Police Knowledge Fund Showcase Conference

27th November, Ryton

Presentation abstracts (in programme order)

CSE and Policing Knowledge Hub, University of Bedfordshire

Marginal Gains: Improving police engagement with young people in need of a safeguarding response

Presenters: Dr Fiona Factor, DCI Ivon Beer and Keeley Howard

The International Centre at the University of Bedfordshire was awarded funding by the Police Knowledge Fund to develop a national hub to work together with the police to enhance their responses to child sexual exploitation (CSE) and associated vulnerabilities. One of the most exciting and impactful outcomes was the 'Marginal Gains' project, which addressed poor responses by the police to young people who have experienced or are at risk of CSE. Prior research and police inspection reports have highlighted young people's experiences of the police as distressing and re-traumatising, often leading to poor engagement in investigation or withdrawal from the process altogether. Over the course of a year, we worked together with young people ('experts by experience') and police officers to prioritise and find solutions to the most pressing problems of police engagement with young people. A series of small workshops with young people and preparatory activity with the police over the summer of 2016 culminated in a residential weekend in the Lake District.

This presentation will present the outcomes of this work, including a short film and poster designed by the police and the experts by experience, emphasising how police can be respectful and non-judgemental, show empathy and compassion, and improve how they listen to young people's accounts. The work clearly demonstrates the important possibilities of bringing together police and young people, and listening to young people's needs. More broadly, the film and poster have also been shared at a number of conferences as well as with forces across the country and adopted into force training packages. The film and poster have been also been embraced by multi-agency partners. The messages offered by the film and poster can universally support police across the investigation process to better support young people, and increase the chances of better criminal justice system outcomes.

Action Learning Plus, Keele University

"This isn't just a case of taking someone to the hospital": Police approaches and management of situations involving persons with mental ill health

Presenters: Samantha Weston, Diane Malkin

Despite being identified as a key aspect of police work (Gotfredson, et al 2011) mental health is an area that has been neglected in police training. As reflected in the Adebowale review (2013), the police struggle to respond appropriately on an individual level to those with acute mental disorder, find it difficult to access support from mental health services and often respond "with whatever tools lie at hand" (Wood, 2011:6).

Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 2007 has become a fundamental tool for police officers when managing situations involving persons with mental ill health (Turner, et al 1992). Yet nationally, questions have been raised about the extent to which police officers should be called upon as 'the service of first resort' (HMIC, 2017:8).
Similar concerns have also been raised at a local level. Staffordshire's Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner commissioned a review to identify the frontline impact of mental health issues and found that demand on the police to support people with mental health needs living independently was increasing (2013).

Against this backdrop have been significant cuts to mental health provision and other services that may have otherwise addressed the issues presented by people with mental ill health. This context means that police officers need some core skills to carry out their role and to ensure that vulnerable people receive appropriate care.

Through the use of three Knowledge Exchange Groups and 12 one-to-one interviews, the paper to be presented will report on the issues and challenges faced by both police officers and other related staff when approaching and managing incidents of mental ill health. In an effort to address these issues, Staffordshire police have implemented a skilled helper programme and so findings from this will also be presented.

CONNECT Project, University of York

Co-producing a bespoke mental health training package for frontline police officers: Lessons learned from the Connect trial

Presenters: Dr Arabella Scantlebury, Dr Nicola Moran, Inspector William Scott

North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and researchers from the University of York conducted a randomised controlled trial (RCT) and qualitative study to evaluate the effectiveness of a bespoke mental health training package for frontline police officers, compared to routine training.

The product: Frontline officers allocated to receive the mental health training (the intervention) attended a face-to-face one day mental health training programme, developed specifically for the 'Connect' trial by researchers from the University of York. The training was delivered by mental health professionals from a local NHS mental health trust and aimed to improve officers' understanding and ability to: identify, record, respond, refer and review incidents involving mental health.

Co-production: NYP officers were involved in all aspects of the trial including design and delivery and the production of academic papers and lay summaries. Close collaboration with other partner organisations, such as mental health charities and NHS organisations, facilitated both the delivery and dissemination of our findings to relevant stakeholders.

What we have learned: The mental health training intervention did not reduce the number of incidents reported to the police control room, but may have had a positive effect on how police officers record mental health incidents. The training had a positive impact on police officers' knowledge, attitudes and confidence in identifying mental vulnerability, responding to incidents involving mental health, and referring individuals to mental health services and other relevant agencies.

