional. It was noted that validity and reliability of these skills would have to be proven prior to their introduction to the Service. The emerging skills sets appeared as follows under the headings that were deemed appropriate by the small working group.

- Interpersonal skills
- Communication
- Self-motivation
- Decision making
- Creativity and innovation
- Leadership
- Management and development of people
- Strategic perspective

The complexity of the whole competency framework cannot be understated, however when broken down into its component parts the rationale and structure was becoming more and more robust. As one observer stated: -

“As time has gone on, the inclusion of so many facets of police performance management appears to be answering the needs of the Service. It is especially relevant to be reviewing the skills sets in light of the current changing political environment.”<sup>285</sup>

Under each heading the actual behavioural skills were listed. Again, these skills were written in consultation with the small team of researchers that included an occupational psychologist. An

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<sup>285</sup> Interview with a human resource practitioner. Royal Ulster Constabulary. 1999.

example of such a set of skills is: -

### **Interpersonal Skills**

Standard to be achieved is;

Sensitive to the needs/feelings of others without compromising authority

Approachable and supportive to colleagues and others

Maintains impartiality

Invests in time to consult with others

Tactful in discussion; sensitive in use of language

Keeps temper under control; calm/confident under stress

Looks at a situation from other person's point of view

Projects positive self-image

Willing to consult and seek the views of others

Demonstrates an ability to resolve conflict situations effectively

The remaining skills sets are contained in appendix 2.

At various times within the methodology employed in this research it was relevant to revisit some of the core fundamental statements and principles upon which it was based. One of these was the use of the 3D model of police assessment that was derived from the original work into police probationer development and assessment. The provision of occupational standards through the work of the NTO would satisfy one dimension of this model, that of role or function. The redesigned and reformatted skills suite would fulfil this requirement of the model. The third dimension, and perhaps the dimension that sets policing apart from other occupations, is the context in which the skills are applied to the core function, as outlined in the relevant occupational



standards. Assistance and guidance was taken from the Prison Service as to the relevant contextualisation of the policing skills that would be required to meet this need.

### **Contextualising the emerging competency suite**

The Prison Service had invested heavily in developing a set of skills that applied to all of their employees. Although they had tackled the issues from a different direction, they laboured hard and long over the need to contextualise their skills to become relevant to different roles and job profiles. It was in this context that they were able to guide and assist this research. For each skill set that the Service had created they employed a team of researchers to further develop three descriptive labels for each skill. Their team applied this principle to the emerging police framework and generated three labels for interpersonal skills. Those headings were: -

- Capable of interacting easily with a wide range of people, both public and colleagues
- Takes time to communicate with colleagues and the public
- Appreciates the feelings and views of others

If this process were repeated for each set of skills (eight in total) the result would be twenty-four descriptive statements. The process the Prison Service then employed<sup>286</sup> was to ask a group of representative employees, namely one managing the role in question, a person in that role and a subordinate or receiver of services from that role, to work with these labels.

The task was to take all the labels, in this case they were made into separate cards, and place them into priority clusters. There would be five clusters with a range from 'very important' through to

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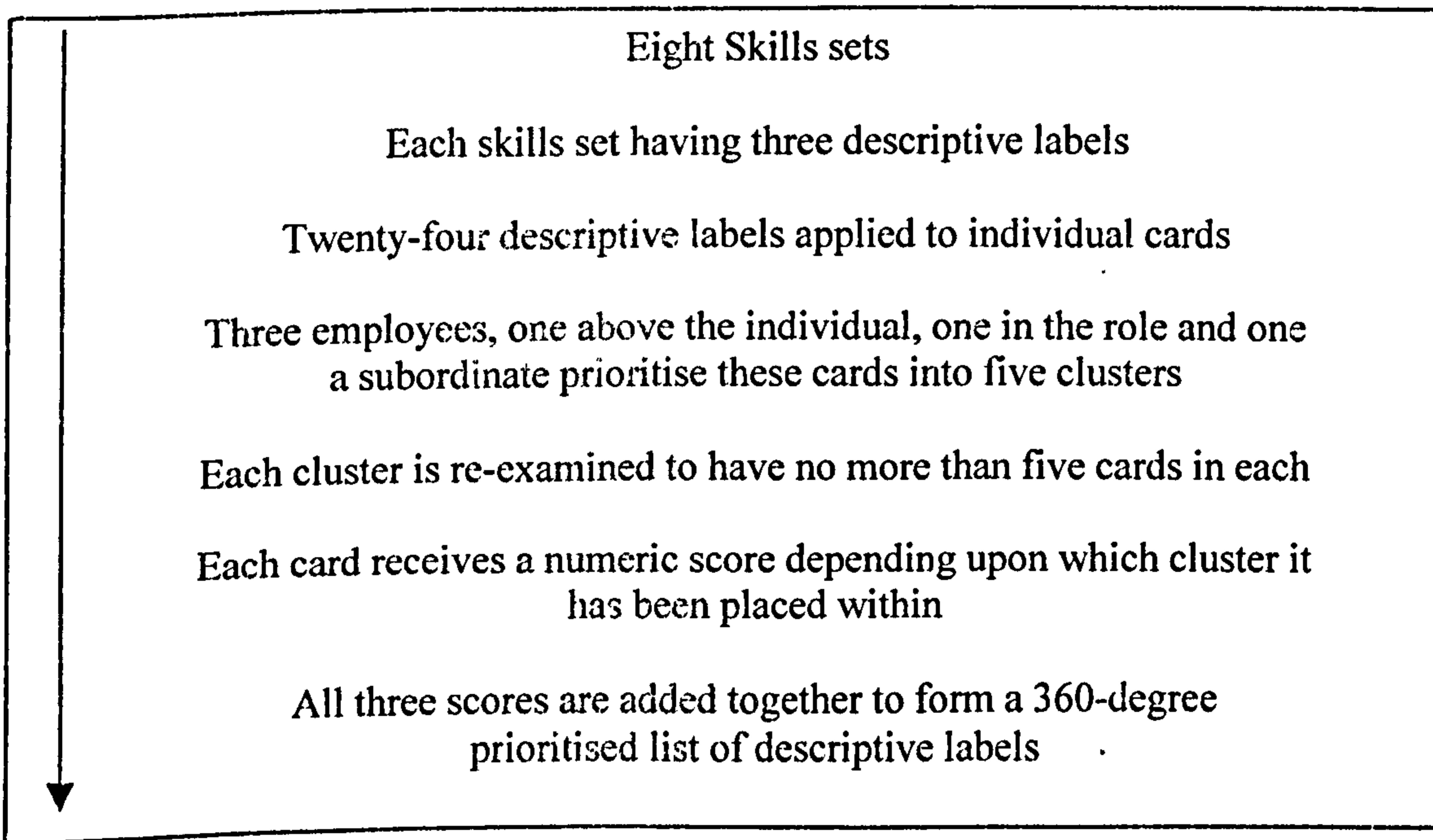
<sup>286</sup> HMP. (1998) Core Competency Framework.

'not very important'. The employees, having prioritised the twenty-four cards were then asked to re-examine their work to ensure that there were no more than five cards in each group.

By then allocating points, five for 'very important' through to one for 'not very important', each cluster received a value score, this being spread amongst the cards from the original eight skills sets.

By adding those together a 360-degree perspective could be drawn that prioritised the skills in relation to the role in question. This is demonstrated in the following diagram: -

**Fig. 28**



The scores were then traced back to the actual parent skills set and from this the relevance of particular skills that befell the particular role were identified. From the eight skills sets the result was a prioritised hierarchy across the broad range.



Having worked alongside the Prison Service to review their practices it then became prudent to examine the emerging police skills in this way. The processes outlined above were undertaken for example roles, e.g. a front office counter clerk. Having placed the descriptors in order and defined the hierarchy of skills it was clear that the latter two skills scored extremely low in the exercise. Those were 'strategic perspective' and 'management and development of people'. When completing the exercise for other roles it was also clear that the lower scoring skills bore little relevance to the role in question. The decision was therefore made in principle to remove the lower scoring skills sets from the suite for each function, leaving a core role profile of five skills.

This process was tested on a number of police employees in four focus groups. On each occasion the groups managed the task adequately and gave feedback as to the logic of the exercise. As one participant typically commented: -

“Every time I’m given a new set of policing skills, half of them do not apply to me in my job. At least with this there is some approach to removing that unnecessary problem.”<sup>287</sup>

One participant took the debate further by commenting: -

“I applaud your efforts, however you haven’t gone far enough. What you need to do now is focus on the actual skills in each set and identify which of these is not relevant to a particular role. Then the skills will be truly relevant and particular to the job in question.”<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Interview with a police constable, Runcorn. 1999.

<sup>288</sup> Interview with a police constable, Runcorn. 1999.

Two other focus groups agreed with this sentiment and therefore the process was re-examined to test the practicality and viability of performing this extra step. The process was again offered to a small group of employees, this time in Cheshire Constabulary headquarters. Having broken down the skills into the relevant hierarchy, six staff were asked to score each of the actual skills numerically, the highest number going to the most important skill when aligned to their particular role. These done the scores were put together. The highest scoring were then identified as 'essential skills' and those remaining were identified as 'desirable skills'. The split of essential and desirable skills was undertaken on a two-thirds to one-third ratio.

By way of an example the emerging 'essential' interpersonal skills were: -

- Sensitive to the needs/feelings of others
- Maintains impartiality
- Sensitive in the use of language
- Keeps temper under control
- Remains calm in stressful situations
- Approachable and supportive
- Seeks and recognises other person's point of view
- Projects positive image

The desirable interpersonal skills were: -

- Invests time to consult with others
- Tactful in discussion
- Learns from previous experiences
- Identifies and minimises interpersonal conflict<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Example skills profile from a focus group. Cheshire. 1999.



