

Continuous Improvement Programme

Helping forces make sustainable improvements to service delivery

Overview

The NPIA's Continuous Improvement Programme has three key objectives:

- Significantly improved performance outcomes
- Strengthened staff business skills and levels of staff engagement; and
- The release of resources for reinvestment in priority areas or to reduce costs.

The work has demonstrated:

- 30% plus productivity uplift is achievable in short timescales
- Simultaneous performance uplift whilst reducing cost is achievable
- Transformational change is achievable without huge infrastructure or other significant investment
- The service can build the skills to deliver benefits, sustain improvements and repeat the application to realise further benefits in performance uplift, reduced cost and customer satisfaction
- The approach is suitable for a wide range of policing functions.

The approach uses business process improvement methodology, including Quest (developed as part of the Home Office's programme to support forces making savings through process improvement), to help forces make sustainable changes and improvements to their service delivery. This improves the service they offer to the public as well as reducing the cost of providing it. The programme offers a central reference point for continuous improvement across the service; building capability to deliver and support change programmes,

developing a POLKA network for sharing lessons learnt and noteworthy practice, as well as a regional network of practitioners to exchange experiences and potentially share resources.

Continuous Improvement has traditionally focused on frontline activities such as incident management, crime recording and investigation, defendant management and patrol and proactive services. The approach has also been applied to mid and back office functions, generating similar improvements and cost savings in these environments.

The approach has diversified with the availability of additional supplier support, procured through a Home Office contract, and a focus to build and accelerate change capability to transformational change programmes aligned to sustained change capability and infrastructure build.

The process examines and improves the entire frontline operation; starting from the customer's perspective and working back through all related aspects. It considers the outputs and interdependencies while engaging with frontline staff to understand their roles in the process; with the focus to target all available effort on effective activities and eliminate unnecessary effort. It identifies how to provide the same or better level of service with fewer resources, through getting it right first time and measuring qualitative rather than merely quantitative activity.

The transformational change programme exposes and confronts many of the cultural barriers and capability gaps which block efficient and effective service delivery.

What will be achieved?

Continuous Improvement will increase productivity and performance, improving customer service and public satisfaction while making sustainable cost savings.

Benefits of the programme include cashable savings, but these are not the only outcome. Consequences of the approach include more engaged staff, reduced bureaucracy and increased capacity. By ensuring the force has the right people with the right skills and behaviours, by needing less people, or through more efficient deployment of staff and other resources, savings can be made.

The focus on capability building will ensure improvements can be sustained and change capacity is enhanced to realise new benefits across business functions.

What does the programme offer?

- Continuous improvement provides a structured approach for long term sustainable changes that make a positive difference to performance and culture.
- It improves the quality and performance of the service provided to the public while helping to reduce costs and ensure better value for money.
- The NPJA manages the programme, helping the police service to build up the ability and the capacity to deliver continuous improvement internally, reducing the need for external consultancy support.

How does it impact forces?

Continuous Improvement challenges and improves the way the service operates. It takes a long term view, simplifying end-to-end functions and processes, stripping out waste and unnecessary bureaucracy, whilst developing measures and understanding of the contribution and impact of everyone's role towards productive service outcomes. Continuous Improvement also makes sure managers are managing, leaders are leading, and staff understand and are engaged in delivering the expected output, both in terms of improved performance and satisfaction at reduced cost. The programme builds the capability to sustain improvements and repeat the process in other business areas to realise benefits.

Who are you working with?

The Home Office has procured supplier support on behalf of the service from management consultants KPMG and PA/Tribal at reduced cost. This enables forces or regions to access supplier support through the contract without recourse to any further procurement effort.

How will you measure success?

Suppliers are contracted to achieve the following success criteria:

- Minimum £-denominated return on investment (ROI) by an agreed elapsed time, judged by predefined hallmarks
- Measurable, positive impact on key operational policing outputs, within a range agreed by the chief officer team
- Clarity about where savings are made and how they are used, in a way that would withstand audit scrutiny
- A quantified understanding of the levels of staff engagement and assessment of how the programme has and will affect these, agreed with the chief officer team
- Effective, explicit local senior sponsorship and BCU leadership focused on desired behavioural norms and planned actions
- Tangible evidence of Continuous Improvement, demonstrated in a resourced, self-reinforcing programme at the local level.

Where do I get more information?

Forces can access supplier supported Continuous Improvement via the NPJA or Home Office.

For more information, please contact:
vfm@npja.pnn.police.uk

Or go to:
www.npia.police.uk/continuousimprovement