



Association of
Police and Crime
Commissioners



APCC Guidance: The Strategic Policing Requirements

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The APCC created this guidance as a resource to assist PCCs in understanding and adhering to the statutory requirements of the Strategic Policing Requirements. The purpose of this guidance is to enhance accountability and transparency with respect to the duty to have regard to the SPR. This document aims to help the reader gain an understanding of the content of the SPR and to inform the reader how to fulfil PCCs' statutory obligations to fulfil their duties as outlined in the SPR.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) guidance has been developed by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) with the overall purpose of strengthening and expanding the role of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in line with the ongoing PCCs review. The 2023 SPR can be found on the [UK Government website](#).

1.1 Background and Summary of the SPR

The *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011* saw the introduction of PCCs across England and Wales in 2012. This legislation replaced police authorities in England and Wales (not including Greater London and the City of London) and introduced the 43 territorial police forces and the model of PCCs as elected representatives to ensure community needs in policing are met effectively.

While PCCs are responsible for enacting local priorities by consulting with their communities to set out their local Police and Crime Plan priorities, the government recognised that there remain aspects of policing where a cross-boundary response is required to provide a cohesive response to wider national threats. Section 77 of the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011* enabled the Home Secretary to issue the SPR document, and the first publication was released in 2012. With this document, the Home Secretary fulfils their statutory duty to set out the national threats, definition of which can be found in the [glossary](#), at the time of publication and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter these threats.

The SPR is intended to support Chief Constables and PCCs to plan, prepare, and respond to the national threats set out, and ensure that the forces' national responsibilities are fulfilled. This is with respect for the independence of and the differences between each police force. Each PCC consults extensively with their communities continuously and take this into account when setting their local Police and Crime Plan priorities what measures to take against the national threats laid out. The SPR requires PCCs to have regard to the document when issuing or amending their Police and Crime Plans Police and Crime Plans and to provide an assurance statement within Annual Reports, explaining how they have had regard to the SPR and the influence it has had on the strategic direction of the force and the objectives for the year.

The SPR has undergone two revisions since its introduction in 2012, the first in 2015 and the second in 2023. The SPR 2023 now includes the addition of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) resulting in seven national threats and guidance relating to outcomes, capacity, national standards, collaboration, and partnership working.

1.2 SPR framework

The SPR Framework uses the definition of "national threat" from the *Police Act 1996*, s. 37A. Such threats are of national importance, significantly affecting national security, public safety, order, or confidence, requiring a response beyond local forces, and can only be countered effectively by national policing capabilities. The framework identifies threats, including VAWG, terrorism, organised crime, cyber events, child sexual abuse, public disorder, and civil emergencies, necessitating cross-boundary policing.

A consultation on the SPR in 2020/2021 confirmed the ongoing identification of these threats, with added emphasis on drug trafficking, specifically the county lines model and fraud. For each national threat, the framework specifies objectives, tactics, and collaborations and details them through six pillars: Outcomes (strategic goals), Capabilities (required functions), Capacity (resource levels), Consistency and Standards (meeting set requirements), Collaboration (national agencies and regional efforts), and Connectivity with Partners (engagement with local partners and the private sector). For more information on assurance methods please go to [chapter 2.2.2](#). Additionally, the APCC is producing guidance on Accountability framework which will be linked when published.

1.3 Balance between local and national priorities:

While these threats are classified as national issues affecting policing in England and Wales, it is important to recognise that, while they are national in nature, the harm caused is felt locally. Indeed, the SPR acknowledges that these are not new threats to policing, and that while they can be addressed locally within each police force, a national response is required to fully combat the risk. The SPR's intended purpose is to assist PCCs and Chief Constables in planning, preparing for, and responding to these threats by linking local and national responses, highlighting the necessary capabilities and partnerships for fulfilling national responsibilities.

Whilst the SPR refers to national threats, the APCC recognises that crime types are not only national in isolation, and while they are identified as national threats, they may have a high local presence and priority, being integral to local concerns. Furthermore, each force, while addressing the same threat, is independent and will perceive the effects of the threats differently; the PCC's approach to the threats must be based clearly on the evidence and on the concerns of their communities.

1.4 Purpose of this document

The SPR should not be taken in isolation. This document aims to be a resource to support PCCs in understanding and complying with the statutory requirements of the SPR. This guidance was commissioned in accordance with the PCC review, in which the Home Office allocated additional funds to the APCC to support the Government's efforts to expand and strengthen the role of PCCs.