This process of identifying skills was then tested in focus groups in Swansea, South Wales. In two focus groups the process was outlined to and operated by a representative sample of employees, including administration clerks, traffic wardens and operational officers. The feedback was positive and included statements such

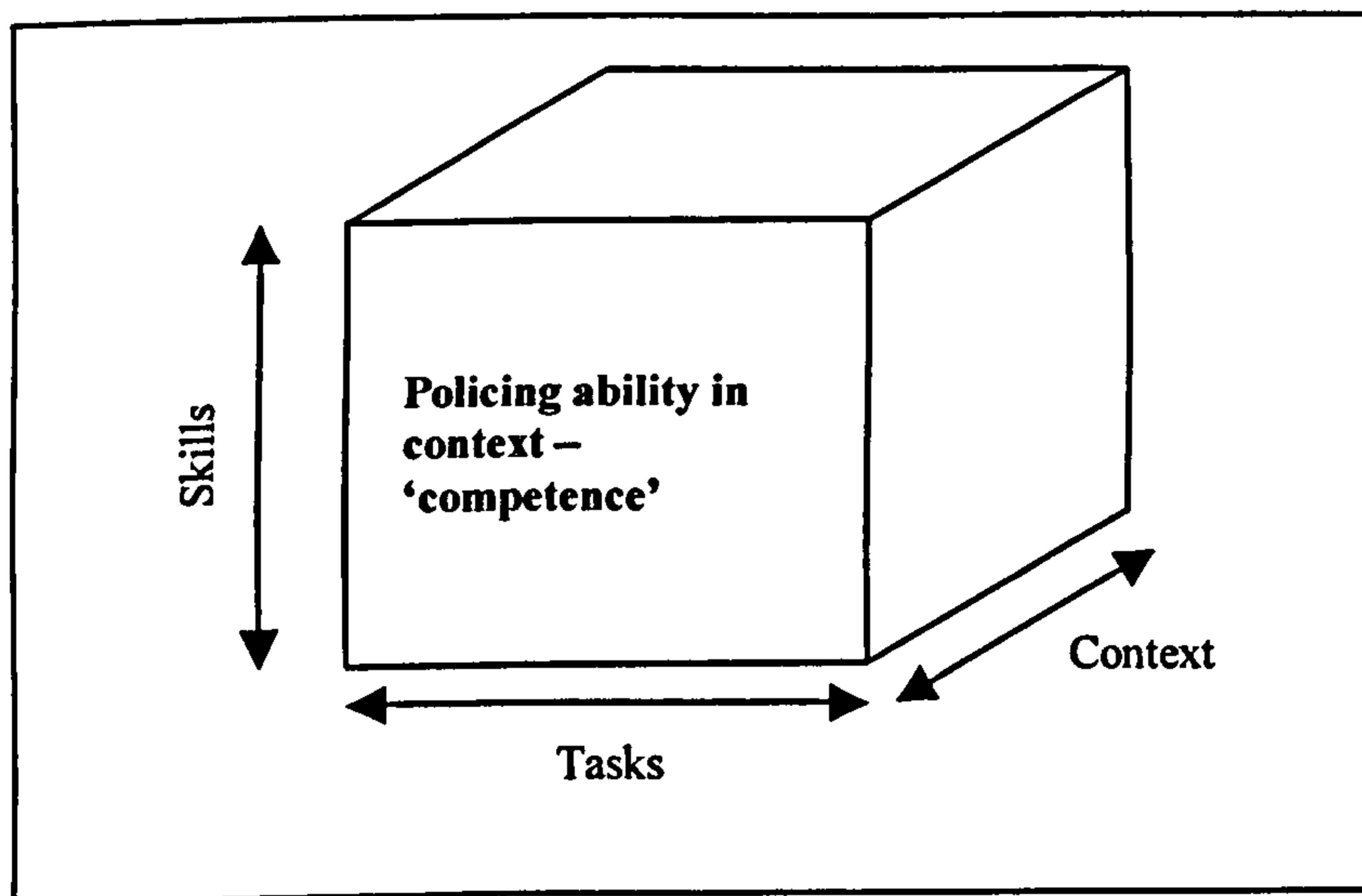
as: -

“This appears to make skills credible, fair and honest. If these are linked into the proposed system that will allow me to set meaningful performance targets and be measured honestly. I’m all for it. A change is definitely needed.”<sup>290</sup>

### **The overall perspective on competency**

This research commenced with a desire to satisfy the emerging need for a national competency framework. In undertaking this research, attention has been focussed upon the 3D model of police competence. The three dimensions are restated as follows: -

**Fig. 29**



<sup>290</sup> Interview with a focus group participant. Swansea. 1999.

By applying the concept of occupational standards, which could be managed through the National Training Organisation (NTO) to the emerging occupational skills (redesigned in this research), and then applying the context of the role in question (through the profiling methodology outlined earlier), the 3D model becomes pertinent to the emerging requirements of post-probation police employees. By placing this 3D model into an improvement model that couples individual development with that of the parent employer, the emerging 'competency framework' takes on a function that allows individuals to work and develop in an environment of organisational growth and shared performance responsibility.

In total what is offered to the Service as a result of this research is a complete paradigm for continued organisational development. The Local Government Act (1999) made a requirement of all police authorities to manage their function with regard to continuous improvement, in particular it was stated: -

“A best value authority must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.”<sup>291</sup>

One of the key goals of Best Value is: -

To shift culture irreversibly so that politicians, managers and staff believe that they exist only to work for the people in the community and not to defend their

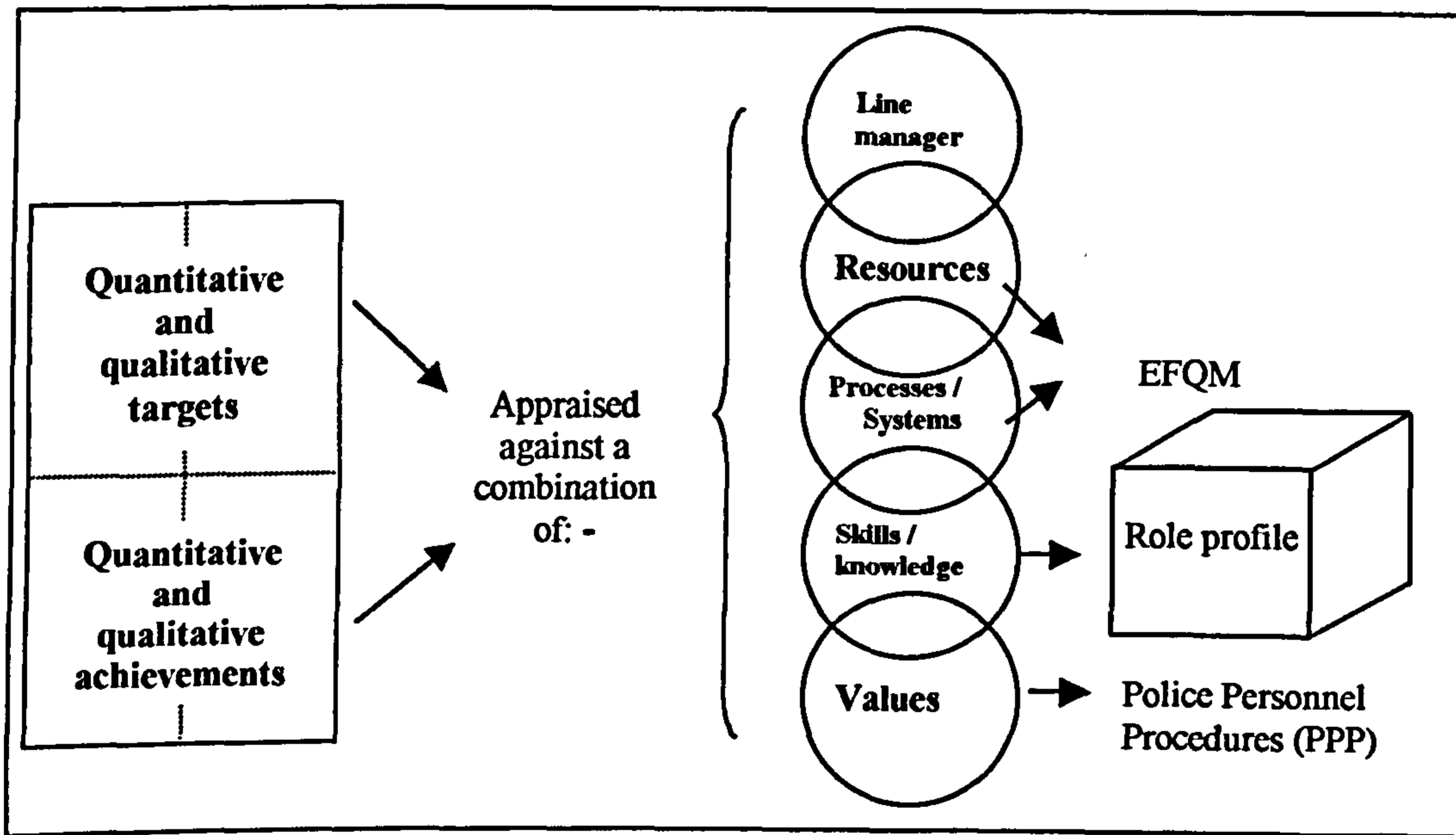
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<sup>291</sup> Local Government Association. (1999) Best Value – An Introductory Guide. Local Government Management Board. London.



Therefore, in keeping with the espoused political protocols, the model of competency aims to meet the current demands being placed upon the Police Service whilst at the same time recognising the pragmatic requirements of those actually charged with making a difference in the workplace. The completed model appears as follows: -

Fig. 30



This element of the research has focussed on generating a method of developing and measuring the performance of police service employees beyond the period of their statutory probation. The proposed model challenges current thinking on assessment and development and is offered to the Police Service as a foundation for creative thought and the opportunity of a new dawn in police assessment and development.