Impact on policing: NYP plan to roll out the mental health training throughout the force and it is anticipated that the results of the study will be used to inform the next review of national guidance for training of police officers. Findings of the Connect trial have also led to a review of how NYP record mental vulnerability.

Centre for Policing Research and Learning, The Open University

Evidence Cafés; Game-based learning

Presenter: Dr Anne Adams, Associate Director, Academic Professional Development

Evidence cafés

Evidence-based practice is increasingly important in public services (health care, management, teaching, policing). Even when academics and practitioners work together to use evidence in practice, barriers emerge, such as conflict between academic and practice-based use of language, and a lack of shared understanding. Such barriers can inhibit meaningful knowledge-exchange. This paper introduces evidence cafés as an effective method for engagement and dialogue from which both academics and practitioners emerge with changed understandings. We use findings from a study of 14 evidence cafés involving 386 participants. We used an evidence typology to analyse the knowledge exchange and include evidence of follow-on impact for both academics and practitioners.

Games-based learning

The child interview simulator (CIS) was co-developed with the police as a serious game to support the training of UK police recruits in collecting initial witness accounts from children. In addition to conceptual understanding, the trainees develop a confidence for interacting with children, which previously was only developed through experience. The CIS provides an interactive scenario where one takes on the role of an officer that needs to interview a nine year old boy, who allegedly witnessed a woman being attacked on his way home from school. One hundred and sixteen new recruit police officers from three UK forces participated in a randomised-control trial. Statistically significant increases were identified in understanding post the games-based learning $p < .001$ (large effect size). Tricky topic breakdowns identify increased tacit understanding (eg, empathy, attention) after games training and decreased tacit understanding (ie, respect) after face-to-face training. The simulation (game) was identified by police as effective because it produced a 'relevant' and 'authentic' experience.

CARI Project,
Leeds Beckett University

Frontline officer awareness development and decision support app

Presenters: Dr Z. Cliffe Schreuders, DCI Vanessa Smith

With the recent rise in cybercrime, vast amounts of digital evidence are generated. The volume of digital devices at scenes poses a significant challenge to frontline officers. Digital evidence needs to be accurately identified, and correct procedures need to be followed during the seizure stage to preserve digital evidence at crime scenes. An Android app was developed to improve the awareness and level of confidence of frontline officers to perform seizure of digital devices. The app provides officers with an easily accessible source of reference, guidance and training related to cybercrime and digital evidence. Animated videos were scripted and produced to provide training around some key concepts and procedures. The app can also be used at crime scenes to collect case evidence such as videos, images, audio and wifi signal captures. The latter is not normally retrieved.

A user-centred design approach was utilised. End users were identified as the police officers who act as frontline officers in warrant situations and these users have been involved in the design phases. Focus groups were conducted with police officers to elicit requirements for the Android app. The app was developed in close collaboration between police and academics.

An evaluation was performed to assess the impact of using the app. The factors assessed were the accuracy of device seizure as well as the participants' confidence in decision making. A system usability scale survey was also conducted to assess the usability of the app. The results obtained from the statistical tests showed a statistically significant mean increase for the accuracy of device seizure. The result for the participants' confidence in seizing a device showed a small increase. There was a 10% improvement in correct seizure of devices, which indicates the potential for significant timesaving for forensic analysts.

Better Policing Collaborative, University of Nottingham

Prioritising risk within indecent images of children investigations – The Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool (KIRAT)

Presenters: Hayley Rhodes, Samantha Matthews

Developed in collaboration with Kent Police, by Alison et al, the Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool (KIRAT) assists police in investigations involving individuals suspected of indecent images of children (IIOC) offences. The tool assists the police in identifying which individuals pose a greater risk of also committing hands-on contact sexual offences against children, enabling the prioritisation of resources more appropriately and risk to be managed more effectively.

The Police Knowledge Fund (PKF) funding allowed the KIRAT team to facilitate the translation of research findings into policing practice. One of the key activities facilitated within this project was the delivery of a structured training model to nearly 170 police officers from across the United Kingdom as part of various training events. This training was developed jointly by the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the University of Liverpool, balancing evidence-based knowledge transfer and ensuring operational validity of the guidance information. The delivery of the training was also academic-practitioner oriented with both the university and NCA involved in its delivery. The training model

aimed to improve the officers' knowledge of KIRAT and when, and how, to deploy the tool in active investigations. This knowledge will allow officers to prioritise high-risk offenders more effectively and intervene at an earlier stage of the investigation to avoid longer term damage for victims and demands on the system.

