

# HM Inspectorate of Probation

## Plan 2007 – 2008

*Joint Inspection to Sell Improvement*

April 2007

**“JOINT INSPECTION TO SELL IMPROVEMENT”:**  
**HMI Probation Plan 2007-2008**

***Helping to Improve Effectiveness in the Criminal Justice System***

**PART ONE: OUR APPROACH**

**Who we are, and What we do:**

1. A year ago we were expecting this Inspectorate to disappear as a separate entity, in a planned development that we supported. In the event, Government plans have changed, and the five Criminal Justice System (CJS) Inspectorates will now continue as distinct entities. However, all five Inspectorates are now committed to developing a jointly-owned annual Joint Inspection Programme.
2. Hence the distinctively new feature of this year’s HMI Probation Plan is that it is best seen as the first Part of a two-tier Plan of the work for the year ahead. As we will explain in more detail later in this document, the responsibility for some of our scheduled work for 2007/8 is solely owned by this Inspectorate, and so it belongs in the first tier of the Plan. However, the great majority of our work for the year ahead, about 85%, belongs in the second tier, as the responsibility for it is jointly owned by the five CJS Inspectorates.
3. Nevertheless, despite this major change in our fortunes there is a strong theme of continuity in our Plan this year. This reflects the fact that for three years now we have been planning for a future in which joint inspection will become the norm, and we continue to maintain our clear messages about our role and purpose within the CJS as a whole.
4. We are fifty salaried staff, plus a panel of a dozen or so sessional colleagues. We cost a fraction of one percent of the total cost of the whole Probation Service and all the Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) of England and Wales. But we have an important message about both Probation and YOTs, and about our work with them at this time when their own work is under continued challenge:
  - *Both the Probation Service and the YOTs of England & Wales deal with the reality of crime and risk every day, working to protect the public and reduce crime through effective management of offenders*
  - *Those who offend must take full responsibility for the crimes they commit but the public has every right to expect that Probation and YOT staff will do their job properly.*
  - *HMI Probation measures their work against clear expectations on behalf of the public. When the relevant authorities fail to meet those expectations we shall be uncompromising in saying so, but we also believe that the public, politicians and the media should support an organisation that is generally doing an important job and making a major contribution to public protection.*

Our Approach flows from this.

**Context:**

5. We are continuing to work actively towards a major change in the inspection arrangements in the CJS as a whole, which is developing alongside parallel developments in the inspections of other public services too. Alongside the three other future redesigned Inspectorates that are now planned to cover together the other major public services, the five CJS Inspectorates will develop and work to a jointly-owned Joint Inspection Programme alongside their respective solely-owned inspection programmes to cover the CJS.
6. This Plan will therefore be one of five two-tier plans that will aim to provide the right mix of solely-owned and jointly-owned inspections to promote improvement in the CJS as a whole. For our own part, taking into account the place of offender management within the CJS, we expect most of our inspections to be located in the 'jointly-owned' tier in the planning process.

**Managing each offender or young person under supervision:**

7. We continue to stress the central importance of what was once called the 'case management of offenders'. We still see this as the bedrock of the unfolding NOMS, providing a foundation for supervision which needs to be effective in terms of enforcing every sentence, making offenders less likely to reoffend, and minimising *Risk of Harm* to the public. We also continue to say that case management of young people (not always formally-convicted offenders) will continue to be part of the bedrock of practice by Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). As ever, the terminology is changing, as are some of the details of the definitions of some of the terms we use. We are increasingly referring to *offender management*\* as being the central part of the *core correctional practice* of the future. These ideas are being developed and trialled within NOMS and in the world of the YOTs, and hence we have developed our mainstream inspection methodologies with that principle firmly in mind.
8. So despite the prospective upheavals in organisational arrangements, we see more continuity than change in the building blocks of effective practice with sentenced adult and young offenders. We believe that at the heart of effective offender management will be the ability of the *offender manager* to engage skilfully with the offender or young person. This not only secures compliance with sentence enforcement, but also helps the offender or young person to make use of all the learning from the sentence to change their former behaviour. An inspection methodology which measures the *quality of offender management* is the right way to inspect the work of NOMS and of Youth Offending Teams and Services both now and in the future.

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\* *Offender management* is a term that is still being used in two different ways at different times. Sometimes it refers to everything done with a sentenced adult offender under the auspices of NOMS, and sometimes it refers exclusively to the role undertaken specifically by *offender managers*. We consider that it may therefore become useful to use a term such as *offender managing* for the latter usage in order to address the specific subject-matter of *core correctional practice*

9. But we are continuing to suggest that we do more than simply inspect – that what we do is to “sell Improvement”, an idea we introduced in last year’s Plan. What do we mean by this?

