

# Policing research in an era of reform: new challenges and opportunities

The announcement in September that Scotland is to create a single police service marks the beginning of the most significant restructuring of Scottish policing for a generation. Key decisions about how different aspects of policing are to be configured within a new national structure will be made over the coming months and the process of devising and implementing new arrangements for police governance and accountability will begin.

These developments create significant opportunities for SIPR. As the Institute enters a second phase with renewed investment from ACPOS and the consortium universities, it has a key role to play in contributing to the evidence base that will underpin major decisions regarding the reorganization of policing. By mobilizing research evidence from Scotland as well as internationally, SIPR will be able to offer insights on effective and cost-efficient practices in a range of key policing areas, from local policing to reducing violence, and from criminal investigation to tackling organised crime.

Such evidence is crucial as policing seeks to secure investment in a world in which competition for public funding is ever more acute. Given, too, that Scotland is among several European countries which are following a similar trajectory in terms of police reform, SIPR will be able to use its established networks of researchers and practitioners (particularly within EPIC, the European Police research Institutes Collaboration) to explore possibilities for comparative analysis and policy transfer. There is also an important role for the Institute to play in researching the process of implementing reform and over the longer term, providing an independent assessment of the impacts and implications of reform for local communities, partner organizations, and for people working in and with the Scottish police service.

Against this background, the process of determining SIPR's priorities for research and knowledge exchange (KE) will be crucial. In line with its Strategic Plan 2011-2015, the Institute's Executive Committee are now involved in detailed discussions with ACPOS to identify key themes and topics which will provide the framework for a programme of ACPOS funded research and KE which researchers across the consortium universities will be able to bid for. As part of this new programme, SIPR will launch a Critical Issues in Policing seminar programme at which practitioners and researchers will have the opportunity to scrutinize evidence of 'what works' in relation to key policing priorities.

In addition the Institute will continue to support a small grants competition to allow academics and practitioners to come forward with their own ideas for research, and the Practitioner Fellowship programme to encourage those who work in or with Scottish policing to conduct their own research with the support of an academic mentor.

With the launch of SIPR's postgraduate diploma and masters programme in Policing Studies in September 2011, there are also new opportunities for those who work in and with police organisations to deepen and broaden their knowledge of policing as well as to learn new research skills.

These then are very exciting times to be involved in policing research and police education. Although a recent paper on police science for the Harvard Executive Sessions\* spoke of the need for a 'new paradigm' in which the universities become active participants in the world of police practice, this is precisely what SIPR has developed over the last four years. It is this strong collaborative relationships between Scotland's police service and academic community that means we are well placed to meet the challenges and embrace the opportunities at a crucial moment in Scottish policing history.

\*Weisburd, D. and Neyroud, P. (2011) 'Police Science: towards a new paradigm' (Harvard Kennedy School/National Institute for Justice).



© Scottish Police College. Iain Whyte, Convenor of Lothian & Borders Police Board (centre) presents a Scottish Policing Award to Prof. Nick Fyfe and Supt Andy Tatnell (Head of Management & Leadership Division, SPC) for the joint CPD Programme between SIPR and the Scottish Police College.

## Local policing in Scotland – SIPR's contribution

Contact: Dr Kenneth Scott (Kenneth.scott@uws.ac.uk) Associate Director, SIPR & UWS

Part of SIPR's mission statement has been to contribute quality research to what happens 'on the ground' in Scottish policing. At the end of the Institute's first phase of activity a stock-taking of projects so far undertaken indicates that this objective has been more than fulfilled.

Despite the relative lack of policing research in the pre-SIPR era, it is ironic that the earliest work on what the police do was carried out in the 1960s in the city of Edinburgh. Michael Banton's (1964) pioneering work on *The Policeman in Society* included close analysis of a police division through diaries kept by officers over a couple of days. Based on these and on interviews, Banton developed what remains a significant account of policing and police work at that time.

Modern police researchers have now expanded considerably on our knowledge of local/community policing in Scotland through SIPR PDRA projects, PhD studentships and small grants. Amongst these have been:

- Community Policing Knowledge Exchange Project in Lothian and Borders (Alistair Henry and Simon Mackenzie)
- Local policing in Dumfries and Galloway, Grampian and Strathclyde (Liz Aston and Ken Scott)

- Fife Constabulary's community engagement model (Janine Hunter and Nick Fyfe)
- Understanding police knowledge and practice in rural communities in Northern (Tara Fenwick)
- Local policing initiatives in the East End of Glasgow and Inverclyde (Liz Frondigoun and Annette Robertson).