The PKF funding also allowed the KIRAT team to highlight plans for future developments of the training model, a longer term training framework and sustainability. These plans will enable the team to continue the analysis of police casefile data, monitor trends in deployment of KIRAT, identify changes in offending behaviour and deliver updates to the tool. This will ultimately help ensure that the tool is up to date, valid and sustainable.

The East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC), University of Northampton

Helping to inform police force and police officer decisions concerning community engagement: The Community Engagement Area Classification for the East Midlands (CEACEM)

Presenter: Dr James Hunter

Greater levels of community engagement is a key policy priority for police forces and their partner organisations. However, delivering effective community engagement is a policy outcome that has eluded many police forces (and other public services organisations). As part of the East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC) Police Knowledge Fund activity, Nottingham Trent University was commissioned to develop a policy tool that could inform police force decision-making in relation to their community engagement activities.

Whilst existing area and household classifications such as the 2011 Output Area Classification (ONS) or Experian's MOSAIC public sector household classification contain aspects of neighbourhood characteristics that can shape patterns of community cohesion and engagement, there is currently no dedicated area-level resource that specifically measures and maps the community engagement profile of localities. The bespoke Community Engagement Area Classification for the East Midlands (CEACEM)

therefore classifies neighbourhoods in the East Midlands into different community engagement 'rich' and 'poor' types of locality.

Utilising statistical modelling of spatial variations in neighbourhood connection, social diversity, fear of crime, satisfaction with policing (and other public services), and levels of volunteering and participation, the classification provides the user with a means of understanding the specific community engagement potential and challenges posed within each locality. The classification has been created both as an online resource that users can access on mobile phones and tablets, as well as in a desktop format. This policy tool has been developed through initial discussions with police forces and community safety partnerships, and talks are currently taking place concerning a potential 12-month trial period as a decision-making resource with Northamptonshire Police. Following the evaluation of this trial, and the adaption of the nature and format of the tool in light of user feedback, it is intended to make the CEACEM available to police forces (and their partner organisations) across the East Midlands.

Centre for Policing Research and Learning, The Open University

Understanding public value through policing priorities using Q methodology

Presenter: Professor Graham Pike

With more and wider expectations on police than they can deliver, what activities are most important to concentrate on, and which should be de-prioritised? The public value framework provides a way of thinking about this by focusing on what contributes to 'the common good', enabling deeper understanding of it. As developed by Moore (1995) and Benington (2011) and applied to the policing sector by Hesketh and Hartley (2015), public value is increasingly being applied by policy-makers, practitioners and academics as a way to understand demand and priorities.

The research examines public value, as seen by police, public service partners and members of the public, in terms of what is most important in the prioritising of policing activities, using Q methodology. 125 participants ranked 62 policing activities using a Q board. Analysis identified four major perspectives about what policing should prioritise:

- Personal harm – reducing serious personal psychological and physical harm

- Engagement – reducing community harm and creating a fearless society

- Crime-fighter – a focus on crime itself

- Good cop – policing that is committed to serving the public

The research makes three substantial contributions to understanding public value and policing:

- Q methodology is a robust and sensitive tool for analysing how participants view their key priorities for policing

- This is a novel methodology to address public value

- The paper contributes to evidence based on the analysis of similarities and differences in views about policing priorities, as seen by police, officials of policing partner organisations, and members of the public

These findings may help police as they engage in decisions about priorities, and understand how the public view policing priorities. Additionally, the Q board developed for this research has been used since by several forces in community engagement, and in evidence cafés and workshops to stimulate discussion about demand management.

The Exeter Policing, Evidence and Research Translation (ExPERT) Project, University of Exeter

Individual and organisational capacity building through 'Making Sense of Evidence' Workshops

Presenters: Dr Katharine Boyd, Detective Chief Inspector Neil Ralph

Working collaboratively, our project team designed and implemented four two-day 'Making Sense of Evidence' workshops in 2016 that served 83 police and police staff from Devon & Cornwall, but also Wiltshire, Avon & Somerset, Dorset, Gloucestershire, and Jersey; as well as a few individuals from non-police organisations. The collaboration between the partners was evident in that the workshop was held in both academic (University of Exeter) and police (Middlemoor Police Headquarters) locations and content was delivered by both partners.
The workshop content was based on a medical model of evidence-based practice (EBP) training used by PenCLAHRC at the University of Exeter medical school and adapted for police exemplars.