**The Inspectorate role:**

10. Our contribution to service improvement is entirely in line with the Government’s stated expectation of how public service inspectorates should work, contained in the July 2003 policy document, *Inspecting for Improvement*. The ten principles set out in that document appear again in the Annex to this Plan, and in accordance with them we in HMI Probation commit ourselves for the fourth consecutive year to the aim that:

***“Our inspections will not only measure the performance of our respondent organisations fairly and accurately, but will also maximise the likelihood of performance improvement.”***

11. The wording of this aim acknowledges the fact that as/when a respondent organisation (Probation Area or YOT or other) improves its performance following an inspection, the achievement belongs to that organisation. An Inspectorate cannot make performance improvement happen, but it can ‘maximise the likelihood’ of it happening. It does that through its own quality of engagement with the respondent organisation – in our case the Probation Boards (or Trusts in the future) and YOTs. This has implications both for our inspection methodology and for the interpersonal and communication skills of the staff who implement them.
12. Just as the heart of effective supervision of offenders and young people is the quality of engagement by offender manager with the offender (or case manager with a young person), the heart of effective inspection of that work is the quality of engagement by inspectors with the offender managers and other people from the respondent organisations. It is in that sense that we aim to do more than simply ‘measure’ how well people are doing. What we aim to do in addition to that is to ‘sell improvement’.
13. *Improvement* is not as glamorous for many people as either innovations, initiatives or projects. But in a system in which large numbers of people are put through well-mapped processes every day the key need is that practitioners do the right thing with the right person in the right way and at the right time. And there needs to be a steady incremental improvement each year in the effectiveness with which this is done. It is a significant challenge for public servants to be able to provide a fair, consistent and effective service to large numbers of people in an individualised way, but that is what is required in the CJS. And that is the main focus of attention with both our Offender Management and our Youth Offending Team inspections. We look at all the small but significant behaviours that make a difference in making practice effective, and we aim to engage our respondents in focusing on how to improve those behaviours.
14. Our criteria, and the questions we ask, illustrate the quality of work we are looking for. When our inspection process works well it means that our respondents become more likely not only to see the nature and degree of any shortfall on their part – the performance ‘gap’ – but also to ‘buy’ the

idea of wanting to close that gap. Or, if they're already good, to improve still further. Of course we not only want them to buy *the idea* of improving, we want them to 'buy' *actually improving* in practice. Hence our inspection process aims not only to measure fairly and rigorously, but also to 'sell improvement'.

**Our evolving methodologies: -**

15. Thus we have noted the changes taking place in the world that we inspect and we have also outlined what we mean by 'selling improvement'. We now need to describe how our methodologies are evolving to meet the specific needs of some of our current and future inspection programmes.

• **- Offender management:**

16. Our methodologies for the evolving Offender Management Inspection (OMI) and YOT inspection programmes focus on what is actually delivered to offenders and young people under supervision. We measure the quality of assessments and planning, interventions, and initial outcomes, as a proxy variable for effectiveness. To do so we therefore seek evidence of how well each case is managed in terms of enforcement, likelihood of reoffending and *Risk of Harm*.

17. A strong principle of the methodology is that it focuses on services as delivered to the users by Probation staff, or by YOTs, or by any of the contracted providers. We keep to a minimum our assessment of performance factors which are already comprehensively monitored within the organisation, and we only seek to arrive at findings regarding the quality of management insofar as they relate closely to the quality of supervision being delivered in practice, as evidenced in our inspections.

18. We therefore plan to retain and improve our existing methodologies, but also to develop them so that they fulfil a clearly identified role in relation to the developing NOMS, YJB and to the wider CJS, and in the context of the new environment of commissioning. By this we mean that although Probation and YOTs are our core subject area, we are already committed to inspecting that work as 'whole processes' within the wider Criminal Justice System as a whole. We assess the effectiveness of the work increasingly as a contribution to the overall effectiveness of the CJS, in the context of other relevant government policies.

19. Hence, as we work with progressively much wider horizons than hitherto, we will continue to develop these and other inspection methodologies jointly with the other CJS inspectorates as we develop our jointly-owned Joint Inspection Programme. Part Two will illustrate how we are allocating our resources between the two tiers of our planned Inspections for 2007/8.

• **- Youth Offending and Children's Services:**

20. We have implemented a further development in the joint inspection of Youth Offending Teams and Services, which we lead (and which is in fact

now easily our biggest single area of work). The work of YOTs straddles both the criminal justice system, because it is about preventing reoffending, and the world of children's services, because YOTs also have wider duties to protect children and enhance their quality of life.

21. The YOT inspection programme is already closely co-ordinated with the current system of the Ofsted-led Joint Area Reviews (JARs) of integrated children's services in each area of England. Our own methodology still focuses core attention on work to reduce offending by the young people seen by YOTs, but our inspection criteria and scoring is also designed to contribute directly to that of the JARs. Equally significantly, our schedule of inspections is now closely aligned to the schedule of JARs.
22. At the same time, our criteria and scoring will also become congruent with the relevant inspection programmes and methodologies of our partner Inspectorates in Wales, where we inspect YOTs but where the arrangements for inspecting other children's services are different.