Now these, and other themes, are to be brought together by SIPR in two ways in the coming months. An extended Briefing Paper will pull together some of the key outcomes of research projects around the community policing strand, using evidence from SIPR projects to identify how police forces have been developing new initiatives.

It is also planned to have a series of events under the title 'Critical Issues in Policing'. This will comprise a range of knowledge exchange seminars throughout Scotland on specific areas of research in which SIPR has been actively engaged.

Part of Banton's work in Edinburgh was to provide a basis for comparing policing in Britain with policing in the United States. It is hoped that SIPR's projects will also provide a modern basis for comparing Scottish policing with policing trends elsewhere in the world.

## Update on PhD Research: Unpacking public confidence in local policing in Scotland

Contact: Kath Murray (k.h.murray@sms.ed.ac.uk) University of Edinburgh

In recent years, public confidence in policing has emerged as a key policy theme across the UK, in part driven by the observation that effective policing is dependent on public support. In Scotland, increasing public confidence in the police is stated as a high level objective in the Scottish Policing Performance Framework (SPPF), and measured using six variables from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. With the exception of crime prevention, these six variables describe a reactive crime control policing model, for example, public confidence is premised on the ability of the local police to respond quickly to public calls, to investigate incidents after they occur and to solve crimes.

This research uses Scottish Crime and Justice Survey data to consider whether public support is likely to be improved by effective crime control, or whether public support for the police depends on a wider range of variables, including quality of police contact, engagement with the community and neighbourhood cohesion. The analysis uses logistic regression to predict the likelihood of people expressing that the local police do a good job. Seven hypotheses are tested which explore a range of potential drivers of public support, including police conduct, crime control, opinions about the severity of crime and anti-social behaviour across Scotland, and socio-economic background.

The results indicate that perceptions of police conduct and communication, alongside people's assessments of the local area are significantly stronger predictors of public confidence than perceptions of crime control performance. Interestingly, the research also suggests that if crime and anti-social behaviour are viewed as problematic, rather than unproblematic, this is likely to increase expressions of public confidence in the police. This counter-intuitive result may be explicable with reference to the argument that the public are more likely to hold on to the police as representatives of 'order, security, discipline and authority'\* in difficult social conditions. The relatively low influence of crime control factors on public confidence suggests that current measures might be reworked to include a wider and more relevant set of drivers. However, the unlikely association between increased support for the police and disorder suggests that public confidence in itself may not be a wholly constructive policy goal.

\*Loader, I. and Mulcahy, A. (2003) 'Losing faith? The desacralization of English policing since 1945', in I. Loader and A. Mulcahy. *Policing and the condition of England: memory, politics and culture*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

## **Update on PhD Research: Legally-compliant by design: towards improved information sharing between the police and their community partners**

Contact: Omair Uthmani (o.uthmani@napier.ac.uk) Edinburgh Napier University

From 'big society' to 'joined-up' services to increased 'partnership-working', information-sharing is fast becoming a central theme in transformational government. Practitioners from law-enforcement, healthcare, education and social-work are collaborating and sharing information more than ever before in order to make coordinated responses to common problems.

The amount and type of information to be shared, however, needs to be proportionate and in context to a defined, legally permissible objective. Identifying what and how much information can be legally shared in a given scenario often requires interpreting complex legislative guidelines which may be too unspecific and abstract for non-lawyers.

The Bichard inquiry in 2005, the Lord Laming inquiries in 2003 and 2009 and the Serious Case Review into the death of three-year old Ryan Lovell-Hancox in 2011, all highlight the tragic consequences which could result from the misinterpretation of these guidelines.

A three-year SIPR-funded research has resulted in the development of a novel information-sharing framework which ensures legal compliance 'by-design'. It has been designed and developed at Edinburgh Napier University as part of a PhD project (Omair Uthmani) under the supervision of Professor Bill Buchanan and Alistair Lawson, and builds on work undertaken by Superintendent Russell Scott and the Management of

Police Information (MoPI) development team at the Scottish Police College. Essentially the work creates a human-readable information sharing policy, which is then modelled for its correctness and implemented into a filtering engine which connects two domains (such as police and social care). Any information sharing requests are then checked against the policy to see if they are allowed or not.