Impacts
Police and police staff from SW police forces networked and shared knowledge. Three videos about specific aspects of the workshop content were developed to extend the reach of the workshop content beyond the initial 83 attendees.

Overall, attendees reported an increase in knowledge of EBP, skills in applying EBP, and confidence in applying EBP in a retrospective pre-post workshop feedback form.

75 of 83 workshop attendees developed an EBP action plan by the end of the workshop.

Attendees completed organisational audits regarding EBP within their organisation; results, in aggregate, from the Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP) attendees were shared with leadership at the DCP Business Board.

DCP attendees of the workshop are now part of 'EBP Champions' network that receives updates and resources post-workshop.

Project members authored 'Making Sense of Evidence: Using Research Training to Promote Organisational Change' which will be published in Police Practice and Research.

The East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC), University of Northampton

East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC) Fellowship Programme

Presenters: Dr Becky Thompson, Alex Paradise

Police forces in several countries are adopting evidence-based policing – using the best available research evidence to improve policy and practice. This has led to several models of collaboration between universities and police forces. This presentation will discuss one model adopted by the East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC), in which serving officers and staff complete research relevant to their work while being supervised by an academic.

A range of provision has been developed under the EMPAC fellowship programme including one-to-one academic supervision via the University of Northampton and Loughborough University, distance learning programmes at the University of Derby and a taught postgraduate certificate (PGCert) in policing research at Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

The fellowship programme attracted a diverse mix, from police support volunteers to Detective Chief Superintendents. The students are also diverse in their prior accredited research literacy. Fellows

undertake tailored academic study, aligned to regional policing priorities. They are also 'change agents', influencing and supporting their colleagues on the benefits of research-informed practice. As Derbyshire PCC Hardyal Dhindsa states: "EMPAC fellowships are a practical way of embedding a sustainable culture of what works in policing."

This paper will discuss the activity undertaken as part of the EMPAC fellowship programme. It will discuss the rationale behind the approach that has been taken as well as showcasing the research of a number of the current NTU PGCert cohort. Finally, the paper will outline the benefits of the approach taken as well as some of the issues that have been encountered so far.

Liverpool John Moores University

Knowledge Hub, advanced practitioners and postgraduate certificate

Presenters: Dr Matthew Millings, Chief Inspector Chris Gibson

This presentation outlines three impacts on policing that have emerged as a direct result of the activities of the Merseyside-based Police Knowledge Fund (PKF) project delivered under the title 'Embedding Evidence Based Practice in Public Protection and Crime Prevention: A multi-disciplinary partnership'.

Knowledge hub: The PKF project has had a catalytic impact in developing Merseyside Police's engagement with evidence-based policing. The PKF project, the work of the student officers, the assessment formats, and opening of channels of communications and flexible working practices between Merseyside Police and academic partners has been the most significant single stimulus behind these advances in embedding evidence-based practice.

Advanced practitioners: The PKF has played an important role in extending the reach of evidence-based practice thinking within Merseyside Police and in embedding a 'questioning culture' that stimulates officer and staff engagement with research. Three advanced practitioners, seconded police officers based at the University for the duration of the project, delivered teaching sessions, supervised research projects, and built networks with academics from a range

of disciplinary backgrounds

The tangible evidence of impact here includes chief officers approaching advanced practitioners to help embed evaluation in local policing initiatives prior to their commencement. The force have been proactive in commissioning new research to better understand new and emergent concerns (for example, research into the illegal use of scrambler bikes).

Postgraduate certificate: A total of 68 students graduated from a bespoke postgraduate programme of research training and supervision validated specifically for Merseyside police officers and staff for the PKF. Each student produced a portfolio of research evidence on a theme. The presentation of project findings back into force to an assessment panel helped direct the emergent learning to the appropriate practice audience. The creation of the postgraduate diploma in evidence-informed practice, launching in January 2018, draws on the good practice developed through the PKF and will enable collaboration partners to continue to demonstrably upskill practitioners through the generation of co-produced research products that will help inform practice delivery and contribute to the evidence base.

Centre for Policing Research and Learning, The Open University

Open Educational Resources

Presenter: Dr Paul Walley

Open educational resources (OERs) are available anywhere and at any time, are free and vary from 10-minute videos to 36 hours of study. The Police Knowledge Fund (PKF) grant enabled Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL) to create a large repository of OERs created by The Open University, that is regularly updated and extended with those relevant to policing accessible on the CPRL website. They are organised according to key policing themes and can be searched by topic. The free resources were regularly found to be the most accessed web pages on the CPRL's site.