The objectives of this guidance are to improve transparency and accountability with respect to the duty to have regard to the SPR. This document intends to be utilised to gain an understanding of the content and to inform the reader of how best to meet and deliver on the statutory requirements of PCCs to fulfil their duty set out in the SPR.

This guidance was developed with the input of the APCC SPR Working Group. The purpose of this guidance is to provide the following:

- **A comprehensive understanding of the new adaptations to the SPR, the role of the SPR in supporting PCCs with their accountability responsibilities and requirements of PCCs** to make the reader aware of the differences between previous SPRs and the PCC's statutory requirements, including an overview of both Annual Reports and Police and Crime Plans and their differences.
- **An in-depth understanding of each crime type**, giving the reader a detailed description, the rationale for their inclusion, and examples of best practises for both the Annual Report and Police and Crime Plans.
- **Support for PCCs to enact their statutory requirements**, by giving the reader an understanding of the legal requirements of the SPR.
- **A resource assisting PCCs to hold Chief Constables to account**, with examples of notable practice. It includes ten questions to ask your Chief and provide guidance as to what to do if PCCs are not assured that Chief Constables are implementing the SPR adequately.

CHAPTER 2: SPR REQUIREMENTS

The SPR statutory requirements for PCCs are described in detail in this chapter. It explains how this version differs from the previous version and offers guidance on how to adequately pay regard for the SPR in Police and Crime Plans and Annual Reports. Whilst this guidance outlines the statutory requirements it is important to note a culture of continuous improvement is crucial for enhancing policing capabilities and adapting to evolving threats and challenges. PCCs and OPCCs should be encouraged to regularly review and evaluate their strategies, policies, and procedures, aiming to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation.

Please note specific examples of how to refer to VAWG, Terrorism, SOC, Child sexual abuse, public disorder and civil emergencies crime type within a Police and Crime Plans and Annual reports is given in [Appendix A](#).

2.1 Differences between previous SPRs

The SPR 2023 differs from the previous versions in that it identifies a seventh national threat in addition to the previously reaffirmed six. Additional detail has also been included to strengthen governance and assurance arrangements. This includes a more detailed description of how police forces should respond to threats, the establishment of new governance and assurance arrangements, and the enhancement of the serious and organised crime section to ensure that crime types such as fraud and organised immigration are given prominence. These seven threats are expanded in [Chapter 4](#) of this document.

2.1.1 Inclusion of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The SPR 2023 reaffirms the commitment to the six national threats, which are terrorism, serious and organised crime (SOC), a national cyber incident, child sexual abuse, public order, and civil emergencies, and introduces a new threat type which PCCs need to pay regard to which is VAWG.

The National Police Chief Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing (CoP) are collaborating to develop a revised national VAWG framework. This will establish and provide a refreshed framework for 2024–2027, alongside self-assessments, to deliver

the new SPR requirements of the threat of VAWG in each force strategy. We will update this document accordingly when the VAWG framework has been published.

[Chapter 4](#) of this document, National Threats, contains information on how to include VAWG in the Police and Crime Plan and Annual Reports.

2.2 PCC Statutory responsibilities

The *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011* stipulates that PCCs create Police and Crime Plans and publish Annual Reports. The SPR 2023 legislation requires PCCs to provide evidence of the requirement to pay due regard to the SPR and the threat types within both documents.

2.2.1 The difference between requirements in Annual Reports and Police and Crime Plans

The Police and Crime Plans shows the plans for how the PCC has taken the SPR into consideration when developing plans, and what the PCC is planning on doing throughout their term in office. Annual Reports indicate how PCCs have considered the SPR during the year referred to and will detail how the PCC has followed the plan or paid regard to the SPR in other ways. These differences will be reflected in the requirements and content for both documents.

If referencing the plans illustrated within Police and Crime Plans in the Annual Reports, it is acceptable to use the phrase “referenced elsewhere” instead of rewriting this information. This is as long as the Police and Crime Plans is clearly hyperlinked within the document. This is acceptable as there is no need to repeat the details within the Police and Crime Plans, but instead it is expected that the Annual Report should focus on the outcomes and if wanting to reference the plans, there is no need to repeat the details within the report. Evidence is needed within the Annual Reports on the actions taken to follow the plan outlined in the Police and Crime Plans and how the PCCs have continually paid regard to the SPR over the year.