The framework makes it possible for legislative principles to be 'hard-coded' into the communication infrastructure so that information can only be shared in a proportionate and legally-compliant manner. Further, it allows an information-sharing system, governed by existing legal principles, to be modelled in a simulated environment. These simulations are essential for identifying anomalies, discrepancies and conflicts in policies and running 'what-if' scenarios that show how the behaviour of the system changes as aspects of the legal principles governing it are modified.

The research has also relied on collaboration with Professor Burkhard Schafer of the Joseph Bell Centre for Forensic Statistics & Legal Reasoning at Edinburgh University and expertise of Alan Small, Programme Manager of Children's Rights and Wellbeing at Scottish Government and Detective Sergeant Joyce Greenhorn at Central Scotland Police. The work is now nearing completion and shows good prospects for commercialisation, such as being considered for Proof of Concept funding by Scottish Enterprise.

## **Update on PhD Research: Scottish based anti-money laundering operations and inter-agency co-operation across jurisdiction**

Contact: Mo Egan (M.Egan@abertay.ac.uk) University of Abertay, Dundee

This PhD project, which is jointly funded by the University of Abertay and SIPR, aims to examine anti-money laundering institutional overlaps, gaps and conflicts within Scotland; the interaction between Scottish law enforcement agencies and the rest of the UK; and EC/EU impact on police practice in Scotland. At a time when the 'follow the money' approach to crime control is receiving ever greater political commitment, at both the UK and European levels, it is imperative that there is a stronger evidence base on which to evaluate how and if the police make use of available legislation. Accordingly, this research seeks to contextualise the policing of money laundering by examining how police officers make use of the available framework. A mixed methods approach is used. It combines critical analysis of the legislation and policy regulating money laundering with in-depth interviews of key participants. Participants were drawn from Tayside Police, Lothian & Borders Police, Strathclyde Police, the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency, Europol and Eurojust.

The data collection stage has been completed and is in the process of being analysed. However, it is possible at this stage to identify considerable differences in knowledge and experience of police cooperation mechanisms specifically relating to the investigation and prosecution of financial crime. In particular, there is a significant divide between territorial forces and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency.

This research hypothesises that this divide is compounded by three contributory factors: by the type of crime being addressed, the 'working personality' of officers and whether the purpose of the action is the prevention or prosecution of crime. However, this research also indicates that the Scottish Financial Investigators Practitioners Forum goes some way to addressing the potential for 'linkage blindness' between these organisations.

For further information, see: Egan, M., (2011) 'Non-conviction Based Sanctions: The Court of Justice v. the European Court of Human Rights, Who Decides?', *European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice*, Vol.19, No. 3. pp167-182

## SIPR Policing Studies Diploma: New International Collaboration

Contact: Dr Jeffrey Murer ([jeffrey.murer@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:jeffrey.murer@st-andrews.ac.uk)) University of St Andrews

SIPR and the Universities of Dundee and St. Andrews are collaborating with the Dutch National Police Academy to develop an innovative, new mode of assessment for an upcoming module as part of the SIPR Postgraduate course in Policing Studies. Dr Jeffrey Murer from St. Andrews will offer a module on "Community, Threat and Identity", in which students can choose to cooperate as a team and work with Dutch counterparts in evaluating a policing initiative in a complex neighbourhood, selected for its multicultural, multi-lingual,

multi-ethnic character. The Scottish team will prepare a dossier of their neighbourhood, and compare it to the similarly detailed Dutch case. The two teams will settle on a common problem, will evaluate the policing approach to it, and then review each other's recommendations and assessments. By comparing these neighbourhoods in two different countries, students will see problems in a new light, potentially pose new solutions, and experience working with a team from another culture.

## The SIPR Practitioner Fellowship Programme

The number of Practitioner Fellows researching crime and policing projects with supervisory assistance from academics within SIPR continues to grow, with projects being carried out on: The effectiveness of police negotiator training (Chief Inspector Andy Brown, Scottish Police College); The development of a Territorial Policing Doctrine (Inspector Tony Bone, Strathclyde Police); No-Cold Calling Zones (Brian Smith, Senior Trading Standards Officer, Angus Council); Police-protestor liaison (Inspector Craig Menzies, Grampian Police); A Small Scale Qualitative Analysis of Safer Neighbourhood Teams in the South of Edinburgh (Dr Penny Woolnough, Senior Research Officer,

Grampian Police); Domestic abuse (DCI Brian Johnston, Central Scotland Police).

