
Information & Communication Technology (ICT)

Version 4

1. Policy statement

Information and communication technology (ICT) has enormous potential to contribute to the reduction and prevention of crime, improving public confidence and supporting victims through the automation of systems and processes; the provision of better information to police officers; and in supporting officers in performing more tasks and activities while remaining visible to their communities.

However, every year the police service spends over £1 billion on ICT much of which is on maintaining old and ineffective systems rather than investing in new technologies which then prevents officers from doing their job and is deeply frustrating. Police ICT systems remain unfit for purpose. It is essential to have interoperability across the service and up-to-date technology for officers to use. The Home Office, Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Officers must work together to ensure that forces have appropriate levels of funding to invest in technology.

2. Responsibility

The National Board is responsible for policy formation

3. Summary

PFEW believes that reducing crime, improving public confidence and supporting victims should determine the information and communication technologies that forces in England and Wales decide to invest in.

Each year forces in England Wales spend over £1 billion on ICT, much of which is on maintaining out of date, ineffective and expensive systems. PFEW believes that poor ICT prevents officers from getting on with their jobs. In addition, as crime continues to rise, criminals often have better technology than police officers.

PFEW believes that the Home Office, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners need to develop a coherent ICT strategy to maximise innovation and to reduce duplication. Currently across England and Wales some IT companies are selling the same product many times over to different forces. There should be greater use of standard products rather than bespoke solutions that are costly to maintain and difficult to upgrade. As HMIC has identified further investment in a co-ordinated approach to police ICT is paramount.¹

¹ HMIC State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2016

The Home Office, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners must work together to ensure that forces have an appropriate level of funding to invest in technology. Chief Officers and Police and Crime Commissioners should carry out a full cost-benefit analysis before investing in technology. Social media for instance could be a useful source of intelligence and could improve how the service engages with members of the public. The use of crime mapping could help reduce crime and improve the allocation of resources. The use of mobile devices requires strong back office support to enable officers access to force ICT systems and to meaningful information.

A joined up approach will help police officers get on with their jobs, share information across forces and between different criminal justice agencies, local government and other third sector partners.

4. Procedures/implementation

PFEW will press the Home Office, Chief Officers and Police and Crime Commissioners to develop a coherent ICT strategy based on a full cost benefit analysis and to provide forces with an appropriate level of funding to invest in technology.

We will hold police leaders to account for their role in ensuring the service provides the best service to the public including victims of crime. In addition, we will continue to press the Home Office and the APCCs to ensure that Chief Officers are provided with proper support and funding to deliver changes to police ICT.

Responsibility is delegated to the National Secretary and/or appropriate sub-committee

	Author	Date	Date to be reviewed	Change
Version 1	EP-KP	June 2015	June 2016	
Version 2	EP-KP	June 2016	June 2017	No change
Version 3	KP-EP	June 2017	June 2018	Minor changes including reference to HMIC State of Policing Report 2016
Version 4	KP	January 2019	June 2020	Minor changes

Signed by:



National Chair



National Secretary