2.2.2 Assurance method

Each year the APCC will send an annual summary of assurance statements to the Policing Minister, which will inform discussions about the SPR and how it is being considered in setting the strategic direction and objectives for a force at the Strategic Change Investment Board (SCIB) under the National Policing Board. The summary will

only include reports from PCCs and Deputy Mayors, and the APCC will not analyse or report on these statements.

2.3 SPR compulsory requirements of Annual Reports

PCCs are required under the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011* to provide an annual assurance statement within their Annual Reports on how they have had regard to the SPR and how it has influenced their setting of the strategic direction and objectives for their force. The SPR states in paragraph 24.1 page 11 that PCCs should reference all threat types and outline how they have paid regard to each threat with details.

Whilst a summary of words was provided by the APCC in May 2023 for Annual Reports issued for 22 -23 please note that this guidance is outdated, and the expectation is that all PCCs will need to evidence how they have adhered to the SPR in their own words.

2.3.1 Example of notable practice:

[Humberside Annual Report 22-23:](#)

What is the Strategic Policing Requirement?

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out the Home Secretary's view of what the current national threats are, and the national policing capabilities needed to counter those threats. The seven threats are Violence against Women and Girls, Terrorism, Serious and Organised Crime, a National Cyber Incident, Child Sexual Abuse, Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner considered the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) in development of the Police and Crime Plan. The Chief Constable is responsible for having due regard to both the Police and Crime Plan and the Strategic Policing Requirement when exercising their functions, and the Police and Crime Commissioner holds the Chief Constable accountable for doing so through our governance framework.

A revised version of the SPR was published nationally in February 2023, which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The identified threats were: Serious

and Organised Crime (SOC), Terrorism, Cyber, Child Sexual Abuse, Public Disorder, and Civil Emergencies. These remain from the 2015 version, with the addition in 2023 of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence. Following publication of the revised Strategic Policing Requirement for 2023, the Police and Crime Commissioner sought assurance that the Force had sufficient capacity and capability to meet the responsibilities outlined in relation to the national threats.

The addition of VAWG in 2022-23 was a welcome recognition of the severity of this national threat that must be eradicated from our society. Throughout 2022-23 the Force continued to deliver its VAWG action plan, including increasing the volume of Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Stalking Protection Orders. During 2022-23, the Force also worked alongside the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Organised Crime Unit to tackle drugs, fraud, cybercrime, and crime relating to organised immigration. Over the course of the year, a total of £998k was taken from criminals and £220k paid out in compensation to victims of crime.

Tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation was a strategic priority for the Force. In June 2022, the Force introduced the Vulnerability Hub, a central seven-days-a-week hub consisting of a team of 36 officers who dealt with all aspects of vulnerability, including domestic violence and abuse, safeguarding vulnerable children and adults and child protection. The Hub improved outcomes for vulnerable young people and enhanced working across regional agencies.

Preparing for national incidents of public disorder and maintaining the required numbers of specially trained officers continued to be a focus during 2022-23. Training was extended and enhanced, and the Force was able to manage all public order incidents throughout the period without making requests to other forces.

Throughout 2022-23, the Force worked closely with the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to prepare for emergencies. The LRF is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency, and others. The Force attended a number of Safety Advisory Groups and participated in a programme of joint exercises and training to ensure SPR capabilities were met.

2.4 SPR Compulsory Requirements of Police and Crime Plans

The SPR must be referred to in PCC Police and Crime Plans, as well as the SPR's influence on the strategic direction and objectives of the force, and consequently, the force's ability to address threats of national importance. PCCs must have regard for the SPR while performing their duties and they must also hold their Chief Constables accountable for doing the same. It is important to acknowledge that any modifications to the SPR made by the Home Office necessitate a review to the Police and Crime Plans to reflect the change as stated in paragraph 17 of the SPR. PCCs should reference all threat types and outline how they have paid regard to each.

The SPR states in paragraph 23.3, page 11, that to evidence how they have had regard to the SPR in Police and Crime Plans the following should be included:

- a) The need to highlight the PCC's duty to have regard to the SPR in the Police and Crime Plans.
- b) An explanation of what the SPR is in the Police and Crime Plans.
- c) An explanation within the Police and Crime Plans of how the PCC has had regard to the SPR in setting the strategic direction and objectives for the force.