Police forces found these resources valuable in helping officers and staff to get on the ladder of continuing professional development and some forces have put links to the OERs on their learning and development intranets.

OERs come in various shapes and sizes. They include free massive open online courses (MOOCs); various learning packages and the CPRL's YouTube Playlist. One MOOC, "An introduction to public leadership" containing 12 hours study time, freely available, went live on 12 September 2016. It was commissioned through the PKF and, so far, over 14,000 people have joined this course.

Four other MOOCs: "Systems Thinking and Complexity", "Managing Public Money" (1,700 joiners in the first few weeks), "Introduction to Cyber Security" (>140k learners so far) and "Forensic Psychology: Witness Investigation" (over 100k learners so far) have also been developed and offered as free resources.

There has been such interest in the OER repository, other forces have been stimulated to develop their own and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) decided to create "Collaborative problem solving for community safety". This free 16-hour course offers a range of techniques for community police officers, other community-based public service professionals and members of community groups. Over 250 people have enrolled on this course in the first few weeks.

University of Cambridge

An overview of the Triple-T approach to evidence-based policing

Presenters: Dr Barak Ariel,
Sir Denis O'Connor

Evidence-based policing has recently been operationalised by Professor Lawrence Sherman (2013) as the 'Triple-T Approach': Targeting, Testing and Tracking. This paradigm seeks to increase efficiency, cost-effectiveness and fairness in 21st century policing, using the scientific approach:

- Targeting refers to aiming for the biggest impact, given the limited available resources for policing in an age of austerity

- Testing asks which tactics or strategies 'work' or do 'not work', utilising the most appropriate research methods (controlled experiments when feasible)

- Tracking looks at the systematic measurement of both outputs and outcomes to ensure implementation.

We illustrate the contribution of the Police Executive Programme for both the accumulation of applied research evidence as well as for day-to-day police practice through a series of examples:

- technology in policing

- hotspots policing

- implementation evaluation

A Merseyside study illustrates how these elements come together. We will also provide an overview of 180 evidence-based studies conducted in 52 law enforcement agencies worldwide (11 countries), and specifically 32 forces in the United Kingdom, through the Police Knowledge Fund. Research topics in the form of masters dissertations were driven by the participating forces' ACPO officers in collaboration with Cambridge University.

Our systematic evaluation of these theses illustrates the emerging areas of interest for police forces, gaps in knowledge, and the role of the 'pracademic' in evidence-based policing and contemporary criminal justice research. Specifically, the Cambridge programme pracademics championed applied research that led to substantial policy changes in the use of body worn cameras, hotspots policing, domestic violence, restorative justice and predictive policing. However, we show that our future focus should try to enrich our understanding of 'what works' against cybercrime, vulnerability, hate crimes and child sexual exploitation, given the limited research in these spaces.

OSCAR Development Centre, Cardiff University

Evidence, insight and innovation from OSCAR

Presenters: Dr Colin Roberts,
T/Supt. Iain Donnelly

The Open Source Communications Analytics Research (OSCAR) development centre was designed to investigate the disruptive impacts of new social media technologies and other forms of public 'big data' upon the investigative, intelligence and engagement functions of policing. A unique feature of OSCAR's approach was that it examined these issues across the range of policing disciplines including counter-terrorism, public order, crime investigation and community policing. The partners delivering the work were Cardiff University, UK Counter-Terrorism Command, West Midlands Police, South Wales Police, Surrey Police, Sussex Police, Safer Sutton CSP and University of Surrey.

In this presentation we will highlight the key findings and outcomes from the work, including how the close working between police and academics delivered research findings 'at the operational edge' that directly informed policing interventions. This will integrate demonstrating the use of 'CEBOT ' which was trialled as part of OSCAR. A kind of 'SIRI for police intelligence', this new technology allows frontline officers in the field to use mobile devices to directly interrogate intelligence databases and other forms of open source data.

CARI Project,
Leeds Beckett University

Linking images to source camera devices

Presenter: Dr Z. Cliffe Schreuders, Director, Cybercrime and Security Innovation (CSI) Centre, Reader in Computer Security, Leeds Beckett University

With the decrease in cost of digital cameras, cell phones and tablets with cameras, the proliferation of digital photographs has reached epic proportions. Some of these imaging devices and the photographs that they produce are used in the commission of crime.