- **- Risk of Harm (RoH) work, including Serious Further Offence (SFO) reviews:**

23. The last two years have seen a vastly increased focus to our Risk of Harm (RoH) work. This included three high profile cases (one YOT, two Probation) where people under current supervision in the community have gone on to kill, but it can now include other bespoke inquiries at the request of the Secretary of State. Inevitably, with such inquiries we are working largely with the unpredictable. Our aim with these is to be both uncompromising but fair in our criticisms, and contribute to future learning both about the specific case and about wider lessons for the development of the management of both adult and young offenders. Furthermore, in other ways we aim to help identify what effective *Risk of Harm* work looks like, so that staff working with both adult and young offenders will know better how to avoid leaving their work exposed to potential future criticism.
24. This is hugely important work, which unusually for us is additionally very high profile work in the public eye. However, our aim has not been that this consideration should displace all other aspects of managing offenders – our aim has been to redress a balance, where our inspection reports were finding regular weaknesses. We will continue to emphasise the vital and difficult nature of *Risk of Harm* work to both NOMS and YOTs, but we will do so within the context of what they have to try to achieve with each offender or young person overall.
25. To this end, we have established a *Risk of Harm* thread within the Offender Management Inspections, so that we now provide with each inspection an assessment of the quality of this specific area of practice on its own. This not only focuses attention on this work but also does so within an appropriate overall context. We are exploring a comparable development in YOT inspections, and we are heartened to see the YJB responding to this issue both strategically and operationally.

**Our inspection criteria – a basis for self-assessment:**

26. One of the Government's principles for inspection is that they should provide a basis for self-assessment. Hence we aim for a shared understanding by all parties about 'what success looks like' in terms of good quality offender management, and the specific details of how it will be measured. This is conveyed by means of our Criteria for our OMI, YOT and other inspections, which are set out in open and transparent documents, with the principal ones published on our website.
27. Our inspection criteria have two key aims:
- In the short-term, to provide the basis by which each inspection defines what it is looking for
  - In the long-term, to provide a definition of quality (a definition of 'what success looks like') that our service delivery organisations can then look to, so that they know what they are aiming for. It is important that these definitions are maintained with reasonable consistency over a good length of time, because it takes time for an organisation to aim for them and achieve them. Hence we will aim to work with both NOMS and the YJB so that there is maximum possible overlap between their *performance standards* and our *inspection criteria*.

**Summary of review of 2006/2007:**

28. We will be providing a full review of our 2006/2007 programme in our Annual Report. In summary, however, our view is that on the whole 'Our Approach' as we outlined it in the last three Plans is still being well received, and we are on course to deliver during the year both the quality and the quantity of inspections that we promised. Furthermore we also planned with the future in mind. Accordingly, this Plan again contains as much *continuity in how we work* as it does *change in our working arrangements*, necessary with the advent of a formalised Joint Inspection Programme. Hence the broad policy direction we set out three years ago – 'Our Approach' – continues to apply.

**Our overall approach, in both solely-owned & jointly-owned inspections:**

29. Based on this thinking, we therefore still believe that our inspections do and will continue to make an identifiable contribution to steady long-term improvement in the quality and effectiveness of front-line practice with offenders and young people. We will therefore:
- provide, by means of our inspection criteria, a clear and consistent definition of what good quality management of offenders and young people looks like.
  - measure, fairly and accurately, the performance of each Probation area or other employing body and YOT or YOS in achieving this, and
  - both encourage and enable self-assessment by those organisations against our definition

30. By repeating such assessments, it will be possible both for us, and for the organisations themselves, to track improvements or otherwise in their performance over time. By paying attention to the way we engage with respondent organisations we aim to maximise the likelihood of them 'coming with us' down the path of pursuing steady continuous improvement in the quality of their management of offenders and young people. That is to say, we aim that they will 'buy (into)' *improvement*.

31. With this approach, what we therefore still do is:

<b>Help to Improve ...</b>	By maximising the likelihood of respondents 'coming with us' to pursue steady continuous improvement
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<b>... Effectiveness ...</b>	As measured by our inspection scores
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<b>... (in the) ...</b>	Probation and YOTs not only in their own right, but as contributors to the overall effectiveness of the whole CJS.
<b>... Criminal Justice System</b>	

32. This is the long-term approach we set out three years ago, and which we are now continuing, albeit under changing circumstances. In particular, by emphasising our aim to get respondents to come with us to pursue steady continuous improvement we consider that we still *sell improvement*.

