



**Hampshire Constabulary
Strategy for Special Constables
2011-2013**

Version Control

Version	Date Issued	Distribution/Comments
1.0	December 2010	Draft Strategy Distributed to key stakeholders
	26 January 2011	Draft Strategy submitted to ACC DANN

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Introduction

This strategy sets out how the Constabulary aims to enhance the development of Hampshire's Special Constables to fulfil the vision of being an integrated and valued part of policing teams; equipped and empowered to support policing in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. While continuing to greatly value the commitment of Career Specials, this strategy also acknowledges that in the future one of the primary recruitment pathways to the Regular force will be from the ranks of our Special Constables. The Specials' Police, Law and Community pre-joining qualification will enhance the initial training received by Specials and assist those officers who wish to develop their career towards joining the regular force.

Context

Hampshire Constabulary has a long and successful history of having an integrated Special Constabulary supporting the work of regular officers. There is a growing recognition nationally and within Hampshire that the ethos of supporting communities within society through volunteering is here to stay, particularly by our Special Constables who epitomise our Force values:

Common sense and sound judgment

Act with integrity, courage and compassion

Respect people and keep our promises

Experiences are used to learn and improve

In the immediate future the Force faces the dual challenge of supporting the Policing of the 2012 Olympics while remaining vigilant in the face of the threat posed by international terrorism. It is the intention to enhance the recruitment, retention and deployment of Specials to enable them to play a key role in supporting the Force during this demanding time and into the future.

Executive Summary

This Strategy, while recognising the limitations on demands that can reasonably be placed upon volunteers, acknowledges that Special Constables play a key role in crime reduction, detection and incident response. By providing a visible presence Specials help to, reduce the fear of crime and promote confidence within communities. Clearly defined Performance Management measures and Leadership training are being instituted with the aim of placing Hampshire Constabulary's Special Constables in the top quartile nationally with regard to key identified value indicators. Dedicated Human Resources support, valuing and training of staff is the key to ensuring that volunteer policing becomes business as usual.

The vision behind this strategy is that:

Our Special Constables are an integrated and valued part of policing teams; equipped and empowered to support policing in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

In particular, the work of our Special Constables must be directed toward fulfilling the Hampshire Constabulary objectives, which are:

- **Providing an excellent service**
- **An active presence in every neighbourhood**
- **Catching criminals and managing offenders**
- **Protecting our communities from crime and harm**
- **Making the most of our resources**
- **Equipping our team to deliver**

Key Aims

The eight key aims of this strategy, which link to the national strategy for the Special Constabulary are designed to achieve the vision and support the Constabulary's Objectives. They are:

1. Marketing: To promote the position of the Special Constabulary as an integrated part of the Policing fabric of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and demonstrate the value it adds to the work of the regular Force. To support the recruitment and retention of Special Constables.

2. Recruitment and Retention: To increase Hampshire Constabulary's establishment of Special Constables to 500 by December 2011, 550 by 1 April 2012 and 650 by 1 April 2013. To reduce the annual turnover rate of Specials leaving the organisation from 18% to 16% by April 2012 and 14% by 1 April 2013.

3. Training and Development: To provide a flexible, cost effective and well resourced training and development infrastructure promoting sustainable recruitment, retention and performance of Special Constables. To implement the adoption of a pre-join qualification for all Specials and facilitate a study programme for officers who view the Special Constabulary as a recruitment pathway for the regular force.

4. Leadership: To raise the profile of Special Constabulary supervisory ranks to Specials and regular colleagues and provide them with the skills to lead and manage effectively.

5. Deployment and Tasking: To effectively deploy Special Constables in a way that adds value to the work of the regular Force and that Specials find rewarding and challenging.

6. Performance Management: To place Hampshire Constabulary in the top quartile of forces nationally with regard to the key identified value indicators, these being:

- number of commitment hours per month,
- turnover rate,
- percentage of Special Constables with independent patrol status
- levels of satisfaction felt by Specials.

7. Finance and Resources: To provide appropriate budgetary support for the recruitment, training and resourcing requirements for Special Constables and ensure return on investment. To investigate the procurement of personally issued equipment to reflect role requirements.

8. HR and Professional Standards: To adopt flexible and well communicated HR processes to facilitate the efficient administration of the Special Constabulary and promote inclusionary practices.

Strategy Objectives

1. Marketing and Communications.

Overview - The July 2010 National Special Constabulary Recruitment Marketing and Retention Surveys suggest that to retain their Special Constables forces should recognise their contribution and improve communication.

One of the top five internal marketing tools was inclusion in the Policing plan and the Force commitment to the Special Constabulary is reflected in Hampshire's current Plan. The gap analysis between National and Hampshire practices recommends that forces adopt a marketing strategy for Specials. The Hampshire Constabulary Special Constables staff survey 2010 revealed that while 73.8% of Specials felt valued or very valued by the organization, 31.3% did not feel that issues that affected them were clearly communicated. The culture of the Constabulary does not yet fully embrace the view of Special Constables as an integrated part of the Policing fabric of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

- 1.1** To formulate and publish a marketing and communications strategy for Special Constables by 1 April 2011.