<sup>292</sup> Hilary Armstrong (1997) in Best Value – An Introductory Guide. Ibid.

This opportunity is best summarised by Armstrong (1994) who concluded that: -

“Performance management should be regarded as an integral part of the continuing process of management. This is based upon a philosophy that emphasises: -

- the achievement of sustained improvements in performance
- continuous development of skills and overall competence
- that the organisation is a learning organisation.”<sup>293</sup>

This philosophy, as defined by Armstrong, and built into the suggested competency model for post-probation police officers, would determine a strong future for police assessment and possibly avoid the opportunities for ‘bruises’ and ‘confidence’ lost as described at the beginning of this chapter. In the final form in which the framework appears it was offered to ACPO via a leading representative of the Personnel and Management (P&M) Committee. Unfortunately this ACPO member could not see the benefit of such a framework and was unwilling to accept that any framework could involve organisational performance as well as that of the individuals within it. In his words: -

**“This is all well and good, but, this challenges too many concepts at once. It’s not the organisation that needs developing. If the bobbies on the street are given a skills reference and then told to reach a level that’s all that is required. All this other stuff will lead to a whingeing load of coppers who never look at themselves.”**

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<sup>293</sup> Armstrong, M. (1994) Performance Management. Kogan Page. London.



**It is important that in the current climate of EFQM, Community and Race Relations difficulties and perhaps reduced public confidence in the Police that such narrow views are allowed to be so powerful and act as constraints on service wide progress. At this point the official support of the ACPO (P&M) Committee was withdrawn. Within the parent force of the researcher however the development of competency and competency frameworks continues. The recently introduced Performance Development Review (PDR) system acknowledges the points emerging from this research and although not adopting them all initially the development team have recognised the issues and matters raised, and are looking to reassess the Constabulary's position after PDR has a created a substantial foundation upon which to further develop.**

## **Chapter 9**

### **Conclusions**

This research has taken place within an environment of rapid change and policing uncertainty. The change of Government in 1996 from Conservative to Labour control brought about significant alterations to not only the policing climate but also that of other fiscal bodies that operate in the public sector. Issues such as Best Value, Performance Management, Value for Money and the policing of a plural society have all placed a burden on police managers and police officers across England and Wales. Set in that context, the conclusions of this research have a bearing upon policing that is both relevant and pertinent to the future. That future is likely to contain unexpected and taxing policy directives and requests from most, if not all, of the major stakeholders in our society.

Therefore it remains of utmost importance that the conclusions of this work are examined in that challenging and energetic context. This environment is one that heightens the relevance of any work that is aimed at improving performance and satisfying the requirements of the stakeholders.

The environment for policing is rapidly changing. In previous years, that have witnessed various examinations of police work and police officers' associated behaviours, the Police held a monopoly grip on the 'policing function'. Those days, the 'halcyon' days, have gone. Police forces now find themselves competing against one another for training, against the many component parts of the private 'security industry' and against increased demands for raised standards, for less monetary inputs. The so called 'golden age' of the Police Service has passed by.



In recognising the passing of the golden era, the Police Service needs policy changes and changes to its leadership styles. The police have not, as a collective body, promoted much of this change. The majority is being imposed through government controls, legislative changes that have European overtones and the louder, more effective voices of society demanding change. Central to this change is the policing function, the operational core of this vital public service, a core that must now perform as required by Government and society, not as it chooses. Performance management is a critical element of this new climate and this research sits well within the identified needs and demands of the new style police culture as this thesis demonstrates.

The conclusions, based on the evidence in the text, are as follows.

### **Competency**

Competency, the new language of behaviour and appraisals, requires definition. The multitude of labels and differing understandings within this arena lead to debates that take place in academic environments, police training schools, a number of written texts and in the minds of many students working to prove their own worth through a portfolio of 'competence' as required by their employers. Many organisations struggle to formulate competency statements, juggling the behavioural characteristics espoused by occupational psychologists with the occupational 'task' statements favoured by professional bodies such as the Qualifications Curriculum Authority (QCA). As with the Police Service at this point in time, this continues to be the management trend. With the submission of this thesis it has become known that a significant national project, to rewrite competency statements for dealing with a multi-cultural society, has become embroiled in the ever present debate over competencies (behaviour), and competences (tasks). To this end it is clear that the requirement for definition and purpose in this field of human resource management could not be clearer, nor could the requirement for simplicity be identified in any more understandable terms.

The definitions offered in this thesis could become the benchmark against which all competency projects are defined and measured.

### **Police assessment of performance**

The single, detached dimension of assessing individual performance is also failing to meet the demands of the modern policing environment. The requirement for dramatic performance enhancement, management and improvement rests heavily on both the human resource and the organisation in which that workforce operates. To set standards of expected behaviour and clearly identify a role for the individual is both healthy, respectful to those involved and are good practices for other agencies to observe. The placing of those statements into the specific police context adds to the professionalism and relevance of the performance requirements that can be expected through overall competence. It is therefore concluded that the emerging three-dimensional model for police assessment in the workplace is recommended for future performance measurement.

Police probationers are currently operating within this three-dimensional model, the feedback, as examined and evidenced in this research, clearly identifies the positive effects that the model is having upon performance and development. When carried over into the espoused model for organisational development these benefits are amplified. Appraisals within the Police Service should be iterative, cooperative collaborations between the manager and employee. The appraisal process should be designed to remove 'jousting opportunities' between these two parties by building mutual and shared portfolios over the entire appraisal year. Evidence should be solicited by the appraisee from all quarters. The threat of asking for feedback should be reduced by interventions from managers, a benefit that will in fact be for managers in the longer term. Training to accept this cultural change may have to be considered by the organisation as a whole, as threat reduction may not come about too smoothly. Appraisal systems should be based on trust, not



Only of the appraisee by the relevant manager, but of the manager by the organisation. To this end lengthy reports and meaningless documentation should be avoided within appraisals in favour of mutually prepared, short and relevant performance observations.

### **Performance management**

It would appear that a shift of focus is required regarding the 'post-probation' performance management of police officers. For too long the Service has required employees to accept responsibility for their skills and its effects upon their performance, since the organisation controls the environment, the values of employees, the limitations on available resources and the systems and processes in which the employee is required to function. It has been the case for a long time that attempts to manage performance have overlooked the responsibilities of the governing organisation to create performance enhancing situations, whilst relying heavily on raising the skills profiles of employees to improve overall outputs and outcomes. The adoption of a model of performance management based upon EFQM principles as discussed in chapter eight, equality of opportunity and a meaningful set of qualitative and quantitative performance targets will serve well the Police, and the public, in the future.

### **National police decision making within training**

Within this research, as discussed in chapter eight, especially when some of the findings were shared with members of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), there was considerable resistance to moving towards implementation. This was most prevalent in the area of a generic competency framework. The research findings are based on both the needs of the Service and the results of a robust research methodology. ACPO's resistance to sponsored project work cannot be omitted from these conclusions. The accuracy of representation offered by this body of executive managers could therefore be open to scrutiny.

The role of chief police officers is to strategically lead the nation's police function. It is becoming more and more noticeable that this duty is often performed without cognisance of the overriding empirical research and public/policing needs. The resistance to a redesigned appraisal process within a competency framework, in chapter eight, details these difficulties. The results of this research were shared with other ACPO members, who do not sit on the relevant ACPO committees, and there was emphatic support for the principles and practices the research suggests as a result of this consultation.

It is felt that there is a great need for the outcomes of this to be shared, both those at a micro level, (the probationer's Professional Development Portfolio) and the aspects of competence and appraisal, and those at a macro level, including the nationwide management of police training. The formation of a National Training Organisation (NTO), (a function that should take overall responsibility for organisational competency within the service), and the training discipline of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary (HMIC), could relieve the many ACPO committees of some of their powers and decision making veto regarding national and strategic training matters.

This may be something that the recently appointed civilian HMI, together with an experienced and qualified team of police officers, as part of the new HMIC training function may wish to consider. The availability of a qualified and authoritative body of 'police' employees, into which research findings such as this thesis, can feed and serve the professional development of the Police Service well in the future is therefore recommended.

This thesis opened with the following statement: -



“If you compare British policemen and women with their counterparts abroad, the major distinction is that he or she is **approachable**, ready to help anyone, whatever problem they bring – a stark contrast to the forbidding, remote, armed figures found in some countries.”

The acceptance of these findings could enhance the facts contained in this statement. The belief of the British police officer’s approachable nature should be refined and developed. It is the desire of the writer of this thesis, himself a police manager, that in years to come a Home Secretary will make a keynote speech that includes a statement such as: -

“If you compare British police officers with their counterparts, the major distinction is that they are ultimately competent, focused and serving the needs of a plural society with enthusiasm, vigour and a sense of purpose not seen anywhere else in the entire world.”

The recommendations from this research are as follows.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Recommendations**

- **The newly formed HMIC (Training) function should become a clearinghouse for all relevant research programmes removing some decision making from the various ACPO committees.**
- **Any future competency work within policing is managed by the newly formed NTO and that the clear definitions of purpose within the global arena of ‘competence’ are used to provide clarity.**
- **The three-dimensional model of police assessment, as discussed in this thesis, is included within any emerging police assessment/competency framework models.**
- **Police appraisal developments take into account the positive advantages of including supervisor performance in any new processes.**
- **Developers of police appraisals should take into consideration, and include, the advantages of European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) processes within the structure of police officer assessment.**
- **The intrinsic link between organisational competence and the competence of individual employees is recognised and made explicit within the overall umbrella of ‘performance management’.**



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## **Index to appendices**

<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>Questionnaire used in competency framework research</b>	<b>I – IX</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>Emerging suite of behavioural skills in competency framework</b>	<b>X – XIX</b>
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>Skills contained in Home Office Circular 43/96</b>	<b>XX – XXVIII</b>
<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>Core tasks from the Probationers PDP</b>	
	<b>Core tasks for independent patrol</b>	<b>XXIX – XLVII</b>
	<b>Core tasks for confirmation of appointment</b>	<b>XLVIII - LVI</b>

**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

National Competency Framework Questionnaire

In addition to answering the following questions it is important that you send me a copy of your forces Personnel Development Review (PDR - or similar personnel appraisal Form) for both police and civil staff.