**PART TWO: Our plan of work for 2007 – 2008**

33. The main new development for the year ahead is that our work needs to be divided into two 'tiers'. The solely-owned work is in the first tier, and appears only in this Plan. The jointly-owned work is in the second tier, and although we refer to this below too it also appears in the Joint Inspection Programme that belongs collectively to the five CJS Chief Inspectors.
34. Within this new two-tier approach, our needs for the year ahead are again to maintain and fulfil our core inspection commitments, to ensure that we are continuing to develop the new Joint Inspection Programme, and to implement our other commitments to Ministers about how we do our work.
35. Accordingly, our work for the coming year is now classified by the two tiers, and one supporting theme:
  - **A. Solely-owned inspection work:** Because we have been planning for three years for the 'future approach' to inspection, the great majority of our planned inspection work is in the *Jointly-owned* tier, and only a small minority is in this *Solely-owned* tier. This tier consists of the work that is specifically requested of this individual Inspectorate, either by the Secretary of State, or by bodies outside England & Wales, or by others.
  - **B. Jointly-owned inspection work (Joint Inspection Programme):** The distinctive point about the Joint Inspection Programme is that all the five CJS Chief Inspectors jointly own it. As we have noted in previous years, both the OMI and the YOT inspection programmes belong under this heading, as they both address one of the core 'whole processes' in the CJS i.e. Offender Management. Also in this tier belongs the prospect of new bespoke Thematic and other Inspections that focus on selected aspects of 'whole CJS processes'.
  - **C. Planning and managing future Inspection arrangements:** We will ensure, both on our own part, and in co-operation with others, that we explore all opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of arrangements for supporting Inspection activity.
36. Most of our resources are our people, and broadly speaking they can be divided into three groups: Inspection staff, support service staff, and managers. For us as an Inspectorate, the first group is our 'front line' – in the language of organisational theory these are the people who go out and directly deliver our service. They include for this purpose both our own salaried inspection staff and the inspectors whose services we 'purchase' (either in person or from their employing Inspectorate).
37. Our projections are that for the year ahead this combined pool of Inspection staff can provide in total about 44,000 'deployable hours' of service. This means that after deducting from their total contracted hours a number for what we call various 'overhead' activities we have 44,000 hours to deploy directly towards our planned activities for the coming year. Hence we project an allocation of these hours to each of the inspection programmes and other related work under the above two tiers of work–*Solely-owned* and *Jointly-owned* Inspections.

38. Each of these inspections and other work programmes are managed by a named Assistant Chief Inspector – either Liz Calderbank, Julie Fox, Alan MacDonald or Kate White. Support services for each programme (including information and ICT support) will be managed by Peter Ramell, who also supports the task of Andrew Bridges to lead the business management of HMI Probation as a whole.

**A. Solely-owned inspection work:**

39. This consists of the work that is specifically requested of this individual Inspectorate, either by the Secretary of State, by bodies outside England & Wales, or by others. It belongs under this heading because of its status as work specifically requested of this individual Inspectorate; thus it is independent of the strategic planning that relates to the inspection of 'whole CJS processes'.

- **Risk of Harm (RoH) inquiries, inc Independent Serious Further Offence (SFO) reviews:** These inquiries are in part 'on demand' items, but in addition we have been asked by NOMS this year to undertake eleven RoH Probation Area assessments by the end of June 2008. This will involve us undertaking 4,000 hours in the coming year. The work will be managed by Kate White.
- **Outside England & Wales:** We have contributed as invited to the first three years of inspection work planned by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate in Northern Ireland, and we are expecting a further assignment in the year ahead. We have also undertaken Probation inspections in Jersey and the Isle of Man, and there is a potential YOT inspection for 2007/8. We have allocated an initial 250 hours to this work, which will be led by Alan MacDonald.
- **Other work:** Periodically, we are asked to undertake other bespoke inquiries. We can only put our best projection on the probable demand, so we are assigning 250 hours to this, to be managed by Andrew Bridges directly.

**B. Jointly-owned inspection work (Joint Inspection Programme):**

40. This tier of work is set out more substantively in the Joint Inspection Programme (JIP) jointly-owned by the five CJS Chief Inspectors. Although the JIP for 2007/8 has had to be prepared with considerable speed, the aim is that a more measured and scheduled process can be devised and implemented in the coming year, including a formal consultation process, in order to draw up the JIP for 2008/9.