2.4.1 Example of notable practice

Durham Police and Crime Plan 21-24:

Strategic Policing Requirements (SPRs):

SPRs support the Chief Constable and I to ensure we fulfil forces' national responsibilities. It enables us to plan effectively together for challenges that go beyond force boundaries. The SPRs also support my ability, and statutory obligation, to hold the Chief Constable to account for the ability to deliver these functions:

- Contribute to the Counter Terrorism Strategy to Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare.
- Contribute to the Serious and Organised crime Strategy to Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare.
- Respond adequately to a national cyber security incident.

- Ensure the ability to keep the peace by preventing and managing public disorder; Respond adequately to civil emergencies which require a national response; and,
- Respond adequately to reports of Child Sexual Abuse.

North Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan, 22-25

Terrorism	Serious and organised crime	Cyber-security event
<p>C - Prevent harm before it happens; Tackle hidden harms</p> <p>A - Enhance collaboration</p> <p>R - Properly skill and equip our people</p> <p>E - Promote a more visible presence in communities</p>	<p>C – Prevent harm before it happens; Tackle hidden harms</p> <p>A – Enhance collaboration; Take a whole system approach to tackling core problems</p> <p>R - Properly skill and equip our people</p> <p>E – Embed a customer and community focus; Promote a more visible presence in communities</p>	<p>C - Tackle hidden harms</p> <p>A - Take a whole system approach to tackling core problems</p> <p>R - Properly skill and equip our people</p> <p>E - Promote a more visible presence in communities</p>
<p>2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems (2a;2b)</p> <p>3. Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time (3a)</p>	<p>1. Actively engage with all communities to identify need and risk and to reassure (1a; 1b)</p> <p>2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems (2a; 2b)</p> <p>3. Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time (3a; 3b)</p> <p>4. Maximise efficiency to make the most effective use of all available resources (4a; 4b)</p>	<p>2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems (2b)</p> <p>3. Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time (3a)</p>

Threats to public order	Civil emergencies	Child sexual abuse (CSA)
<p>C – Make all women and girls safer; Prevent harm before it happens</p> <p>A – Take a whole system approach to tackling core problems</p> <p>R – Improve trust and confidence in our police</p> <p>E – Promote a more visible presence in communities</p>	<p>C – Prevent harm before it happens</p> <p>A – Enhance collaboration</p> <p>R – Properly skill and equip our people; Improve trust and confidence in our police</p> <p>E – Embed a customer and community focus</p>	<p>C – Make all women and girls safer; Prevent harm before it happens; Tackle hidden harms</p> <p>A – Take a whole system approach to tackling core problems</p> <p>R – Properly skill and equip our people; Improve trust and confidence in the police</p> <p>E – Embed a customer and community focus; Promote a more visible presence in communities</p>
<p>1. Actively engage with all communities to identify need and risk and to reassure (1b)</p> <p>2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems (2a; 2b; 2c)</p> <p>3. Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time (3a)</p>	<p>2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems (2a)</p> <p>3. Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time (3a)</p>	<p>2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems (2a; 2b)</p> <p>3. Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time (3a; 3b)</p> <p>4. Maximise efficiency to make the most effective use of all available resources (4b)</p> <p>5. Enhance positive culture, openness, integrity and public trust (5a)</p>

2.5 Compliance advice

The following checklists have been developed to help aid the inclusion of all required details of the SPR within Annual Reports and Police and Crime Plans. These are intended to assist in ensuring that the PCC's Annual Reports and Police and Crime Plans meet all the SPR requirements. These lists can be used as a guide to make sure all the components are present and can be checked off.

2.5.1 Police and crime plan SPR compliance checklist:

Activity	Considered	In progress	Completed
Does the Police and Crime Plans explicitly emphasise the PCC's obligation to consider and address the requirements outlined in the SPR?			
Does the Police and Crime Plans provide a clear explanation of the SPR to ensure a comprehensive understanding?			
Is there a detailed explanation in the Police and Crime Plans outlining the specific ways in which the PCC has had regard to the SPR in setting the strategic direction and objectives for the force?			
Does the Police and Crime Plans encompass strategies and initiatives addressing all seven types of threats identified in the SPR?			