The programme of Fellowships supported by the Economic & Social Research Council funding as part of the wider project on 'Building Safer Communities in Scotland' was successfully completed, with six projects mentored by academics from SIPR and the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research. For further information on how to apply for this scheme, and some of the past projects and those currently being undertaken by Fellows, please see: <http://www.sipr.ac.uk/research/fellow.php>

## 'Digital is the new normal'

*DCC Gordon Scobbie, Tayside Police, is the lead for use of Social Media and Digital Engagement for ACPO and more recently for ACPOS. This article is based on a piece he prepared for Public Service Review : Home affairs, which considered the consequences of the growth of social media for the police.*

We cannot ignore the facts on social media growth. There are now 30 million users of Facebook in the UK and over 600 million worldwide. Up to 400 thousand people sign up to 'Twitter' every day. People now use social media to communicate in a very different way than before and this change is accelerating rapidly. It has implications not just for how the police communicate with large elements of the public, but for how the public choose to interact with the police. No longer will protesters typically write to the police giving notice to demonstrate. Instead, often the preferred option is to organize events through social media sites, dynamically and in real time. Protesters have even developed their own site, Sukey, to counter police public order tactics, again in real time. So how have the police responded?

From a slow start the police are now embracing social media and the digital world. Many forces and individual officers are using a number of platforms to engage with the public, typically Facebook and Twitter. However, more coordination is required to maximize the full potential social media can offer.

National guidance has been introduced through the short online 'Engage' document, produced by the NPIA. This is currently being refreshed to reflect the rapidly changing nature of social media. The guidance promotes the use of digital engagement by showcasing the practical use by officers and

police staff. It gives good examples of the use of 'Twitter', Blogs, website interaction, web casting of public meetings and a case study of the GMP 24 hour 999 'Tweetathon'.

Tayside Police recently piloted an independent website, 'MyPolice', which seeks to engage with the public and find out from them the things we are doing well and the things we need to improve. The unique aspect of this site is its independence of the police and that the content is open for all to see just by logging in. The site is moderated independently to ensure content is not offensive or prejudicial to ongoing proceedings, but otherwise the public can say what they feel about the police in the confidence that it will be visible and transparent. This is a bold step for Tayside Police, but one which the force was happy to take as it understands the value of direct and instant public feedback. The pilot ran for 3 months and is currently being evaluated.

Three areas are of strategic importance to the police service in a digital age, and will be explored in more depth in further articles: How do we keep up with the pace of change and adapt our service delivery in a time of shrinking budgets and resources? How do we better join up by converging digital with our traditional methods of doing things? How do we show brave and forward thinking leadership in an area which most strategic police leaders have little knowledge?

## Interpreter-mediation in Investigative Interviewing

Contact: Professor Ursula Boser (U.Boser@hw.ac.uk) and Christine Wilson (C.W.L.Wilson@hw.ac.uk) Heriot-Watt University

*Heriot-Watt University is playing a lead role in this comparative study of practices in six countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic and Turkey) in this project which is funded by the DG Criminal Justice.*

A growing demand for interpreting in new contexts and formats has been the corollary of a progressively more multicultural world. Interpreter-mediated face-to-face interactions play an increasing role in navigating the challenges of diversity and in the shaping of aspects of multicultural societies. The main institutional setting on which research in the emerging field of 'community-based' interpreting has focused so far is interpreting in the courtroom (court interpreting); however, little attention has been paid to the impact of interpreting on other types of verbal interactions in earlier phases of the emerging forensic narrative.

This project will investigate the specific conditions within which police interpreting is taking place and the effects of interpreting on conversational dynamics in investigative interviewing. More specifically, the project aims are to create a better understanding of the context of police interviewing and forensic interviewing formats to enhance training of interpreters. It also seeks to propose how the findings can be taken into account in cross-

cultural and multi-lingual interviewing practice.

Project members will carry out a comparative study of practices in the six countries represented. This will be based on shared research and roundtable information sessions with practitioners in interpreting and policing in the six participating countries. Findings will be presented at an international conference of trainers, researchers and practitioners in Paris, in late 2012, and published subsequently. In addition, each member state will prepare a short film to illustrate national interviewing practices in a multilingual context. This will be for use in a training environment and relevant to both interviewers and interpreters working in an investigative context.