A method to link digital images recovered by law enforcement agencies to the source imaging device that created these photographs would be helpful in linking suspects to crimes. The sensor noise, so-called sensor pattern noise (SPN), is an artefact left in any photograph created by an imaging sensor. The SPN forms part of the digital picture but is outside the human visual range and therefore it is invisible to the human eye. The SPN is formed when pixels on the sensor react (absorb) differently to the same light intensity, which creates a unique pattern for each imaging sensor. The unique pattern can be used as a digital fingerprint for the sensor analogous to human fingerprints. Each digital camera sensor has its own SPN fingerprint that is imprinted in all pictures captured by that camera.

A novel SPN extraction method was implemented using the MATLAB programming environment. An experiment was devised, using the Dresden image dataset, to compare the identification results of the novel method against the state-of-the-art extraction method. The experimental results were generated using images of 10 cameras to identify the source camera of the images. Results show that the proposed non-decimated wavelet extraction technique generates superior results to that of the state-of-the-art wavelet-based source camera identification. A software application and operating procedures were developed to enable the police to make use of this technology, in order to link images with source devices.

Better Policing Collaborative, University of Nottingham

Project Fisher: Development of a suspect prioritisation tool

Presenters: Dr Jessica Woodhams, DC Bren Jose, Dr Juliane Kloess

Project Fisher is a three-year collaboration between West Midlands Police/ROCU and the Universities of Birmingham, Bath and Aston, two years of which was funded by the Police Knowledge Fund (PKF). Its aim is to develop a prioritisation tool for online child sex offenders whose identities remain unknown.

With PKF funding we were able to develop a comprehensive dataset of the behaviours and characteristics of 60 suspects operating in the Dark Web (a group of offenders never before studied). A coding framework of 1000+ features that could be extracted from material on online child sex offenders while their identities remained unknown was developed in the earlier stages of this project. Through statistical analyses of inter-rater agreement, this was refined to a matrix of 600+ variables and we have refined this further through other statistical analyses. This matrix forms the basis for development of a prioritisation tool.

With PKF funding we were also able to establish that the classification of Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) can be a very challenging process leading to some occasions of quite low inter-rater agreement.

With additional funding, we have been able to explore this further and have written an academic paper which describes the research conducted as part of PKF and the follow-on research.

The collaboration involved the embedding of researchers within WMROCU. Through this model of co-working additional areas of operational policing were identified that would benefit from academic study. Other benefits of the project include the opportunity for two-way knowledge exchange and the identification of gaps in intelligence procedures that have now been filled through technological developments.

City, University of London

Evidence-informed training – Sexual offences: SOIT training module overview

A new training module for Sexual Offences Investigative Trained (SOIT) officers has been produced as part of the Police Knowledge Fund (PKF). The overall aim of this project is to embed evidence informed practice into police support and investigative interactions with victims of rape and sexual assault. The project was led by a team of academics from City, University of London and officers from two partner forces – MPS and Sussex Constabulary. In keeping with the aims of the PKF, the SOIT training module is evidence informed. Four sources of evidence were identified and incorporated into the training programme.

1. The substantive academic evidence base on rape and sexual assault, with an emphasis on victim experiences and the impact of rape myths on professional practice. The project added to the existing academic evidence base by conducting primary research in each of our partner force areas. Briefing reports were produced focusing on: Police officers' views of victim credibility; Third sector workers' views of officer/victim engagement; A literature review of existing research evidence to provide a wider understanding of the impact of rape on victims and the outcomes of rape allegations in the MPS

2. Data/information from within forces to enable an understanding of: the kinds of victim who report; what kind of vulnerability and other features are common in the rapes reported to police; and force performance informed case outcomes.

3. A briefing report summarising the academic evidence base on 'what works' in training and Continuous Professional Development - CPD.

4. Observations and a constructive critical review of the existing training for SOIT officers in the MPS.

The process of developing evidence informed training has necessitated continuous critical reflection on what 'training is' and 'what training is expected to produce and needs to produce'. We have noted that so many improvement recommendations assume that 'more' police training will appropriately address the shortfalls of police practice. We have found that this is an unsupportable assumption, as the current approach to police training is not yet a beneficiary of police cultural transformation and cannot lead the development of tomorrow's police officers until the training content is aligned with better academic knowledge and practice.

Training provides a foundation for future practice, and as such is an integral consideration when monitoring the preparedness of a force to respond effectively to crime, especially crime that is linked to vulnerability. This project underscored the critical importance of an evidence informed approach – underpinned through a continuous reflection and incorporation of new information, research findings and the pitfalls of practice that are documented in so many inspections and reviews - to developing and continuously improving police training.