2.5.1 Annual Report SPR compliance checklist:

Activity	Considered	In progress	Completed
Does the Annual Report feature an assurance statement?			
Does the assurance statement encompass an explanation of how consideration has been given to the SPR?			
Does the assurance statement include a description of the impact of the SPR on the force's strategic directions and objectives?			
Does the Annual Report make explicit reference to all seven threat types?			
Does it demonstrate how attention has been given to each threat type?			
Does it provide evidence of the outcomes achieved by the Police and Crime Plans strategy in relation to each threat type?			

CHAPTER 3: HOLDING YOUR CHIEF CONSTABLE TO ACCOUNT

One of the main requirements of PCCs within the SPR is to hold their Chief Constable accountable for ensuring they meet their duty within the SPR. Chief Constables, alongside PCCs, are responsible for the implementation of the SPR and ensuring that their force fulfils its national responsibilities for tackling the national threats. Chief Constables must have regard to both the SPR and the PCC's Police and Crime Plans when exercising their functions.

3.1 SPR Scrutiny questions to ask your Chief Constable

The following questions have been developed as a tool for PCCs to hold their Chief Constable to account for ensuring that the Chief Constable is performing their duty set out in the SPR. Rather than inquiring about the seven threat types in general, the PCC could focus on the individual threat types for a more thorough investigation.

These questions were developed with the intention of supporting local scrutiny and providing an additional tool for PCCs to use if they so desire. The questions are not exhaustive but are intended to serve as a prompt for local scrutiny activity.

Scrutiny Questions:

- 1. Do you have a good understanding of the SPR, the national threats, and your duty within?**
- 2. Do you understand the requirements you need to meet for each threat type? How has this been assessed locally and what is in place to meet these requirements?**
- 3. Have you paid regard in your force strategy to all seven threat types?**
- 4. How is the balance between local and national priorities being achieved both in general and in relation to each of the seven threats?**
- 5. How has the 2023 SPR altered your strategic planning for the force?**

- 6. How have you prioritised each threat type in your force? What are the mechanisms in place to make sure the force is meeting the requirements of the SPR? For example, reporting or governance.**
- 7. How do you ensure that the force is fulfilling its national responsibilities for tackling the national threats set out in the SPR?**
- 8. Are you confident in the capacity and skills of the force to respond to each threat type?**
- 9. Do you understand the risks of each threat to your force area, and how has that impacted your response? What have been identified as the most significant risk locally?**
- 10. If concern is raised relating to a threat type outlined in the SPR, how is it escalated?**

A good response would be for the Chief Constable to explain how the SPR is being implemented and what steps they are taking to counter each of the seven threats. It is advised that responses should be precise and grounded in evidence. PCCs should feel confident after this discussion with their Chief Constable that they have a good understanding of the SPR and how their force is working strategically to implement it.

CHAPTER 4: NATIONAL THREATS

The objective of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive analysis of each category of crime that is identified as a national threat in the SPR. This section is divided into subsections in which the threat for each crime type is described. An illustration of a notable practice for the Annual Report and Police and Crime Plans are provided in [Appendix A](#)

4.1 Violence against women and girls

Definition: The SPR makes use of the definition provided by the Home Office in the July 2021 strategy document titled *Tackling violence against women and girls*. According to this definition, acts of abuse or violence against women and girls are those that disproportionately affect them. Whilst the definition is titled “violence against women and girls,” it covers all genders and victims of any of these offences.

The SPR gives examples of behaviours and crimes included in the SPR under this term are forced marriage, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic violence, "honour" based abuse (such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and "honour" killings), and many other offences, including crimes committed online.

Requirements:

- Chief Constables should ensure that their force collaborates with all relevant partners to safeguard the well-being of victims and by having appropriately trained officers and staff to guarantee a comprehensive and efficient response to all forms of VAWG. This includes having regard to relevant multi-agency guidance as appropriate, and joint working.

Please note that the NPCC National VAWG framework 24-25 is due to be published at the end of February 2024 and this guidance will be updated accordingly.

4.2 Terrorism

Definition: The SPR classifies Terrorism as using or threatening serious violence, causing significant harm to individuals or property, endangering lives of not just the perpetrator, posing a serious risk to public health or safety, and the interfering or

disruption of electronic systems. The intent is to influence the Government, intimidate the public, or advance political, ideological, racial, or religious causes.