It is hoped that the project will contribute to the implementation of Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings.

## Unusually persistent complainants: a PCCS Research Project

Increasingly organisations, in both the public and private sectors, are required to manage people who make persistent complaints. This small group of individuals can consume a disproportionate amount of an organisation's resources, pursuing what they believe are legitimate complaints, for longer and with more intensity than the majority of the population would consider reasonable.

This issue was originally examined by researchers in New South Wales and published in an article "Unusually Persistent Complainants" in the British Journal of Psychiatry in 2004\*. The Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland research programme builds on the New South Wales research to help the police in Scotland identify potentially persistent complainers early.

Typically, a persistent complainer will be male, in the 30-50 age bracket, and will demonstrate challenging behaviours ranging from anger and aggression to threats of harm to self and others. They can also be misleading in the facts they present and look for outcomes that are not possible such as revenge and retribution. Failure to gain the desired result with one agency can lead them to take their complaint to other agencies where they start the complaint cycle again.

The PCCS identified 20 cases from its own files, where the complainer could be deemed to be "querulous" i.e. unusually persistent, and a further 20 cases deemed "persistent", i.e. someone who, after their case was closed by the police body, brought their complaint to the PCCS. Grampian Police Professional Standards Department then used the same data collection techniques to examine a further 20 "control" cases, i.e. people who made their complaint to the police body only. This information will be analysed and used to inform the creation of practical guidance for all police in Scotland, with the potential to roll out to other public sector bodies. The guidance will be presented in September and will provide a response model that combines both preventive and reactive elements for police to use when managing this group of people, as well as a mechanism for effective management of case closure.

The research is being carried out on behalf of the PCCS by Dr Gordon Skilling, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and Ms. Marianne Ofstegaard, Assistant Psychologist from the School of Forensic Mental Health, based at The State Hospital, Carstairs.

\*Lester G, Wilson B, Griffin L & Mullen PE (2004). Unusually persistent complainants. British Journal of Psychiatry 184, 352-356.

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## SIPR / FBI KT Seminar Series

Following the success of the 2-day seminar co-organised by Peter Wilson and Nick Fyfe at the International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest in October 2010, two further meetings have been funded by the FBI National Academy of Associates, and have provided an opportunity for academics from Scotland to present their research to an audience of senior police practitioners from across Europe. The first was held at the German Police University, Muenster in August 2011, and the second was held at the Scottish Police College in September 2011.

# Missing Persons Research



Martin Houghton-Brown (Chief Executive, Missing People) and ACC Colin Menzies (ACPOS lead on missing persons) sign the Strategic Agreement.

SIPR and the Missing People charity organised, with funding from the People's Postcode Lottery, a full-day event at the Scottish Police College in June. Participants heard about the work of the Missing People charity and the UK Missing Persons Bureau, and learnt about recent research into missing people in Scotland, including a major project (see previous SIPR Newsletter), funded by the Economic & Social Research Council. A particularly moving account was given by Elizabeth Templeton, whose son, Alan, is a missing person. The event also marked the occasion of the signing of a Strategic Agreement between ACPOS and the Missing People charity.

**missing  
people**  
Registered Charity No. 1020419



## Tell us what happened? Grampian Police Missing person 'closure-interview' forms

Contact: Dr Penny Woolnough (penny.woolnough@grampian.pnn.police.uk) & Emily Bonny (e.bonny.07@aberdeen.ac.uk) Grampian Police Research Unit

In 2005, Grampian Police received 1539 reported incidences of missing persons of which 99% have been traced alive. So why do people go missing? The aims of this project, which is part-funded through a SIPR Small Grant Award, are to gain further insight into why individuals go missing and where they go, as well as to identify any geographical 'hotspots'. Once a missing person has been traced, police officers use a 'cancellation form' to understand the particulars of each case. A database of the information collected from these forms has been created, and some analysis has already been conducted on the dataset in an attempt to answer these questions.

Data entry is ongoing - 1308 cases have been entered so far, pertaining to 495 individuals. The data showed that in 54% of cases, the individual knew where they intended to go and in 87% they went somewhere familiar. In 42% of cases the missing persons returned of their own accord, and a further 42% were traced by police. Interestingly, in those cases where the person was traced, 70% stated that they would have returned of their own accord if they had not been found.

Full analysis of the entire dataset will be undertaken over the coming months, which will help to answer many of the questions surrounding missing persons.