1. What is the name of your Police Force?

\_\_\_\_\_

The following questions relate to how people are initially recruited; are selected for specialist posts; or are promoted within your Force.

The answers apply to BOTH civilian and police personnel.

2. How are personnel recruited into your Force?  
(tick where appropriate)

ASSESSMENT CENTRE [ ]

INTERVIEW [ ]

PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING [ ]

COMPETENCY TESTING [ ]

A COMBINATION OF ABOVE [ ]

OTHER (please specify below)

IF THERE ARE SEPARATE PROCESSES FOR POLICE AND CIVIL STAFF COULD YOU PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF EACH (on a separate sheet of paper - or by sending us a copy of the recruitment procedures).



**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

3. Are there prescribed minimum qualifications for entry into your Police Force?  
(tick one box only)

YES [ ] NO [ ]

4. If you answered YES, to Question 3., could you tell us what the prescribed minimum qualifications are?

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5. How are personnel selected for specialist posts within your Force?  
(tick where appropriate)

ASSESSMENT CENTRE [ ]

INTERVIEW [ ]

PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING [ ]

COMPETENCY TESTING [ ]

A COMBINATION OF ABOVE [ ]

OTHER (please specify below)

**IF THERE ARE SEPARATE PROCESSES FOR POLICE AND CIVIL STAFF COULD YOU PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF EACH (on a separate sheet of paper - or by sending us a copy of the selection procedures).**

**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

6. How are personnel selected for promotion within your Force?  
(tick where appropriate)

ASSESSMENT CENTRE [ ]

INTERVIEW [ ]

PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING [ ]

COMPETENCY TESTING [ ]

A COMBINATION OF ABOVE [ ]

OTHER (please specify below)

**IF THERE ARE SEPARATE PROCESSES FOR POLICE AND CIVIL STAFF COULD YOU PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF EACH (on a separate sheet of paper - or by sending us a copy of the promotion procedures).**

7. Does your Force partly or wholly finance individuals to obtain relevant professional qualifications?  
(tick one box only)

YES [ ] NO [ ]

8. Which of the following relevant professional qualifications do you sponsor?  
(tick where appropriate)

NVQ's [ ]

B.Tech. National Diplomas [ ]

Higher National Diplomas [ ]

Degree level [ ]



**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

9. Are there any other professional qualifications or awards, not listed above, which you sponsor?

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10. Approximately, what percentage of your Training Budget is used to finance, or partly finance external qualifications?

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**The next few questions are concerned with Personnel Development Reviews: how they were introduced into the Force and how they are conducted?**

11. What training took place when the appraisal (or Personnel Development Review) system was introduced in your Force?

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12. When did the training commence, to introduce PDR into your Force?

[            ] DATE (APPROX.)

**It would be helpful if you could provide information on the appraisal system (Personnel Development Review) within your Force: such as the Force instructions for the conduct of PDR's; and/or a copy of the Force order announcing its introduction into the Force.**

13. When is the PDR conducted for staff?  
(please specify)

---

**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

14. Does the PDR measure?  
(tick where appropriate)

- JOB SPECIFICATIONS [    ]
- OPERATIONAL SKILLS [    ]
- CORE SKILLS [    ]
- COMPETENCES [    ]
- BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS [    ]
- TECHNICAL SKILLS [    ]
- PERFORMANCE CRITERION [    ]
- LOCAL OBJECTIVES [    ]
- FORCE OBJECTIVES [    ]
- GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES [    ]

OTHER  
(please specify)

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15. Are your personnel encouraged to compile Personnel Development Portfolios?  
(tick one box only)

YES [    ]      NO [    ]

16. If you answered YES to Question 15., have they been introduced to Personnel Development Portfolios through training?  
(tick one box only)

YES [    ]      NO [    ]

17. If you answered YES to Question 16., when did that training commence?

[            ] DATE (APPROX.)

Again, it would be helpful if you could provide, where appropriate details of the training and a copy of the Force Order introducing PDR and/or PDR portfolio keeping to your Force.



**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

The next few questions relate to PERSONAL performance; how your Force defines the term and how you assess or measure performance.

18. How does your Force define PERSONAL PERFORMANCE?.

19. Does PERSONAL PERFORMANCE measure?  
(tick where appropriate)

JOB SPECIFICATIONS [ ]

OPERATIONAL SKILLS [ ]

CORE SKILLS [ ]

COMPETENCES [ ]

BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS [ ]

TECHNICAL SKILLS [ ]

PERFORMANCE CRITERION [ ]

LOCAL OBJECTIVES [ ]

FORCE OBJECTIVES [ ]

GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES [ ]

OTHER  
(please specify)

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**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

20. How does your Force measure ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE?  
(tick where appropriate)

PRESCRIBED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS [    ]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES [    ]

MINISTERIAL OBJECTIVES [    ]

PRESCRIBED FORCE OBJECTIVES [    ]

LOCAL (DIVISIONAL) OBJECTIVES [    ]

OTHER  
(please specify)

---

---

21. How do you make the link between performance at an ORGANISATIONAL (Force) Level and PERSONAL (individual) level?  
(tick where appropriate)

WE DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THIS LINK [    ]

FORCE AND PERSONAL OBJECTIVES ARE MEASURED [    ]

ONLY FORCE OBJECTIVES ARE MEASURED [    ]

ONLY PERSONAL OBJECTIVES ARE MEASURED [    ]

OTHER  
(please specify)

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The next few questions are based on information gained from the focus group using members of the National competency Framework Project Steering Committee.



**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

The focus session asked, 'What is a generic competency framework?'  
Below is a list of phrases used to describe this concept.

You are now asked to consider the list and enter a number code to describe whether you consider the item to be, 'Very Important, Important, I Am Not Sure, Not Important, or Not Very Important.

For example:

A Competency framework should be user friendly [ 3 ]

---

Please enter the number code which best describes the item below:

- 1 = Very Important
- 2 = Important
- 3 = I Am Not Sure
- 4 = Not Important
- 5 = Not Very Important

---

**A GENERIC COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK SHOULD BE:**

- PRACTICAL AND USER FRIENDLY [ ]
- A USEFUL REFERENCE TO JOB SKILLS [ ]
- STANDARDS WHICH ARE APPLICABLE TO ALL JOBS/RANKS/GRADES [ ]
- CAPABLE OF BEING MAINTAINED/DEVELOPED [ ]

---

**A GENERIC COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK SHOULD:**

- SET MEASURABLE AND ACHIEVABLE STANDARDS [ ]
- GUIDE INDIVIDUAL EXPECTATIONS [ ]
- BE ADAPTABLE TO ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE [ ]
- BE CAPABLE OF BEING ACCREDITED [ ]
- BE AGREED AND ACCEPTED WITHIN FORCES [ ]

**Appendix 1**  
**Competency Questionnaire**

Please enter the number code which best describes the item below:

- 1 = Very Important
- 2 = Important
- 3 = I Am Not Sure
- 4 = Not Important
- 5 = Not Very Important

---

**A GENERIC COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK SHOULD APPLY TO:**

- TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES [    ]
- WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES [    ]
- PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS [    ]
- ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALS [    ]

---

**A GENERIC COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK SHOULD ASSIST WITH:**

- DEMONSTRATING GOOD MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES [    ]
- DECISION MAKING PROCESSES [    ]
- BUILDING AND CHANGING THE ORGANISATION [    ]
- IDENTIFYING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF INDIVIDUALS [    ]
- ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF THE ORGANISATION [    ]
- DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT STYLE; ETHICS; VALUES [    ]
- PROVDING A DIAGNOSTIC HEALTH CHECK OF THE ORGANISATION [    ]
- PROVIDE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR RECRUITMENT SELECTION AND PROMOTION [    ]
- PROVIDING QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT [    ]

Thank you, once again, for taking part in this survey. When you have checked that you have completed all the questions and/or provided the information required in the various sections please send the questionnaire and other literature to the above address.