The SPR gives examples of terrorism as activities by international and domestic groups or individuals carried out using weapons such as explosives, firearms, vehicles, low sophistication devices (e.g. bladed weapons), Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN)

Requirements:

- Police forces should be able to demonstrate their capability to respond to terrorist threats in accordance with Counter Terrorism Strategy CONTEST, to deliver a response adhering to the four Ps (Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare). Forces should collaborate with partners and work in support of Counter-Terrorism Policing.
- Chief Constables, in collaboration with the relevant NPCC threat lead, are required to assess their local capability and capacity to mitigate threats and risks at the national, regional, and local levels.
- Chief Constables should also consider how their force, when required, will contribute capabilities in support of a national policing response.

4.3 Serious and organised crime

Definition: Serious and Organised crime (SOC) refers to the deliberate preparation, coordination, and execution of serious offences by individuals, groups, or transnational networks.

The SPR definition uses the categories established in the National Crime Agency (NCA) national strategic assessment and are:

Vulnerabilities: Child sexual abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking and organised immigration crime

Communities: Illegal drugs (including supply methodologies such as county lines), illegal firearms, and organised acquisitive crime.

Economic: Cybercrime, fraud, money laundering, bribery and corruption, and sanctions evasion

Within the SPR these categories are simplified, and the focus is on the following three main themes: **Drugs, Fraud, Organised Immigration Crime (OIC)**

Enhanced section: The SPR 2023 has given more attention to the problem of **Drugs, Fraud and OIC** to highlight the specific types of crimes that the Home Secretary believes is more prominent within the scope of SOC and need specific attention.

The rationale for the inclusion of **Drugs** is that they significantly contribute to crime and harm communities and are involved in about half of all homicides and acquisitive crime. The NCA suggests that 48% of organized crime groups engage in drug-related activities. Policing plays a critical role in addressing drug supply and county lines, as outlined in the 10-year Drugs Strategy, emphasising the need to target drug supply at every stage and tier, with police forces playing a key role in reducing drug-related crime, homicide, and supporting the overall goals of the strategy.

Fraud is the most common type of crime, making up 41% of all criminal offences registered in England and Wales. It cost the public and economy £4.7 billion annually in 2015–16 and causes emotional harm to victims, with 75% experiencing emotional distress. Fraud also poses a threat to national security since it undermines public confidence in the legal system, disrupts business, and damages the UK's financial standing. Funds obtained illegally through fraud are frequently used to support human trafficking, organised crime, and terrorism. Most criminal groups that concentrate on fraud also engage in other illegal activities.

OIC is a noticeable and expanding threat. Organised networks make money by weakening border security in the UK, frequently taking advantage of weaker individuals, and putting their lives in danger travelling across borders.

Requirements:

- Forces and PCCs recognise their responsibility to assist local delivery against the Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework and collaborating in accordance with the Drugs Strategy Guidance for Local Delivery Partner.
- Forces should implement the objectives of the 2021 (revised January 2023) Crime and Courts Act issued by Director General of the NCA.

4.4 A national cyber incident:

Definition: A national cyber incident refers to a cyber-attack that targets any of the thirteen sectors within the Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), encompassing areas such as **chemicals, civil nuclear, communications, defence, emergency services, energy, finance, food, government, health, space, transport, and water.**

Requirements:

- While the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) directs the response to major cyber incidents, local forces, and Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU)s will play a key role in the investigation, victim care, and mitigation of the incident's impact should it occur.
- Chief Constables are responsible for ensuring that their force maintains a fully operational Force Cybercrime Unit (FCCU).
- Chief Constables should also be assured that their force maintain the necessary public order capabilities, contingency arrangements, and state of preparedness to recover from cyber incidents.
- Additionally, Chief Constables should be assured that their force possesses the requisite contingency plans, public order capabilities, and be prepared to recover from cyber incidents.

4.5 Child sexual abuse

Definition: Child sexual abuse refers to pressuring or persuading a child or young person to engage in sexual activities, which do not always involve extreme violence or an awareness from the child of what is happening. Technology can be used to enable offline sexual abuse as well as online sexual abuse. Male adults are not the only perpetrators, sexual abuse can also be committed by women and by other children.

The SPR breaks this down into three categories:

Assault by penetration: rape or oral sex.

Non-penetrative acts: masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.

Non-Contact activities: such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Requirements:

- The Government's ambition to strengthen the response to child sexual abuse from all forces and the measures which forces should take to support the mission are outlined in The Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy.