- **Youth Offending Team (YOT) inspection programme:** We are the lead Inspectorate among nine regulatory bodies that embarked in July 2003 on an innovative and complex programme to inspect all of the 150+ YOTs in England and Wales over a five-year period. Under the demands of co-ordinating the programme with the Joint Area Reviews in England, and the separate need to co-ordinate the schedule in Wales too we have allocated a total of 21,500 hours to undertaking 39 of these inspections this year. The programme will be led by Julie Fox.
- **Offender Management Inspection (OMI) programme:** The current three-year programme to examine the quality of (adult) offender management in each of the areas of the CJS started in May 2006. In 2007/8 we are scheduled to visit 13 Probation (Criminal Justice) Areas, including London, and with a re-inspection and other related work there will be a total of 17

reports in the year. The programme includes appropriate contributions from HMI Prisons and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (soon to be part of Ofsted). Participation by other Inspectorates is also being explored. We have allocated 11,000 hours to this programme, which is led by Kate White.

- **Thematic inspections:** A key element in the new Joint Inspection Programme is the design and delivery of a number of Thematic and other inspections that relate to 'whole CJS processes'. In addition, we made a significant contribution to the joint inspection of Children's Safeguards in 2004/5, and we expect to assist with a follow-up led by Ofsted, for which the planning has already started. We have allocated 4,750 hours for this work, which will be led in the first instance by Alan MacDonald.
- **Supporting People:** HMI Probation is a contracted partner to the Audit Commission's programme of inspections of the Supporting People arrangements managed by some 150 responsible local authorities in England. Our contribution is to focus on how effectively the partners in each area meet the *supported* housing needs of offenders. The schedule is rigorous but not labour intensive. The AC is planning for 34 inspections in the coming year. Using a combination of salaried and sessional Inspectors we have allocated 3,000 hours to this work, which will continue to be led by Alan MacDonald.

41. All of these inspections are examples of inspecting 'whole CJS processes' (or specific aspects of them), a method of inspecting we strongly advocated in March 2005 when we published *Inspecting the Criminal Justice System: Starting from First Principles*. The joint inspection of Enforcement, which we published on 4 April 2007, also provides a very good illustration of inspecting a special 'whole CJS process' involving co-ordinated working between the different CJS agencies at the post-sentence stage.

### **C. Planning and managing future inspection arrangements:**

42. All of the relevant Chief Inspectors have been asked to explore all opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of arrangements for supporting Inspection activity. We aim to explore the opportunities both as part of the approach agreed by all five CJS Inspectorates, and also on our own separate account. It is in everyone's interest that we work in a way that is as efficient and effective as possible.
43. We are again arranging to make available substantial additional management time to support this work, which is managed on our behalf by Peter Ramell. He is also leading a group, working jointly with his counterparts from the other CJS inspectorates, to examine the scope for sharing support and infrastructure services.

### **Our 'budget' of 44,000 Inspection Staff hours – how this will be spent:**

44. The 'pie chart' diagram projecting how we will spend our budget of 44k deployable hours will be spent is in the single-sheet Financial Annex to this Plan. Integral to each of our principal inspection programmes is a Quality Assurance strategy, with the aim of ensuring that we maintain and where possible improve the quality of our work, and resources have been allocated to those programmes for that purpose.

**Staffing:**

45. In recent years we have reprofiled both the establishment and the skillset of our Inspection and management staff. Our YOT and OMI programmes are labour intensive, for sound reasons, with a heavy emphasis on detailed assessment of the offender management practice experienced by identified samples of offenders and young people in each CJS area or YOT that we visit. Accordingly in 2004 we recruited a team of Practice Assessors, who assess the quality of offender management practice in individual cases under our main two area inspection programmes.
46. However, we still need the great majority of our Inspection staff to have maximum flexibility of deployment, and so all our remaining Inspection posts are for HM Inspectors. We have now also established a managed panel of sessional Associate Inspectors as a further contribution to increasing the flexibility of our resource deployment, as well as broadening the skills and experience on which we can draw (for example, two of the Associate Inspectors speak Welsh).
47. The other change we made in 2004 was to forgo the Deputy Chief Inspector post - the money was redeployed into the front-line Inspection establishment. This was a factor in making us better resourced to undertake the demanding programme already outlined, notably for the increased pace of the YOT inspections that started from September 2004.
48. As for our skillset, we continue to be positive without being complacent. We have said that our Inspection staff have to be skilful at both:
  - (a) Measuring accurately, on the basis of a fair assessment of the evidence, and
  - (b) Engaging well with the respondent, to maximise the likelihood of enabling performance improvement – selling improvementWe will review our practice, and ensure that our Inspection and management staff continue to develop their skills in both these areas.
49. In relation to the second point (b), we are developing further a culture whereby the feedback from the people we inspect is shared with the relevant Inspection staff so that we can consider opportunities to improve our practice where appropriate.
50. This latter aspect is relevant to our support service staff too. Every member of HMI Probation staff can have an impact on the organisations we inspect by behaving constructively and by the quality of the way we engage with them. Hence we place a high importance on the interpersonal and influencing abilities of all our staff.
51. However, our support services staff include colleagues who are also skilled at administration, information and ICT management, finance, publications and other relevant areas. They will continue to be located as they are now, with the majority in our Manchester premises in Trafford House. But the increased pace and intensity of our inspection programmes over the last three years is putting a strain on our support services provision, and we are reviewing how best to organise this, both for ourselves and as part of our newly-developing joint inspection arrangements.