### **Interpersonal Skills**

- **Capable of interacting easily with a wide range of people, both public and colleagues**
  - **Takes time to communicate with colleagues and the public**
  - **Appreciates the feelings and views of others**
- 
1. Sensitive to the needs / feelings of others
  2. Approachable and supportive
  3. Maintains impartiality
  4. Invests time to consult with others
  5. Tactful in discussion
  6. Sensitive in the use of language
  7. Keeps temper under control
  8. Remains calm in stressful situations
  9. Seeks and recognises other person's point of view
  10. Projects positive self-image
  11. Learns from previous experiences
  12. Identifies and minimises interpersonal conflict

## **Communication**

- **Capable of being an attentive listener**
  - **Able to communicate a positive image when communicating with colleagues and the public**
  - **Writes clearly and concisely, and gets the point across in written work**
- 
1. **Speaks clearly and concisely**
  2. **Adapts communication style to suit needs of the listener**
  3. **Listens effectively**
  4. **Questions / clarifies to ensure full understanding**
  5. **Uses appropriate spelling, and grammar in compiling written reports.**
  6. **Able to summarise and paraphrase relevant aspects of a complex message**



**Self-motivation**

- **Demonstrates high levels of interest and commitment to tasks**
  - **Generates part of their own workload**
  - **Organises their work effectively**
- 
1. Shows an interest in their work
  2. Accepts unpleasant tasks without adverse comment
  3. Perseveres when faced with set backs
  4. Keeps their professional knowledge up to date
  5. Volunteers for work
  6. Generates part of their own workload
  7. Requests work which extends their experience or offers new challenges
  8. Plans and organises their workload
  9. Aims to meet deadlines
  10. Takes initiative in identifying own learning and development needs

**Decision-making**

- **Effectively collects and analyses information**
- **Able to make timely and considered decisions**
- **Self assured and decisive, creates a good impression**

1. **Gathers all necessary relevant information**
2. **Checks accuracy / validity of information**
3. **Uses personal experience where necessary to make informed decisions**
4. **Applies knowledge and experience with thought**
5. **Seeks advice from others when appropriate**
6. **Takes responsibility for decisions**
7. **Explains / defends decisions in the light of subsequent information**
8. **Revises decisions when appropriate in light of subsequent information**
9. **Deals with problems through timely interventions**
10. **Considers issues from all angles**
11. **Makes clear recommendations**



### **Creativity and innovation**

- **Seeks innovative ways of doing thing with the notion of continuous improvement in mind**
  - **Displays open minded attitudes to new ideas**
  - **Assists the implementation of changes**
- 
1. **Develops innovative, workable solutions to problems**
  2. **Generates new ideas, systems and procedures**
  3. **Seeks new ways of doing things with improvement in mind**
  4. **Regularly reviews methods of work**
  5. **Considers new ideas fairly**
  6. **Produces practical plans for innovative ideas**
  7. **Generates different opinions, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks**

## **Leadership**

- **Has vision and knows when to react quickly or to take a longer term view**
- **Inspires confidence in others**
- **Provides guidance and direction**

1. Provides direction and guidance for others
2. Takes control of situation when required
3. Recognises and acknowledges good work
4. Allocates work impartially
5. Ensures effective communication of organisational requirements and objectives
6. Anticipates/reappraises plans to meet changing circumstances



**Management and Development of People**

- **Able to get people to work together**
  - **Appraises and develops staff to a high standard**
  - **Ability to assess and develop staff fairly**
- 
1. **Plans and supports development activities**
  2. **Provides continuous assessment and performance feedback**
  3. **Coaches others to improve performance**
  4. **Continuously reviews methods of work for others**
  5. **Identifies training initiatives for others**
  6. **Reviews performance across the whole reporting period**
  7. **Maximises individual contribution through effective delegation**

**Strategic Perspective**

- **Creates and communicates a clear vision for the future**
  - **Provides a workable strategy that supports the vision**
  - **Has an awareness of the environmental issues**
- 
1. **Demonstrates awareness of issues affecting the future of the service**
  2. **Demonstrates awareness of the effect the broader policing environment has on strategy**
  3. **Shows foresight**
  4. **Considers cost/resource implications when compiling plans**



**Team building**

- **Gains an understanding of the need for trust and co-operation to achieve effective working**
  - **Supports teamwork and motivates others**
  - **Can manage conflict and build group identity**
- 
1. **Sets realistic team objectives**
  2. **Provides information to the team**
  3. **Shows personal interest, support and encouragement to the team**
  4. **Fosters atmosphere of honesty, trust and support**
  5. **Treats delicate and/or personal issues with sensitivity and discretion**
  6. **Consults members before making changes which affect the team**
  7. **Seeks feedback from other team members**

**Business Orientation**

- **Shows clear commitment to efficiency and better use of resources**
  - **Seeks to improve working relationships with those they have to work with**
  - **Contributes to delivering a service in a way that secures public confidence**
- 
1. Seeks to achieve the goals and targets set for them, monitoring progress in doing so
  2. Seeks to determine, prioritise and record organisational requirements effectively
  3. Reviews progress against organisational objectives
  4. Consults others on organisational objectives and priorities
  5. Supports implementation of new working practices
  6. Is able to balance the need for short term sacrifice in order to achieve long term goals
  7. Achieves deadlines
  8. Represents the organisation to staff / public



## Professional and ethical standards

Officers must act with integrity and impartiality based on a thorough understanding of policy and with appropriate regard to public perceptions. They should take pride in their job and present a positive image of the service, both to the public and their colleagues. In addition to achieving high standards of punctuality, appropriate dress, personal hygiene and physical fitness, officers must be committed to meeting the needs and expectations of the community they serve and to delivering a quality service to the public.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>maintains impartiality/fairness regardless of race / gender / age / sexual orientation/marital status/disability</p> <p>sensitive to the needs/feelings of others without compromising authority</p> <p>approachable and supportive to colleagues and others</p> <p>invests time to consult with others</p> <p>tactful in discussion; sensitive in use of language</p> <p>keeps temper under control; calm/confident under stress</p> <p>looks at a situation from other person's point of view</p> <p>develops/maintains good specialist knowledge</p> <p>maintains a good level of fitness.</p>	<p>disregards others' feelings</p> <p>dismissive or uncaring of others; shows indifference</p> <p>acts inconsiderately</p> <p>inflexible when dealing with others</p> <p>alienates others by being self-centered, tactless or abrupt</p> <p>abuses authority; overbearing, bullying or threatening</p> <p>creates friction; has a divisive effect on the team</p> <p>insensitive to the needs and expectations of customers</p> <p>tolerates/encourages low standards from others</p> <p>sometimes displays biased or prejudiced behaviour</p> <p>lacks integrity; seeks to undermine established procedures</p> <p>takes no pride in own fitness or appearance.</p>

## **Communication**

Police officers need to be attentive listeners and create a positive impact when they communicate with colleagues and members of the public, whether orally or in writing.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>speaks clearly and concisely</p> <p>highly articulate, fluent and persuasive speaker/presenter</p> <p>adapts communication style to suit needs of audience</p> <p>listens attentively</p> <p>asks probing questions: questions/clarifies to ensure full understanding</p> <p>writes clearly, concisely and with a logical structure</p> <p>written reports summarise salient points</p> <p>uses correct grammar and spelling.</p>	<p>speaks vaguely or in an unclear fashion</p> <p>does not express self clearly</p> <p>is inattentive to others</p> <p>appears uninterested when communicating with others</p> <p>frequently interrupts when others are speaking</p> <p>produces unstructured, poor quality written reports</p> <p>reports fail to convey adequate/accurate information.</p>



## **Self-motivation**

Police officers need to show high levels of interest and commitment to tasks to be sufficiently self-motivated to generate part of their workload and to organise their work and time effectively.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>interested in their work</p> <p>accepts unpleasant tasks without grumbling</p> <p>perseveres when faced with setbacks</p> <p>keeps their professional knowledge up-to-date</p> <p>volunteers for work</p> <p>generates part of their own workload</p> <p>requests work which extends their experience or offers new challenges</p> <p>seeks to achieve the goals and targets set for them, monitoring progress in doing so</p> <p>plans and organises their workload</p> <p>strives to meet deadlines.</p>	<p>apathetic</p> <p>tends to see things negatively; sometimes obstructive</p> <p>lacks commitment to tasks and the job</p> <p>gives up easily when faced with problems</p> <p>does not keep professional knowledge up-to-date</p> <p>avoids work/responsibility</p> <p>often requires close supervision to ensure output/quality is maintained</p> <p>regularly misses deadlines</p> <p>disorganised in their approach to managing work</p> <p>rarely proactive in generating their work.</p>

## Decision-making

Police officers need effectively to collect and analyse information to arrive at timely and considered decisions.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>objective: decisions are devoid of personal bias in terms of race / gender / age / sexual orientation / marital status / disability</p> <p>gathers all necessary relevant information</p> <p>checks accuracy/validity of information and personal experience</p> <p>quickly and accurately assimilates information and personal experience</p> <p>applies knowledge and experience astutely</p> <p>seeks advice from others when appropriate</p> <p>decisions remain rational and impartial under pressure</p> <p>comes to decisions within time constraints</p> <p>takes full responsibility for decisions</p> <p>revises / explains / justifies decisions in the light of subsequent information</p> <p>thinks through the consequences of their actions</p> <p>avoids anticipated problems through timely interventions.</p>	<p>fails to gather necessary information</p> <p>does not consider all the facts or all the options available</p> <p>does not seek advice when necessary</p> <p>accepts information at face value</p> <p>displays personal prejudice when making decisions</p> <p>allows excessive subjectivity to influence their decisions</p> <p>decisions become irrational/impulsive under stress</p> <p>regularly fails to respond to situations</p> <p>avoids making decisions</p> <p>indecisive; takes too long to make up their mind</p> <p>does not learn from experience when making decisions</p> <p>tries to shirk responsibility for decisions they have taken</p> <p>dogmatic once their mind is made up, despite existence of new/ conflicting information.</p>



## **Creativity and innovation**

Wherever possible, police officers should seek innovative ways of doing things with the notion of continuous improvement in mind. They should display an open minded attitude to new ideas and new ways of carrying out their work. They are encouraged to question existing procedures with a view to suggesting improvements and helping implement these changes.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>develops innovative, workable solutions to problems</p> <p>generates new ideas, systems and procedures</p> <p>seeks new ways of doing things with improvement in mind</p> <p>regularly reviews methods of work</p> <p>queries existing procedures where appropriate and considers alternatives</p> <p>appraises new ideas fairly</p> <p>produces practical plans for innovative ideas</p> <p>supports implementation of new working practices.</p>	<p>rarely produces original ideas</p> <p>shows unjustified resistance to any departure from the traditional approach</p> <p>fails to anticipate or take a proactive role</p> <p>lacks imagination</p> <p>always content with the status quo; does not seek improvements</p> <p>displays 'tunnel vision'</p> <p>blinkered/parochial in their outlook; unresponsive to change.</p>