- Forces should maintain child abuse investigation units and safeguarding teams and be prepared to collaborate with ROCUs to access specialist capabilities in severe or complex cases.

4.6 Public disorder

Definition: Public disorder refers to a situation in which a group of people engage in violent or disorderly behaviour that endangers public safety, order, or peace. The SPR notes that there are numerous critical limits where events or incidents within society will lead to these behaviours, including controversial or fatal deaths involving the community or the police, increasing inter-community tensions.

These behaviours include but are not limited to localised events such as **rioting, looting, vandalism, violence, and arson**. It is important to note that the SPR clarifies that lawful protests are not considered a form of disorder and are protected under the right to protest peacefully but they are at risk of being hijacked by those intent on causing public disorder.

Requirements:

- In accordance with the National Mobilisation Plan, forces should be able to demonstrate their capacity to mobilise appropriately in response to a variety of public order policing operations at the force, regional, and national levels.
- In accordance with the [standards](#) established by the CoP, public order resources should be consistent throughout England and Wales.

4.7 Civil emergencies

Definition: The SPR uses the Cabinet Office definition, which refers to an event or situation that poses a significant threat and risk to human wellbeing to individuals residing in the UK, to the environment of a place in the UK, or to the security of the UK.

Events or situations include war, natural hazards, severe weather, flooding, human and animal disease, major industrial or transport accidents, and terrorist or cyber security incidents.

Requirements:

- PCCs should ensure the force has an operations unit that supports the contingency planning function and maintain appropriately qualified and trained commanders to effectively respond to civil emergencies in their area.
- To guarantee the forces sustained operation in the face of disruptive challenges a regional casualty bureau, business continuity plans, and Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) should be accessible to Forces.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Throughout this guidance, there are various documents referred to in relation to the SPR. A summary of these is given below to aid the reader in the context of the guidance produced.

National threats are defined by s.37A of the *Police Act 1996* and is a threat:

- a) to national security, public safety, public order, or public confidence that is of such gravity as to be of national importance; or
- b) a threat which can be countered effectively or efficiently only by national policing capabilities to counter the threat. These are defined by the Home Secretary in the SPR.

Police and Crime Plans are a strategic document which PCCs are required to produce and publish under s.5 of the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*. The plan outlines the PCC's priorities and objectives for policing and crime reduction within their respective force.

Annual Reports are a document giving an overview of the PCC's activities, achievements, challenges, and financial information over the course of a fiscal year which PCCs are required to produce under s.28 of the *Police reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*.

Regard means to have given a matter genuine and appropriate consideration and attention.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Notable practice:

Please note that as good practice continues to be made this section will be updated to include more examples.

VAWG

Hampshire Annual Report 22-23:

In early 2023, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) was considered a national threat for the first time and added to the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) by the Home Secretary, recognising the risk it currently presents to public safety and confidence. The SPR ensures Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables focus resources, and it sets clear expectations on police to tackle VAWG and how they must work with others, including collaborating with other agencies. The term 'Violence Against Women and Girls' (VAWG) refers to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, 'honour-based' abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings), offences committed online, and many others. The term 'violence against women and girls' is used throughout this report, but this refers to all victims of any of these offences. An event was held on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls (also known as White Ribbon Day) in November 2022 which coincided with the anniversary of the launch of the PCC's VAWG Task Group. This event provided an opportunity to reflect on what the partnership had collectively achieved, as well as consider the future of the VAWG Task Group to ensure it remained fit for purpose. Some of the work the Task Group has carried out over the last 12 months included:

- A problem profile of VAWG across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight was formed through surveys, focus groups and interviews. The findings were presented at the VAWG event in November, including some of the direct feedback from focus group participants.
- The PCC has invested more than £350K to tackle domestic abuse perpetrators in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight. Working in partnership with the four local

authorities plus the Hampton Trust and Stop Domestic Abuse, the funding will recruit domestic abuse practitioners to work alongside the police as part of Project Foundation. Project Foundation is an innovative scheme that brings together Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary and specialist domestic abuse perpetrator practitioners to identify and manage the most dangerous perpetrators of physical and sexual violence in the community by offering them pathways to try and help change their behaviour as a long term solution to protect victims. The project's focus is on perpetrators whose abuse has occurred in a family setting where children are present and where police have not been able to bring a charge. The Project Foundation Practitioners will help the police identify which perpetrators need intervention to stop offending by analysing existing police and partnership data. Foundation Practitioners will then support Police with engagement activity to motivate perpetrators to access local support services that can help reduce the risk of reoffending.