52. We also have in mind that some additional work on the management of support and infrastructure services will arise during 2007/08 as a result of our prospective move from the Home Office to the new Ministry of Justice.
53. Peter Ramell manages our support services, and he and his team also aim to identify and meet the corporate and individual skill development needs of all our staff. Three particular areas of staff development, among others, continue to receive our attention:
- ◆ **Diversity:** We aim to integrate the best principles of diversity into the management of our staff, as well as into our inspection practice. We devise and implement a separate annual plan for this purpose.
  - ◆ **Project Management:** We have recognised the importance of project management as an essential skill that enables us to devise new programmes, and revise old ones, while we continue to implement existing commitments. Therefore we now work broadly to Prince2 methodology, we have identified Andy Bonny as our Project Manager, and we have trained other staff to work more effectively with him.
  - ◆ **Report design:** We have been taking the opportunity to undertake a rethink about what our reports should look like. Shorter, plainer, crisper and more clearly presented reports are likely to be appreciated by Ministers and other readers, we believe, and each new or revised programme enables us to plan to move further in that direction.

(We have also decided to revise our logo, so that it communicates more clearly who we are)

54. Finally, we note that our staff have just come through a three-year period in which they have been expecting major organisational change. Our aim has been throughout that all our staff should be able to experience that we are delivering our programme of work effectively during each year, at the same time as we have been preparing positively for the future too. Our future is now as a separate Inspectorate after all, but the new requirements from Ministers continue to make this look like a rapidly changing picture. Hence much of our work with our own staff will need to continue largely as before, since that is the best platform that we can have, both collectively and individually, for making a success of ourselves in that future world.

**Summary:**

55. By the end of March 2008, we will have completed our schedule of inspections, including the new Joint inspection Programme, on time, to budget and to a good standard. In doing so, we will have both maintained and developed our continuing long-term contribution to improving effective work with offenders and young people.

**Andrew Bridges**  
**HM Chief Inspector of Probation**  
**30 March 2007**

**APPENDICES (reference material):**

**HM Inspectorate of Probation: statement of purpose**

HM Inspectorate of Probation is an independent Inspectorate, funded by the Home Office and reporting directly to the Home Secretary. Our purpose is to:

- report to the Home Secretary on the effectiveness of work with individual offenders, children and young people aimed at reducing reoffending and protecting the public, whoever undertakes this work under the auspices of the National Offender Management Service or the Youth Justice Board
- report on the effectiveness of the arrangements for this work, working with other Inspectorates as necessary
- contribute to improved performance by the organisations we inspect
- contribute to sound policy and effective service delivery, especially in public protection, by providing advice and disseminating good practice, based on inspection findings, to Ministers, officials, managers and practitioners
- promote actively race equality and wider diversity issues, especially in the organisations we inspect
- contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System, particularly through joint work with other inspectorates.

Our annual Plan sets out our work for the year. It is agreed between the Home Secretary and HM Chief Inspector and is published on our website.

**Home Office Objectives**

HMI Probation contributes to the achievement of the overall Home Office objective of protecting the public, and particularly to the achievement of Home Office objective 5:

“Managing offenders to protect the public and to reduce reoffending”

We also contribute to the achievement of objective 2 (cutting crime, particularly violent and drug-related crime) and of objective 4 (rebalancing the criminal justice system in favour of the law-abiding majority and the victim), and to other relevant CJS and Children’s Services objectives.

**HMI Probation Code of Practice**

While carrying out our work we aim in particular to follow the Government’s ten principles of inspection in the public sector, namely that inspection should:

- have the purpose of improving the service inspected
- focus on outcomes
- have a user perspective
- be proportionate to risk
- encourage rigorous self-assessment by the managers of the service inspected
- use impartial evidence
- disclose the criteria used to form judgements
- show openness about inspection processes
- have regard to value for money
- continually learn from experience

To achieve our purposes and meet these principles, we aim to:

- work in an honest, professional, fair and polite way

- report and publish inspection findings and recommendations for improvement in good time and to a good standard
- promote race equality and wider attention to diversity in all aspects of our work, including within our own employment practices and organisational processes
- minimise the amount of extra work arising for Probation Areas or Youth Offending Teams as a result of the inspection process.

While carrying out our work we are mindful of Ministerial priorities and the Strategic Plan for the Criminal Justice System. We work closely with other criminal justice Inspectorates through the Criminal Justice Chief Inspectors' Group, and also with Inspectorates involved with work with young people. In addition, through a Probation Inspection and Audit Forum, we work closely with the Audit Commission, the National Audit Office and the Home Office Audit and Assurance Unit.