## **Leadership**

Police officers in leadership roles need to provide direction, support team work and motivate other officers in such a way that they instill confidence and respect.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>provides clear direction for others</p> <p>takes control of a situation when required</p> <p>sets realistic team objectives</p> <p>recognizes and acknowledges good work</p> <p>allocates work impartially</p> <p>consults and seeks the views of others</p> <p>disseminates information to the team</p> <p>demonstrates personal commitment by attending incidents</p> <p>self confident when dealing with staff/public appearances</p> <p>shows high degree of personal interest, support and encouragement to the team</p>	<p>fails to influence and motivate the team</p> <p>avoids having to deal with people</p> <p>encourages information flow up the chain of command, but not down/across</p> <p>lacks credibility in their dealing with others</p> <p>does not provide clarity of direction</p> <p>does not know when to get involved and when to stand back from a situation</p> <p>does not involve the team or seek their input</p> <p>uneasy when meeting assembled staff or dealing public appearances</p>



## **Managing and developing staff**

Police officers in supervisory roles are required to manage, appraise and develop their staff to a high standard and in line with local policing priorities and objectives.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>plans and supports development activities for staff</p> <p>puts aside time to discuss performance issues with staff</p> <p>provides regular, constructive assessment and performance feedback to staff</p> <p>coaches staff to improve performance</p> <p>regularly reviews methods of work for staff</p> <p>reviews performance across the whole reporting period</p> <p>maximizes individual contribution through effective delegation</p> <p>produces accurate and unbiased appraisals that are fair regardless of race and agenda</p> <p>produces timely appraisals supported by hard facts</p>	<p>uninterested in or oblivious to staff's development needs</p> <p>fails to support or stifles individual development</p> <p>does not create time to discuss performance issues with staff</p> <p>provides little or no feedback on performance to staff</p> <p>saves performance feedback until the end of the year</p> <p>sees staff development as personnel's job</p> <p>does not seek to stretch staff, e.g. through effective delegation</p> <p>produces unsubstantiated / subjective appraisal reports</p> <p>lets personal prejudice / bias affect decisions about staff</p> <p>rarely produces review reports on time</p>

## Operational planning

Police officers with operational planning responsibilities are required to manager and deploy the full range of available resources to produce the most efficient and cost-effective results across a range of pre-planned and spontaneous incidents.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>considers issues from all angles</p> <p>consults others on operational objectives and priorities</p> <p>determines, prioritises and records operational requirements effectively</p> <p>anticipates, reappraises plans to meet changing circumstances as the operation unfolds</p> <p>willing to take appropriate advice from specialists and other informed sources</p> <p>allows time where appropriate for consultation to minimize costly mistakes</p> <p>considers resource availability; plans to optimum cost</p> <p>incorporates feedback from debriefs etc</p> <p>reviews progress against operational objectives</p> <p>ensures effective communication of operational requirements and objectives</p>	<p>fails to consult others about operational matters</p> <p>mismanages and wastes resources through inappropriate deployment</p> <p>fails to match resources to demand</p> <p>has unstructured, muddled approach to operational planning</p> <p>does not think ahead or prioritise</p> <p>last minute planning; seat of the pants approach</p> <p>ignores potentially valuable advice</p> <p>takes planning decisions inappropriate to level , rank</p> <p>plans involve excessive use of resources</p> <p>plans fail to provide sufficient resources</p> <p>does not communicate operational priorities / objectives clearly</p>



## **Strategic planning**

Police officers with strategic planning responsibilities need to create and communicate a clear vision of the future, with a workable strategy that supports it.

<b>Effective performance</b>	<b>Less effective performance</b>
<p>plans using information on political / community issues</p> <p>understands major issues affecting the future of the service</p> <p>knows how broader policing environment affects strategy</p> <p>shows vision and foresight about the future</p> <p>prioritises appropriately in the light of service plans</p> <p>plans for different scenarios; thinks of key 'what ifs'</p> <p>generates different opinions, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks</p> <p>balances short term gains against longer term objectives</p> <p>turns strategy into action with plans covering costs, staffing and resource requirements</p> <p>distributes and publicises strategic plans</p>	<p>fails to perceive the impact on strategy of external issues</p> <p>poor understanding of the broader policing context</p> <p>unaware of the political environment</p> <p>only responds reactively to events</p> <p>lacks vision and foresight</p> <p>prioritises inappropriately in view of service plans</p> <p>conducts illogical appraisals of available options</p> <p>exclusive focus on short term gains</p> <p>fails to action strategy</p>

## **Unit 1: Patrolling**

### **1.1 Planning a beat**

*As a police officer you will be expected to organise your work and time effectively. This means that prior to setting off on patrol you need to consider the particular needs of the area to which you have been posted. You should bear in mind potential for public disorder - both planned and spontaneous. You should consider crime and crime prevention both within the private sector, and the public sector, not forgetting community concerns and fear of crime. The information on which you base this plan will come from within and outside the police service and will cover both offences and suspects and should be obtained in accordance with service policy and current legislation. You may need to locate some of the intelligence yourself and your final plan will need to balance the needs of individuals, community representatives, the various communities including the business community, colleagues, and other statutory bodies.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. ensure that you obtain all the relevant and current criminal intelligence for your beat
2. seek clarification on any information which is not clear or is otherwise difficult to understand
3. ensure conclusions drawn from the information are objective, based on thorough evaluation
4. accurately identify areas of vulnerability to crime and public order flashpoints
5. identify community issues and concerns and options for addressing those concerns
6. make plans which optimise your time spent and take full account of the needs of the area.



## Unit 1: Patrolling

### 1.2 Patrolling a beat

*In addition to patrolling your beat in accordance with your plan and objectives, you should aim to establish formal and informal contacts within the community. Useful information can often be gleaned from CCTV, curious neighbours, shop workers, construction workers, parents, children, traffic wardens, school crossing patrols, security staff and all kinds of other people. At the same time you need to be aware of actual and potential threats to members of the public, your colleagues and yourself.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. confirm equipment (personal radio, baton etc) is available and in good working order
2. use equipment in accordance with correct procedures
3. ensure that communication with colleagues can be maintained
4. report your location at relevant times
5. carry out your patrol according to plan
6. establish and develop community relations and contacts
7. actively gather criminal intelligence, complete appropriate reports and submit them in accordance with force policies
8. identify threats to yourself and others, assess those threats and respond appropriately
9. identify opportunities to offer advice on crime prevention issues and then give that advice, while being sensitive to the context in which it is being given.

## **Unit 2: Investigating**

### **2.1 Initial investigation of crime**

*Very often you will be the first officer to arrive at the scene of a crime. You will need to quickly take stock of the situation and identify the offender(s), and witness(es) and whether they are still present. You will also need to take charge of the crime scene to preserve evidence and to take account of health and safety issues. The evidence that you need to preserve and secure could be actual evidence or potential evidence. It could be oral evidence including hearsay, documentary, computer, video, physical, or forensic evidence which may be found in the immediate vicinity and surrounding areas.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. control the scene making certain of your own safety and that of others
2. secure evidence and exhibits to ensure their integrity and continuity
3. where applicable, take steps to avoid cross-contamination
4. submit exhibits which require specialist examination in a suitable manner with the correct documents
5. obtain oral accounts of the incident from potential witnesses and offenders in accordance with codes of practice
6. identify and arrest suspect(s)
7. explain why evidence needs to be preserved or retained
8. identify potential witnesses and evidence in the surrounding areas
9. record full and accurate report(s) of the incident.



## Unit 2: Investigating

### 2.2 Supporting victims and witnesses

*While investigating crime you should consider the effects on the people involved. You will need to be alert to the psychological and physical effects on victims and witnesses, who may need medical advice, practical advice, welfare advice, counselling or other help. In addition, you should be alert to possible needs for an interpreter or the needs of people with particular disabilities.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. identify the effects of the incident on the victims, witnesses and, where appropriate, families/friends
2. identify relevant and appropriate assistance or support and arrange it
3. explain the benefits of contacting and using external agencies for support
4. respect the right of anyone to refuse external agency support
5. respect the confidentiality of all people involved.

## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.1 Making arrests

*There will be times when you have to arrest a suspect in order to continue with your investigations. Whether the arrest is under the authority of a warrant or otherwise, people who have been arrested may be co-operative or resistant to you. They may be a juvenile or have their own special needs. You will have to conduct the arrest with due consideration for these diverse circumstances. Arrests will be made expeditiously, giving due consideration to appropriate time and prevailing circumstances.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. correctly identify your suspect
2. correctly identify the potential witnesses and the evidence for the case
3. confirm the accuracy of any oral evidence you have been given
4. give the suspect the reason for the arrest in accordance with the relevant legislation
5. caution the suspect in accordance with PACE and ensure that the person understands what is being said to them and what is required of them
6. use the appropriate equipment, restraint techniques and amount of force required to effect the arrest, minimising the risks to all those involved
7. search detained persons for unauthorised items in accordance with PACE
8. maintain the security of yourself and others while transporting detainee(s)
9. fulfil the appropriate duty of care for a detainee under escort
10. use the appropriate equipment, restraint techniques and amount of force required to transport the detainee, minimising the risks to all those involved
11. ensure all written records are clear, accurate and complete, and are forwarded to the relevant people at the correct time.



## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.2 Escorting detainees

*Once someone has been arrested, either by you or a colleague, you will often be called on to escort them to the police station. There will be other frequent occasions when you will be required to escort detainees to court, to another police station and to their premises which are to be searched. You will need to be alert to the detainee's security and physical, psychological, medical, welfare and special needs.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. ensure that the correct safety, security procedures and levels of restraint are adhered to during the journey
2. make sure that the detainee is kept under observation during transit
3. ensure that the detainee's personal needs during the journey are attended to in accordance with PACE and force policy
4. deal with incidents and events en route correctly and report them promptly
5. inform the custody officer of the offence and power of arrest
6. make sure that all written records are clear, accurate and complete, and are forwarded to the relevant people at the correct time
7. accurately identify when to use the form 'POL1' for high-risk prisoners under escort and subsequently use the form appropriately.

## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.3 Searching

*Within your role you will be expected to search people in custody or as a result of more proactive work. You may be searching them in relation to drugs, alcohol, personal injury, damage to property, explosives, to prevent escape or to look for stolen property or evidence to confirm/negate involvement in an offence. Searches may be voluntary, or may be against the will of the person searched. This means you will deal with passive or resistant people and/or people with special needs. These searches may take place in public places or the police station.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. provide the correct information (GOWISE) before carrying out any search outside the police station
2. make sure that the gender of staff conducting the search is in accordance with force policy and codes of practice
3. ensure that your communication meets the needs of the person being searched
4. ensure that items that may be of evidential value are seized and dealt with in accordance with legislation and force policy
5. clearly inform the suspect of the reasons for, procedure for and outcomes of the search
6. make sure that the individual's rights and dignity are respected at all times before, during and after the search
7. make sure that the safety of participating officers is maintained at all times and request that prohibited articles and substances are declared prior to the search
8. make sure that the search is conducted in accordance with force policy and legislation
9. complete the search form promptly and accurately, and submit it in accordance with current legislation and force procedures
10. verify the detainee's correct identity, address, and records, recording all accurately.



## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.4 Interview: planning

*Interviewing is an important aspect of police work. You will be expected to plan the interviews you conduct to meet the differing circumstances. You will be expected to plan for interviews of offenders and witnesses, which may be in the presence of legal representatives, the interviewee's family or other appropriate adult. Interviews may take place in police stations, homes, workplaces and at the scenes of incidents. People interviewed may be resistant or aggressive to being interviewed or may have special needs.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. assemble information which is relevant and valid for the interview
2. identify issues and plan approach(es) to obtain information
3. consider the manner, demeanour and behaviour of the person being interviewed and take appropriate steps to ensure the interview is regarded as fair by the courts
4. confirm that strategies to deal with potential defences, alibis and behaviour are appropriate to the context of the interview
5. ensure that the resources required for the interview are correctly identified and assembled, including anything required to meet the interviewee's special communication or other needs
6. set up the interview environment to facilitate an effective interview, while maintaining security
7. provide information to others who will be present at the interview within the appropriate timescales
8. identify the welfare and rights of the interviewee and respond to them.

## **Unit 3: Arresting**

### **3.5 Conducting interviews**

*You will be expected to conduct your interviews in a manner which meets the guidelines and codes of practice. Interviews may be of offenders or witnesses, may be in the presence of legal representatives or the interviewee's family. They may take place in police stations, homes, workplaces and at the scenes of incidents. People interviewed may be adult or juvenile, under arrest or not, resistant or aggressive to being interviewed or may have special needs. You may be expected to record the interview on tape or in writing.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. conduct interviews in accordance with PACE and the Codes of Practice
2. communicate at a level and pace appropriate to the needs of the interviewee
3. ask questions which are structured and delivered in a manner which encourages the interviewee to provide the maximum relevant information
4. check the exact meaning and accuracy of information obtained from the interviewee
5. challenge inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the appropriate manner
6. respect the rights and welfare of the interviewee at all times, especially with regard to any special communication or other needs
7. record the interview accurately and fully in accordance with legislation and force policy
8. deal with any third parties who are present in accordance with legislation, force policy and in a manner which maintains the effectiveness of the interview
9. clearly explain the procedure subsequent to the interview to the interviewee and any other relevant third parties
10. where appropriate, give accurate and complete information and advice to others on the findings of an interview
11. complete all records of the interview accurately and in accordance with force policies and relevant legislation
12. store records of interviews in the correct format and location.



## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.6 Searching land, premises and property

*The role of a police officer often involves searching land and premises. You may be called upon to search for missing, vulnerable persons or people suspected of offences. It is also necessary to search for evidence and illegal goods or substances. It may be necessary for you to use specialist equipment for forcing entry, for communication or for the search itself.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. obtain appropriate authorisation for the search within the terms of PACE and force policy
2. check equipment to be in correct working order
3. inform owners, tenants and representatives of the reason and authority for the search, ensuring that they understand
4. conduct a search in accordance with a plan
5. deal with items of evidential value found, or people found in accordance with legislation and force policy
6. control people who may be present so as to maintain the effectiveness of the search
7. complete the necessary documentation legibly
8. ensure the safety of people and property throughout the search.

## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.7 Gathering and evaluating evidence

*Evidence gathering is an important part of any investigation. Your evidence must always be collected and evaluated in accordance with the procedures and principles of PACE and other relevant legislation. Evidence can be in many forms: oral, documentary, video, physical, hearsay and evidence from computers. All of your evidence must be evaluated for its relevance and accuracy whatever source it comes from. When recording written statements you may be dealing with children or adults, a person with special needs or you may be recording a statement of your own evidence.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. identify the need for expert assistance and take the necessary action
2. evaluate evidence for relevance and accuracy
3. take prompt action to complete outstanding enquiries
4. evaluate the evidence in accordance with force policy. Identify shortfalls and take appropriate action including searching intelligence databases
5. take effective steps to prevent a witness' address being disclosed
6. explain the rules for completing the certificates on a statement
7. refer to exhibits in a statement
8. correct any mistakes in a statement in the proper manner
9. take appropriate action to deal with hearsay evidence.



## Unit 3: Arresting

### 3.8 Case papers; documentation and court proceedings

*Good police work needs to be supported with good records and supporting documentation. The offence, the offender's past history and file, and any special risks posed need to be accurately and promptly recorded and reported. Where forensic evidence is submitted or other evidence is retained, this too needs to be supported with full and accurate information.*

In particular you should:

1. complete documentation relating to all the above
2. ensure that all your documentation is accurate, legible, in the correct format and submitted promptly or filed in the correct location
3. prepare witness statements that are clear, accurate and include all evidence
4. summarise evidence accurately and concisely, including evidence from tape-recorded interviews.

## **Unit 4: Dealing with incidents and disputes**

### **4.1 Incidents**

*As a patrolling officer you may be one of the first officers to arrive on the scene of incidents both large or small. Some incidents may be serious, such as a suspicious death, a serious road traffic accident, bomb threat or a public transport accident.*

*You will be expected to perform different roles depending on the scale and type of the incident.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. initiate action for emergency situations without delay
2. provide immediate care for injured persons
3. investigate reports from the public promptly and fully and take the appropriate action, including searching and examining dead bodies
4. accurately identify the nature of the incident and communicate these facts to the appropriate persons
5. where necessary, exercise the relevant powers of search
6. identify the need for specialist support personnel and communicate this fact to the appropriate persons
7. give public safety information appropriate to the requirements of the situation
8. seek to use different approaches where the initial form of communication is not effective
9. maintain and create relevant records in a legible and accurate manner
10. control access to and egress from the site, siting barriers and signs where appropriate
11. routinely check that equipment, materials and the working environment are safe and free from hazards
12. use and store equipment and materials in accordance with force policy
13. make as safe as possible situations which cause concern for health and safety
14. report notifiable incidents and unsafe situations to the relevant authority.



## **Unit 4: Dealing with incidents and disputes**

### **4.2 Disputes**

*Within your role as a police officer you may be expected to deal with different types of disputes. These may be of a domestic nature, landlord/tenant, involve environmental campaigners or excess noise at a party.*

*Whatever the type of dispute you attend, you will be expected to maintain and improve public peace and order and control these situations where necessary.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. recognise potential and actual incidents of disorder and where possible prevent breaches of public tranquillity
2. establish contacts with the public to promote and improve positive relationships
3. promptly and fully investigate any reports of disorder and take the appropriate course of action
4. identify the need for specialist and support personnel and communicate this fact to the appropriate persons
5. communicate in a manner that is sensitive to the overall needs of the situation
6. respond to incidents appropriately with reference to the nature of the incident and the resources available
7. maintain and create relevant records in a legible and accurate manner.

## Unit 5: Dealing with traffic

### 5.1 Motoring offences

*The role of the patrolling police officer requires them to enforce road traffic legislation and increase road safety. This role can be carried out in various different ways; one of the most common is by stopping vehicles and dealing with the driver. Motoring (and other) offences can be dealt with in a variety of different ways: verbal warning/caution, summons, vehicle defect rectification, or fixed penalty.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. use intelligence to target disqualified drivers and vehicles used by criminals
2. correctly identify offences and take the appropriate action in accordance with force policies and legal requirements
3. stop road users correctly and safely
4. examine vehicles for roadworthiness, taking appropriate action when offences are revealed
5. examine driving documents and make checks to confirm vehicle ownership and driver identity
6. conduct searches in accordance with the provisions of PACE
7. fully investigate any potential breaches of the law
8. ensure that written records are clear, accurate and complete, and forwarded to the relevant people at the correct time
9. give formal warnings which are clear, appropriate to the situation, and in accordance with force policy.



## **Unit 5: Dealing with traffic**

### **5.2 Road traffic accidents (RTAs)**

*Road traffic accidents are a regular occurrence on our roads. As a police officer you will be expected to deal with these incidents safely and with impartiality. You may be called to the scene of minor accidents where there may be a dispute over liability or to more serious injury accidents where your role includes preserving life and preventing injury.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. identify hazards or dangerous traffic situations and deal with them effectively and promptly
2. provide immediate care for injured people
3. begin an investigation into the incident in accordance with local procedures
4. summon assistance from support/specialist departments when necessary and appropriate
5. where applicable, examine driving documents and supervise any exchanges of details, in accordance with road traffic legislation, local procedures and policies
6. record relevant information accurately and submit reports in accordance with force guidelines
7. take measures to reduce dangerous traffic situations and where applicable supervise the removal of vehicles in accordance with local procedures and policies
8. ensure all written records are clear, accurate and complete, and are forwarded to the relevant people at the correct time.