- 1.2** To develop and implement initiatives to improve internal Communication for the Special Constabulary to promote a sense of being valued. To achieve a figure of 80% of all Specials who say they feel valued or very valued by the organisation by 1 April 2013.

2. Recruitment & Retention

Overview – It is the intention to substantially enlarge the establishment of Special Constables within Hampshire throughout the life of this Strategy. The establishment may, however, decline in the medium term if Specials leave to join the Regular force when regular recruitment resumes. Hampshire Constabulary also aims to increase the number of Police Staff who are Special Constables through the promotion of Employer Supported Policing (ESP). In 2010 the ACPO team agreed to increase the number of hours that we support our staff in their work as ESP Specials to 8 per month. To achieve a significant increase in the numbers of Specials, it will be necessary to recruit in excess of the current level of around 100 officers per year, and to significantly reduce turnover. There is currently an approximate 18% annual turnover rate of Special Constables leaving the organisation completely and not, for example, joining the Regular Force.

The practice of holding recruitment assessment processes already reflects National protocols. The adoption of a pre-employment qualification will also enhance cost-effectiveness.

2.1 To increase Hampshire Constabulary's establishment of Special Constables to

- 500 by December 2011,
- 550 by 1 April 2012 and
- 650 by 1 April 2013.

2.2 To implement the adoption of a cost effective pre-join qualification for Special Constables.

2.3 To reduce turnover rate of Special Constables leaving the organisation completely and not migrating to the regular force from the current level of 18% to

- 16% by 1 April 2012 and
- 14% by 1 April 2013

2.4 To ensure that the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic Special Constables equates to at least 2.5% of the overall establishment and to strive to increase this figure by positive action.

3. Training and Development

Overview - The Report of Findings on the July 2010 National Special Constabulary Recruitment Marketing and Retention Surveys revealed that 100 per cent of all respondents stated that continuous training and development is extremely important, very important or fairly important to them and 80% wanted more training.

It is recognised that Special Constables broadly fall into two categories; the majority 'career' Specials and those who wish to use their experience to assist in an application to the regular force.

3.1 To implement the adoption of the Gateway Course for Special Constables as a cost effective pre-join process to expedite the training and development of Special Constables.

3.2 To offer Special Constables the opportunity of participating in a study programme designed to facilitate both their career development as a Special and recruitment to the Regular force for those who wish to do so.

3.3 To contribute toward achieving the milestone of 50% of Special Constables attaining independent patrol status within one year's length of service from appointment by 1 April 2013.

4. Leadership

Overview – Effective leadership is essential to ensure that the Vision for Special Constables within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is realised. The Report of Findings on the July 2010 Special Constabulary Recruitment Marketing and Retention Surveys suggests that in order to retain their Special Constables, forces should provide effective management and ensure supervisors have the skills to lead. The 2010 Survey of Hampshire's Special Constables revealed that 10% of Specials could not identify who their Section and Divisional Officers were. To date, Hampshire's Special Constabulary has only partially adopted the practice of rank structures and titles mirroring those of the regular force.

- 4.1** To complete the delivery of Leadership Training for all Divisional Officers and Section Officers by 1 April 2012.

- 4.2** To continue to monitor whether national trends are developing for the adoption of a rank structure which broadly mirrors that of the regular force and evaluate Hampshire practises in the light of this.

- 4.3** To review the adoption of Assistant Chief Specials Officer appointments and produce recommendations for expansion, retraction or consolidation of the Special Constabulary rank structure by 1 April 2012.

- 4.4** To continue to improve the visibility of supervisory ranks through internal marketing and involvement in operational planning.

5. Deployment & Tasking

Overview - This Strategy, while recognising the limitations on demands that can reasonably be placed upon volunteers, acknowledges that Special Constables play a key role in crime reduction, detection, and incident response. By providing a visible presence Specials help to, reduce the fear of crime and promote confidence within communities. In addition, the Hampshire Special Constabulary Survey 2010 revealed that Specials would feel more valued and therefore inclined to remain within their organisation if they were utilised more effectively and in a variety of roles.

It was also felt that communication was lacking between regular and Special Constabulary supervisors in relation to tasking and deployment. This had a residual effect of diminishing regard for the Special Constabulary leadership. The migration of Special Constables' duties onto CARM is progressing, which will facilitate effective tasking and deployment.

5.1 To implement the use of CARM 3 to forecast availability of and record duty hours for all Special Constables by 1 April 2011.

5.2 To develop and implement processes to assist with co-ordinated tasking and deployment for Special Constables on each district by 1 April 2012.

5.3 To continue to develop a greater diversity of roles for Special Constables.

6. Performance Management

Overview – The key to establishing the worth of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight’s establishment of Special Constables is the monitoring of key Primary performance criteria, which are included in this section of the strategy. The development of a balanced scorecard following best practice is essential.