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## Community Intelligence Project

Contact: Niall Hamilton-Smith (niall.hamilton-smith@stir.ac.uk) University of Stirling

SIPR, in collaboration with the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research and Strathclyde Police, have been piloting a unique approach to gathering community intelligence. Sponsored by the Scottish Government, the project involves community officers in the Inverclyde sub-division using a systematic and computer-assisted method for building up a picture of crime and disorder 'signals'. Based on Professor Martin Innes' "signal crimes perspective" the focus is not simply on identifying common community concerns, but to determine those incidents of crime and disorder that have the biggest collective impact on the behaviour and emotional well-being of the community. As well as assessing the value of the approach for community policing, the project will also be looking to assess whether the methodology throws up additional useful information, in particular intelligence on more serious and organised criminality.

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## SIPR and the Royal Society of Edinburgh

SIPR Lecturer Dr Jeffrey Murer, University of St Andrews, has been chosen as one of the first 68 members of the RSE's Young Academy, which is the first of its kind in the world, and provides a unique opportunity to bring together some of the most able and innovative young people in Scotland to develop an influential "voice" to address many of the challenging issues facing society.

An RSE Arts and Humanities Network Award has also been made to Murray Frame, Nick Fyfe and Anja Johansen (University of Dundee) on the theme Crime and Policing in Scotland Past and Present. The Network will hold its first meeting at the RSE on 4th November on Police Governance and Accountability, and in 2012 there will be a public exhibition on the theme of the history of policing in Scotland at the McManus Galleries in Dundee.

# In Brief

## **Disrupting Organised Crime - Managing Performance**

Contact: Jackie McKelvie  
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Development Manager, SCDEA

Over the past year the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA) have conceived, developed and implemented a simple 'one stop shop' performance management concept specifically tailored to activity carried out to disrupt Serious Organised Crime Groups.

The Aggregated Results Collation (ARC) is a Microsoft Access database that has been customised to enable the recording of any action carried out by the SCDEA which has an impact including disruptions, arrests, cash or drug seizures. Several other law enforcement agencies have already visited the SCDEA to speak with the Executive Support team who developed the ARC, see it in operation, and consider how they could use it in their own organizations. The concept is generic enough to be adapted to a range of performance management contexts.

## **Edinburgh Policing Practice & Research Group**

Contacts: Alistair Henry (University of Edinburgh)  
Simon Mackenzie (University of Glasgow)  
Superintendent John Hawkins (Lothian and Borders)  
Sergeant Steven Nunn (Lothian and Borders)

The Edinburgh Police Research and Practice Group (EPRPG) evolved out of conversations between academics and police officers participating in an AHRC-funded knowledge transfer fellowship on community policing in Lothian and Borders throughout 2009-2011. Interest in stimulating dialogue and future research collaboration went beyond the topic of 'community policing' and so the group was established to act as a wider forum through which officers could be exposed to current academic research findings, and researchers could in turn get a better insight into the kinds of real-life problems and questions that officers were grappling with, and which themselves might benefit from research (and which have informed the choice of topics for ongoing EPRPG events). Sessions take place at Fettes Police Headquarters in Edinburgh and have involved seminars and discussions on a range of topics: community policing; measuring public confidence in policing; experiences of Muslims in Scottish airports; police use of social networking technologies; and the consequences of climate change for policing. The next series of EPRPG meetings are being scheduled for the autumn and will include (subject to confirmation) sessions on: vandalism; desistance from offending; crime risk evaluation and information sharing; and football violence and sectarianism. Details will be published on the SIPR website in due course, and places can be booked through Steven Nunn (steven.nunn@bnp.pnn.police.uk).

## **Policing research at Abertay**

Contact: Derek Carson (d.carson@tay.ac.uk)  
University of Abertay

Building on its existing strengths of research and teaching in forensic science, applied computing, and investigative psychology, The University of Abertay has set a strategic objective of developing an internationally leading group of researchers in policing, criminal justice, and security research by 2015. The group, led by Dr Fiona Gabbert, a Reader in Psychology, will draw on the expertise of researchers from all five Schools in Abertay.

The University recently appointed Professor Derek Carson to the Chair of Applied Cognitive Psychology. Professor Carson, a member of SIPR's Evidence and Investigation Network, currently conducts research in the field of forensic mental health. Working with colleagues throughout the UK, he has modelled pathways into and through the criminal justice for offenders with learning disabilities. Professor Carson previously worked with ACPOS helping to apply psychology to improving police force's use of facial composite systems such as E-Fit.