## **Unit 5: Dealing with traffic**

### **5.3 Drink-drive**

*Drinking and driving wrecks lives. One of your roles as a police officer will be to enforce the relevant legislation regarding these offences. This may be as a result of a stop check, an accident or may arise from other offences.*

In particular you will be expected to:

1. identify the correct provisions for requiring a breath test
2. make a request for a breath test correctly and lawfully
3. where necessary and lawful, make an arrest under Section 5 provisions
4. administer a breath test in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
5. where appropriate, effect an arrest of a suspect for driving while unfit
6. ensure the safety and security of any vehicles in accordance with local procedures and policies
7. prepare a report/evidence file in a legible and accurate manner.



## **Unit 6: In the police station**

### **6.1 Front office: enquiry desk**

*The police station has an essential role in recording and channelling information, enquiries and in providing a central point of reference and advice. Most of the police equipment and documents are stored and recorded in the station. In addition, a great deal of property and items of value are received, stored and subsequently restored in there.*

You must be able to:

1. assume responsibility for all property, equipment and ongoing enquiries, completing all necessary paperwork
2. deal with enquirers without keeping people waiting unnecessarily
3. provide a courteous and helpful service
4. use the telephone system, tannoy and any other communication media correctly
5. be able to locate police registers, files and other records promptly
6. complete all documentation quickly and accurately
7. give information which is accurate and appropriate to the nature of the request
8. provide services in response to requests, in ways that are consistent with force policy
9. find out information which is not known or refer an enquiry to other agencies when appropriate
10. seek advice when in doubt.

## Unit 6: In the police station

### 6.2 The custody suite: gaoler

*The custody suite can be a very busy place and you may be required to assist the custody officer by acting as gaoler. Detainees need to be cared for and supervised within the terms of PACE, the Codes of Practice and force policy. Some detainees have special needs while some may pose more risk to themselves, you or to others.*

In particular you need to be able to:

1. assist the custody officer to check detainees and custody records
2. check the detainee's property and property records
3. carry out routine duty of care checks on detainees within appropriate timescales
4. respond to alarms and calls promptly and take appropriate action including informing the custody officer
5. record all duty of care visits, requests, phone calls, periods out of cell (and reasons for these), meals, refreshment or any other events on the relevant custody records
6. ensure that any solicitor, appropriate adult, or interpreter is kept informed regarding the progress of investigations and detention
7. prevent unauthorised access to the custody area, cells and property stores
8. maintain the security of detainees in the cells, passages and custody area
9. seek advice when in doubt.



## Unit 7: Working with the community

### 7.1 Crime intelligence

*As you continue to make use of crime intelligence to guide your patrolling, you should maintain your effectiveness and plan to work proactively as much as possible. In addition, you will need to become very discerning about your sources of information: the public, informants, other police officers, agencies, databases, technical support, and sightings.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. regularly review all sources of information for usefulness, reliability and accuracy
2. maintain full liaison with other agencies
3. manage sources of information appropriately with a view to continued use over extended periods of time
4. make sure that, where initial evaluation of intelligence demonstrates a need for further intelligence gathering, this is carried out in accordance with force policy.

## **Unit 7: Working with the community**

### **7.2 Building and strengthening community relationships**

*As you settle into your policing role, you will be expected to take an active part in increasing the liaisons in the communities you patrol. You will meet a variety of community members, including individuals, representatives from local groups, businesses and other statutory bodies. You will be expected to identify their needs and preferences and select options for action within the community.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. encourage community members to express their needs and preferences for local policing initiatives
2. seek and record the responses to those community needs and preferences
3. pursue opportunities to develop police and community contact
4. realistically assess the potential constraints which may inhibit or enhance police response to the needs of the community
5. assess the needs of the community and the police and establish the options for action and resource allocation
6. select relevant options and resources for action and record these in the appropriate manner
7. implement action from plans in accordance with legislation and force policy
8. identify emerging problems as plans are implemented and communicate these to the appropriate persons
9. evaluate the results of actions and make recommendation for future action to the appropriate persons.



## Unit 7: Working with the community

### 7.3 Maintaining effective community relationships

*In your day-to-day work you will have the opportunity and need to work with other people outside the police service. These will be community groups, voluntary organisations, people from the public sector and from the private sector, as well as individual members of the public. Your work may involve meeting them personally or it may be a matter of writing reports or completing prepared forms.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. identify when external agencies should be consulted or informed
2. respond to queries and requests for further information or advice within agreed timescales
3. refer issues of sensitivity to the appropriate member of staff
4. treat information received from external sources in accordance with force policy.

## **Unit 8: Investigating proactively**

### **8.1 Crime prevention**

*While investigating crime and researching crime trends and community needs, you will be expected to identify opportunities to give advice on crime prevention and crime reduction. You should be considering both fear of crime and actual crime in all parts of the community including the private sector and the public sector.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. give advice which meets the individual's or the organisation's needs or consider referral to specialist members of staff
2. communicate in a manner which is sensitive to the context in which the advice is being given and to any special needs of the person
3. encourage people to ask questions and make further enquiries about the advice given
4. identify criminal activity which is suitable for prevention initiatives
5. report the features and benefits of a prevention initiative
6. identify organisations and people able to support a prevention initiative
7. ensure that any supporting leaflets and documents you supply are relevant and up-to-date.



## **Unit 8: Investigating proactively**

### **8.2 Using informants**

*A lot of successful police work relies on information. Should you find you are able to recruit a police informant who is able to give you information about particular crimes or criminals, then you must register the informant and operate within the guidelines and force policy.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. evaluate the potential for people you deal with to become informants
2. recognise which people providing information should be included in the informant handling system
3. record all meetings and report to the relevant controller upon initial contact with a person suitable to become a police informant
4. maintain safeguards to protect the confidentiality, security and welfare of the informant
5. handle all informants in accordance with ACPO guidelines and force policies
6. complete and submit appropriate paperwork through proper channels.

## **Unit 9: Preparing and giving evidence**

### **9.1 Preparing evidence and witnesses for court**

*Giving evidence in court and preparing case files for that purpose is a particularly skilful aspect of police work. Cases may be either civil or criminal and may involve many different processes, eg remand files, Crown Court, magistrates' court, county court, youth court or case conferences. You will probably prepare evidence that involves evidence on a suspect's previous history, the exhibits and undisclosed material. Your files of evidence may be full or abbreviated files.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. present evidence or other information which is clear, accurate and relevant to court proceedings
2. seek clarification, should any information appear to be ambiguous or inconsistent
3. summarise evidence accurately and concisely
4. deal with non-documentary evidence in accordance with legislation and force policies
5. submit paperwork to the appropriate persons within the agreed timescales
6. prepare and support witnesses in accordance with force policy
7. provide accurate and clear information to witnesses regarding court proceedings
8. handle and use exhibits throughout proceedings in accordance with agreed procedures
9. explain the requirements of the court proceedings to victims and witnesses
10. where relevant, establish and maintain liaison with the officer in charge of the case.



## **Unit 10: Dealing with incidents and events**

### **10.1 Incidents**

*Some incidents require you to undertake activities which are unusual, important and which contribute to the smooth running of unplanned and demanding situations. Many kinds of difficulties can arise. Depending on the size of the incident they may arise from environmental factors, crowd disorder, traffic congestion, additional accidents and additional incidents. Access and exit routes need to be controlled both for planned access/egress and contingency or emergency access/egress. Part of your responsibilities may include communicating with police staff, external personnel and the public.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. make an accurate assessment of the situation, establish priorities, reporting and updating as changes occur
2. preserve evidence and evacuate hazardous areas
3. identify the need for specialist and support personnel and report promptly to the relevant people
4. establish rendezvous points and access and egress routes using planned criteria when available
5. accurately identify emerging threats to public safety and take timely action
6. brief people who arrive to take charge of the incident.

## Unit 10: Dealing with incidents and events

### 10.2 Events and searches

*Events which are pre-planned and require policing will often involve specialist officers or departments in the planning. There are many smaller, local events including searches which are pre-planned and which you may be expected to police with little or no supervision. On the day there are likely to be a substantial number of police officers, supervisors and managers responsible for the policing activities.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. ensure that information you use to identify potential threats to public safety is confirmed for accuracy and that unclear or inconsistent information is clarified
2. accurately identify, record and communicate (to the appropriate persons) threats and unacceptable risks
3. make sure that working practices you are responsible for promote the safety of all concerned
4. plan a search, brief other officers and obtain specialist equipment and resources.

**Please note.** Other aspects of searching are dealt with in Unit 3.6.



## Unit 11: Transferring detainees

### 11.1 Preparing the detainees for escort

*Privatised security/escort companies are not available for all prisoner transfers. You may be expected to prepare detainees and their property for escorts to other police stations, courts, prisons and other locations, perhaps for a search. This work involves paperwork such as custody records, body receipts and property records. You may deal with co-operative or unwilling detainees, juveniles or people with individual special needs. All detainees' needs: dietary, religious, welfare, physical, psychological and medical should be borne in mind by you at these times.*

In particular, you will be expected to:

1. confirm destination is willing to accept the detainee
2. confirm the transport facilities are available, secure, fully operational and fit for use
3. gather and check information regarding the detainee's needs
4. correctly identify the detainee's property and keep it secure during transit
5. complete all relevant documentation clearly and accurately
6. ensure that high-risk/at risk detainees are correctly identified and the appropriate paperwork completed and passed on
7. deal with property not accompanying the detainee in accordance with force policy
8. establish plans to meet the detainee's needs during the journey
9. attend to the personal needs of the detainee prior to the transfer in accordance with force policy and the relevant legislation
10. confirm, by search, that the detainee is free from unauthorised items and substances.