### **Government's Policy on Inspection in the Public Service: July 2003**

We took note of the Government's ten principles of inspection, published in *Inspecting for Improvement* in July 2003. These place certain broad expectations on inspection providers and on the departments sponsoring them, and as indicated we have also built them into our Code of Practice. We give account of our approach to implementing these ten principles as below:

1. ***The purpose of improvement.*** *There should be an explicit concern on the part of inspectors to contribute to the improvement of the service being inspected. This should guide the focus, method, reporting and follow-up of inspection. In framing recommendations, an inspector should recognise good performance and address any failure appropriately. Inspection should aim to generate data and intelligence that enable departments more quickly to calibrate the progress of reform in their sectors and make appropriate adjustments.*

We aim to achieve this, not only by measuring fairly against open criteria, but also by our commitment to behaviour that 'maximises the likelihood' that respondents will come with us on the path to continually improving their performance.

2. ***A focus on outcomes,*** *which means considering service delivery to the end users of the services rather than concentrating on internal management arrangements.*

Our inspection methodology for both OMI and YOT inspections focuses on what has been delivered to the offender or young person (primarily in terms of Quality of Assessment and planning, Interventions and initial Outcomes).

3. ***A user perspective.*** *Inspection should be delivered with a clear focus on the experience of those for whom the service is provided, as well as on internal management arrangements. Inspection should encourage innovation and diversity and not be solely compliance-based.*

A significant element within our methodology is to interview and listen to the perspective of the offender or young person, and of victims and parents.

4. ***Proportionate to risk.*** *Over time, inspectors should modify the extent of future inspection according to the quality of performance by the service provider. For example, good performers should undergo less inspection, so that resources are concentrated on areas of greatest risk.*

We do not support the idea of offering 'inspection holidays' as a way of implementing this principle, but we strongly support the idea of varying intensity of inspection according to identified need. Hence we are conducting re-inspections only where an employing body falls significantly short of the required criteria. In the new OMI programme we are focusing re-inspections solely on *Risk of Harm* work. In the case of YOTs, the programme of interviews with managers and staff is tailored to the issues identified from our analysis of the cases examined during the first fieldwork week.

5. *Inspectors should encourage rigorous **self-assessment** by managers. Inspectors should challenge the outcomes of managers' self-assessments, take them into account in the inspection process, and provide a comparative benchmark.*

We do this partly by asking managers to submit evidence in advance of the inspection, to demonstrate that they have met the required criteria. Furthermore, the criteria and guidance published on our website enable any practitioner or manager to assess his or her own practice at any time. Finally, in a long-planned development, we aim to make our Risk of Harm inspection module available for self-assessment purposes by the end of 2007/8.

6. *Inspectors should use **impartial evidence**. Evidence, whether quantitative or qualitative, should be validated and credible.*

Evidence has to consist of more than hearsay, and our Guidance provides a framework for decision-making to enable similar evidence to be interpreted consistently, even by different inspection staff in different locations.

7. *Inspectors should disclose the **criteria** they use to form judgements.*

Our inspection criteria are published on our website.

8. *Inspectors should be **open** about their processes, willing to take any complaints seriously, and able to demonstrate a robust quality assurance process.*

Our behaviour is such that we are able to explain at the time the reasoning for the scores we have awarded, and respond to questions to that effect. We have responded to questions, concerns and two formal complaints that have been put to us in the last year. We also take the initiative, through our Quality Assurance strategy, in actively reviewing aspects of our methodology, so that we can be as confident as possible that our judgements are fair and accurate.

9. *Inspection should have regard to **value for money**, their own included:*

- *Inspection looks to see that there are arrangements in place to deliver the service efficiently and effectively.*
- *Inspection itself should be able to demonstrate it delivers benefits commensurate with its cost, including the cost to those inspected.*
- *Inspectorates should ensure that they have the capacity to work together on cross-cutting issues, in the interests of greater cost effectiveness and reducing the burden on those inspected.*

We assess whether the interventions with each offender are proportionate both to cost and to the offender's individual need. We recognise that our methodology is (necessarily) labour intensive, and in March 2005 we published a case study that analyses both the benefits and the costs of an illustrative inspection, including the costs to the inspected body. We not only undertake joint inspections with other CJ inspectorates, but we also co-ordinate our other work to avoid, for example, rapidly successive visits by ourselves and another scrutiny body whenever possible. We co-operate closely with Ofsted and the Audit Commission because of our YOT inspection work, and we also maintain a databank for the Probation Inspection and Audit Forum to co-ordinate with Audit bodies our visits to Probation Areas.