- As part of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary response to perpetrators of domestic abuse, a dashboard was created by the OPCC to provide an overview of services to reduce reoffending. Ultimately, the dashboard supports the Constabulary to identify intervention and rehabilitation opportunities with additional pathways into domestic abuse services, prison, and probation.
- In partnership with local sports clubs, the PCC launched a campaign around White Ribbon Day and the associated 16 days of action to tackle violence against women and girls in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight.

Terrorism

West Mercia Annual Report 22-23:

Although West Mercia is a safe place to live, we can still be affected by trends and events that occur nationally and internationally. It is my role to ensure that West Mercia Police and the work of the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit (WMCTU) are effectively tackling these threats locally and that those vulnerable to radicalisation are being safeguarded appropriately.

In 2022/23 the national threat level from terrorism remained at SUBSTANTIAL. Throughout the year, through RGG and my local counter terrorism briefings, I have sought reassurance that the system and processes work effectively to counter the threat and ensure the safety of West Mercia's communities.

In September 2022, myself and the other regional PCCs had an in-depth deep dive into the use of 'Schedule 7' – the powers that allow officers to search and question people who pass through UK borders. I was closely engaged in renewing my oversight and scrutiny to ensure that the powers are being used fairly and proportionately within the region.

In March 2023, myself and the regional PCCs held a third 'deep dive' session with WMCTU focusing on the regional threat and risk picture, the management of terrorist offenders and the lift and shift of Special Branch functions into counter terrorism policing. We were pleased to see that changes have been made to ensure a positive impact on the service to West Mercia's communities.

SOC:

West Mercia Annual Report 22-23:

Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) form a critical part of the national policing network to protect the public from SOC. There are still improvements to be made in this area, which I will ensure are delivered within the West Mercia area. The West Midlands ROCU undertook a review into its operations and size during 2022/23 which resulted in efficiencies of around £2 million. I will continue to ensure that the ROCU offers the best service for the communities of West Mercia tackling organised crime alongside the local force and the National Crime Agency. I saw for myself a wide range of ROCU operations at a 'deep dive' hosted by them in October 2022

Cambridgeshire Annual Report 22-23:

Against the national crime and policing priorities, the Constabulary has reported:

- The Constabulary continues to tackle serious violence and knife crime through Operation Guardian, including targeting hotspots of knife crime and individuals known to carry knives
- Targeted police work to disrupt county lines and take drugs off our streets has led to police identifying 36% more drug trafficking and 34% more drug possession offences

Durham PCC Police and Crime Plan 2021-24:

I will work with the Chief Constable and partners to:

- Ensure the police force has the necessary resources to respond to serious and organised crime threats (firearms, drugs, child criminal exploitation, fraud, economic crime, cyber, modern slavery, human trafficking).
- Deliver on the strategic policing requirement.
- Tackle and disrupt organised crime groups behind drug activity.
- Recognise the exploitation of children and young people and continue to identify and safeguard those most at risk.
- Continue to work with law enforcement agencies; local authorities; nongovernmental organisations and charities to coordinate the local, regional, and national response to modern slavery through the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network.
- Develop a public health approach to shape the partnership work to prevent and reduce Serious Violence.

Child sexual abuse

Humberside Annual Report 22-23:

Tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation was a strategic priority for the Force. In June 2022, the Force introduced the Vulnerability Hub, a central seven-days-a-week hub consisting of a team of 36 officers who dealt with all aspects of vulnerability, including domestic violence and abuse, safeguarding vulnerable children and adults and child protection. The Hub improved outcomes for vulnerable young people and enhanced working across regional agencies.

Public disorder

Humberside Annual Report 22-23:

Preparing for national incidents of public disorder and maintaining the required numbers of specially trained officers continued to be a focus during 2022-23. Training was extended and enhanced, and the Force was able to manage all public order incidents throughout the period.

Civil Emergencies

Humberside Annual Report 22-23:

Throughout 2022-23, the Force worked closely with the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to prepare for emergencies. The LRF is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency, and others. The Force attended a number of Safety Advisory Groups and participated in a programme of joint exercises and training to ensure SPR capabilities were met without making requests to other forces.

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The APCC provides support to all Police and Crime Commissioners and policing governance bodies in England and Wales.

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