6.1 Total Establishment

Overview – The following Recruitment and Retention targets for Hampshire’s Special Constables have been agreed in order to enable our Special to play a greater role in the policing of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

	Current	Target 01/12/2011	Target 01/04/2012	Target 01/04/2013
Establishment	460	500	550	650
Turnover Rate	Current 18%		16%	14%

6.2. Total Commitment Hours.

Overview - While it is desirable to increase the total establishment of Special Constables, working toward achieving the expected minimum 16 hours figure will provide greater return on investment without placing additional strain upon the training infrastructure.

Training time, which evidences a commitment to professional development, should be recognised. Therefore, in a change to previous practises, future calculations will discount travelling time but include training time in the monthly total of Commitment hours. Special Constabulary supervisors are expected to ensure that their staff balance their commitment hours between training and operational time.

Target Total Commitment Hours Over a 6 Month Period		
1/4/2010 – 30/09/2010	31/03/2011	31/09/2012
43,648	53,000	62,000
Target Monthly Commitment Hours. (National Expected Average of 16 Hours per month to ensure Return on Investment).		
1/4/2010 – 30/09/2010	01/04/2011	01/04/2012
11	12	16

These targets may require revision, once the impact of the newly implemented

methods of calculating and recording hours on CARM has been evaluated.

6.3 Percentage of Independent Special Constables.

Overview - Currently, the percentage of Special Constables having attained independent patrol status is 40.4%. Higher numbers of Specials able to patrol independently will positively impact upon both the operational effectiveness of officers and their confidence levels.

Target Percentage of Special Constables attaining independent patrol status after one year's service.		
Current	01/04/2012	01/04/2013
40.4%	45%	50%

6.4 Levels of Satisfaction.

Overview - Data extracted from the July survey of Special Constables in Hampshire revealed that 73.8% of Special Constables felt valued or very valued by the Force.

- To increase the percentage of Special Constables who feel valued or very valued by the Force to 80% by 1 April 2013.

6.5 Average Length of Service

The average career length of our Special Constables is 4 years. It is unknown whether the length of service of officers who leave the Special Constabulary is significantly higher than, consistent with or lower than the average career length.

It is the intention to monitor career length as part of the exit interview process to establish whether the apparent average length of service is being impacted upward by longer serving officers and to investigate factors affecting retention.

7. Finance & Resources

Overview - Success in the drive to recruit greater numbers of Special Constables inevitably generates associated costs in Training, Uniform and equipment support. Hampshire's Special Constables are already well equipped with regard to training, communications and protective equipment and work is progressing with regard equipment appropriate to other specialist roles. The costs associated with procuring the Gateway Course for Special Constables are likely to realise a significant return on investment. It is estimated that adopting Gateway and Regular officers Police Law and Community (PLC) courses will deliver cost savings of up to 70% when compared to the current method of initial training

7.1 Training

- To support the implementation of the Gateway Programme within the Special Constabulary training budget.
- To investigate the potential cost savings of amalgamating some areas of training for regulars and specials; for example First Aid Training & Officer Safety Training. This will allow Specials to access training at times other than weekends, providing greater flexibility.

7.2 Equipment

- To progress the retrieval and redistribution of equipment which has been issued to Special Constables but which is not currently being utilised.
- To investigate the feasibility of issuing cycle equipment to appropriately trained Special Constables performing Safer Neighbourhood activities.
- To investigate the feasibility of issuing fast wrap equipment to appropriately trained Special Constables.

8. Human Resources and Professional Standards

Overview – Performance and retention rates for Hampshire’s Special Constables are inevitably underpinned by robust, transparent HR processes. Most Special Constables perform their duties outside the working hours of HR professionals. Therefore, it is imperative that Special Constabulary supervisors are provided with support and access to resources to achieve a consistency of approach.

A cohesive approach to HR arrangements for Specials is imperative and work is progressing to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are in place. Hampshire’s Special Constables are subject to the provisions of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2008 which set out the standards of Police behaviour and the Police (Performance) Regulations 2008 which relates to issues of unsatisfactory performance and attendance. Special Constables who incur injury or illness while on duty now benefit from the support of the Force Occupational Health Department to reflect the value placed on commitment made by our volunteers.

8.1 The adoption of cohesive shared HR arrangements for Special Constables between the Human Resources Service Centre and the Special Constabulary Co-Ordinators by 1 April 2012.

8.2 The adoption of a Leave of Absence Policy for Special Constables by 1 April 2011.

8.3 The establishment of a nominated Single Point Of Contact within the Professional Standards department in relation to Special Constables and inclusion of a Professional Standards training module in the Special Constabulary supervisors training by 1 April 2012.

8.4 The adoption of a Performance Development Review document for Special Constables by 1 April 2012.

8.5 The inclusion of all Special Constables in the Job Related Fitness Assessment as part of their Officer Safety Training by 1 April 2012.