## **The future in homicide investigations**

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Violence Reduction Unit

Historically homicide investigations have been a very 'closed' environment, an area of work where experience and learning were very rarely shared, with investigators guarding their knowledge and details of their investigations. However, thanks to the development of the Operation Phoenix system this practice is now beginning to change.

Unique in concept and design, the system, which has been developed by Strathclyde Police and the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, aims to revolutionise homicide investigations by providing a platform for sharing the knowledge and expertise from experienced investigators throughout the country. In addition, the system is an extremely powerful analytical engine, allowing in depth analysis of homicides in a way which has never previously been possible.

Currently live in Strathclyde, Operation Phoenix has now been mandated as an ACPOS National Project and is currently going through the Business Change process to enable it be rolled out Nationally. Once complete, Scotland will be home to the World's first ever National Homicide Database - a system which will help to further enhance the quality and excellence of murder investigations across the country.

# Knowledge Exchange

Over the past 12 months the Institute has been involved in the organisation of 16 events involving the academic, practitioner and policy communities, some of which are highlighted below. For details of all past events and details of future events, see: <http://www.sipr.ac.uk/events/index.php>

**Child protection awareness; Geographical Information Systems for police managers; Working Collaboratively within Partnerships; and understanding trauma and secondary traumatic stress in police officers**, were examples from a series of CPD events held at the Scottish Police College and presented by academics from the SIPR consortium of Universities. This new partnership, which was presented with a Scottish Policing Award (photo, front page), enables us to make a limited number of spaces available to non-police staff.

**The Fourth SIPR Conference** was held in partnership with the SPSA at the West Park Conference Centre, Dundee and initially focused on 'Policing in an age of austerity', with a Keynote address by Professor Martin Innes (Director, Universities' Police Science Institute, Cardiff University). The second day of the conference looked at new developments in forensic science and showcased work of academics and practitioners at the new SPSA forensic laboratory in Dundee.

**The Fourth SIPR Annual Lecture**, sponsored by Apha Translating and Interpreting Services Ltd, was held at the University of Strathclyde, and presented by Professor Nick Tilley, Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science, University College London, who spoke on 'Discipline and Discretion.'

**Crime, Disorder and Policing** A series of three meetings, held at the University of Edinburgh and jointly sponsored by SIPR and the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, focused on public confidence in policing; public response to crime; and disorder and anti-social behaviour.

**Changing the way we do business** SIPR was very pleased to host an international visitor, Professor Jenny Fleming, Director of the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies, who presented a seminar on Managing sexual assault in Victoria, Australia, at the University of Glasgow. She was also guest of the Senior Career Development Service at the Scottish Police College, where she spoke on wider issues of police management and organisational change.

**Cognitive approaches to detecting deception** SIPR supported the International Investigative Interviewing Group's Annual Conference, held at the University of Abertay Dundee, by funding bursary places for practitioners, and Keynote Speaker, Dr Ron Fisher, Professor of Psychology, Florida International University.

**A Professional Development Workshop for Police Analysts** was organised at the University of Dundee to highlight recent quantitative and qualitative research and provide a forum for networking between analysts and academic researchers from across Scotland.

**Co-ordinating police and other response organisations in flood emergencies.** This Workshop, held at the University of Dundee, focused on forecasting, response, and recovery, with representatives from all services sharing good practice.

## Additional articles on-line

We couldn't fit everything that we would have liked to include in this Newsletter. Additional articles on the following topics can be read at: [www.sipr.ac.uk/publications/flyers.php](http://www.sipr.ac.uk/publications/flyers.php)

- Police Research Bulletin 2010/11 - Abstracts compiled by UWS Centre for Criminal Justice and Police Studies
- Space, place and rural anti-social behaviour in Scotland (Andrew Wooff, University of Dundee)
- Examining patterns of reporting amongst victims of partner abuse (Sarah MacQueen, University of Edinburgh)
- False confessions in non-forensic and forensic settings (Wendy Patton, Glasgow Caledonian University)
- Local Community Safety Partnership working in Fife (Frank Gibson, Fife Community Safety Partnership)
- Story telling through blogging: a knowledge management and therapeutic tool in policing (Simon Burnett, RGU)
- Grampian Police: Research Access Procedure

## SIPR Contact details

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