10. *Inspectors should **continually learn** from experience, in order to become increasingly effective. This can be done by assessing their own impact on the service provider's ability to improve and by sharing best practice with other inspectors.*

We seek feedback on our individual interviews with the staff of inspected bodies, which we use to review and renew both our corporate and individual skills and methods. We also take feedback at regional events, and have received corporate feedback on our Probation inspections as a whole, collected by the Probation Boards' Association. By these and other means we monitor our own impact on our inspected bodies, and keep our own practice under regular review, both as part of our normal programme, but also in joint work with other inspectorates.

### Financial Annex to HMI Probation Plan 2007/08: Summary of Activities

The first box below divides our work into 'Overheads' and 7 other 'Activities'. Each Activity has an allocation of 'Deployable hours', and some also have an allocation for fees. Deployable hours are the non-overhead hours of Inspection staff allocated to each Activity; they carry with them the relevant proportion of Management and Support service staff hours. Hence it can be seen how the allocations of Deployable hours, and of Fees, lead to the projected production of c.03 reports in 2007/08 (but these are of a very wide range of scope indeed).

Code	Overheads	YOT Insp	OMI	Joint CJ	Supp Pple	Risk of Harm	Outo Eng&W	Othr	TOTAL
Lead mgr	OVHD	YOTI	OMIC	THCJ	SUPP	INRV	OIEW	OTHR	
INPUTS:	AMB	JF	KW	AM	AM	KW	AM	AMB	
Hrs 'bought'	Hrs not	5,000	1,000	750	1,250	1,000	-	-	9,000 hrs
Hrs Budget	deployed	16,500	10,000	4,000	1,000	3,000	250	250	35,000 hrs
Total hrs		21,500	11,000	4,750	2,250	4,000	250	250	44,000 hrs
OUTPUTS:		Joint Insp Prog	Joint Insp Prog	Joint Insp Prog	Joint Insp Prog	Sole	Sole	Sole	
No: Insp		39	17	3	34	8	1	1	103

<sup>13</sup> we lead; we contribute to many others

### HMI Probation Budget 2007 - 2008: Summary

Allocated budget for 2007/8 £3,485,000  
 Probable income from Audit Comm £165,000  
 Possible income from outside England & Wales £5,000  
 Possible income from NOMS £100,000  
 Projected total income £270,000

#### PROJECTED TOTAL HMI PROBATION BUDGET

Total cost of HMI Probation Managers £540,000  
 Total cost of Inspection staff £1,600,000  
 Total cost of Support Service staff £453,000  
 Fee paid staff (variations in costs per hour) £2,593,000  
 YOTT 3000 hrs from Orsted & Healthcare Commission: £68,000  
 YOTTI 600 hrs from Estyn & Wales SSI: £21,500  
 All other work by Panel of Associate Inspectors £234,500  
**Total Fees: (for c9k hrs) £324,000**  
**PROJECTED TOTAL HMI PROBATION PAY COSTS £2,917,000**

Accommodation (inc fuel, utilities) - Trafford House £133,000  
 IT services £48,000  
 Stationery & printing, inc postage & dispatch £47,000  
 Hospitality & catering £8,000  
 Telecoms, Voice etc £12,000  
 Training £45,000  
 Travel & Subsistence £500,000  
 Promotion & Development (OCE) £45,000

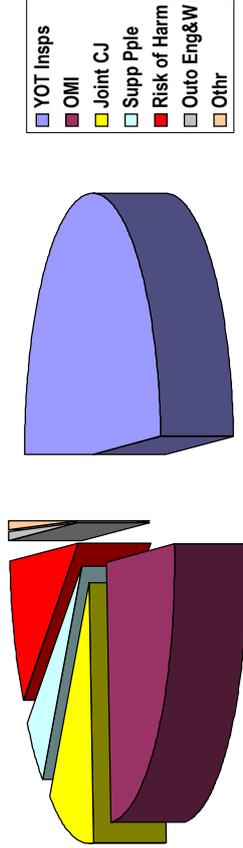
#### PROJECTED TOTAL HMI PROBATION NON-PAY COSTS

£838,000

#### PROJECTED TOTAL EXPENDITURE

£3,755,000

### Allocation of 'Total deployable hours'



**Notes:** YOT inspections, using 21,500 hours, constitute 48% of the Total deployable hours  
 Offender Management Inspections, using 11,000 hours, constitute 25%  
 Joint CJ reports, using 4,750 hours, constitute 11%  
 The four activities shaded green above constitute our contribution to the jointly-owned Joint Inspection Programme, and total 85% of our work for 2007/8

#### Unit costs:

HMI Probation uses the Absorption method to calculate unit costs.  
 Each Deployable hour carries its share of the overheads for the Inspectorate as a whole.  
 Hence the total cost per person-hour when inspecting can be calculated by dividing:  
 Total Planned Expenditure 3,755,000  
 Total deployable hours 44,000  
 to give a **Total cost per 'inspection hour' per person of £85.34 per hr**