

Organisational infrastructure and capability

Delivering problem-oriented policing.

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Chief officers should ensure that officers, staff and volunteers have the organisational support (infrastructure) to deliver problem-oriented policing, as well as the relevant knowledge and skills (capability).

Essential elements include:

- providing specialist problem-solving and analytical support and advice, which should be available and accessible to all members of the force
- providing data and systems that facilitate problem-solving, which should be available and accessible to all members of the force
- providing opportunities to access and share good practice at force, regional, national and international levels
- ensuring that officers, staff and volunteers have access to learning and CPD opportunities related to problem-oriented policing
- providing clear, simple and accessible guidance

Chief officers should consider a multi-faceted approach to developing infrastructure and capability that best meets the requirements of their force. They should reflect on their force's ability to develop and/or align problem-solving skills, practice and processes, in order to successfully address their force's priorities and everyday business. Incorporating problem-oriented policing into force strategies will guide decision making in this area.

Evidence summary

Evidence highlights the importance of ensuring that officers, staff and volunteers have the capabilities to deliver and support a problem-oriented approach. Providing specialist support and tools, as well as access to subject matter and practitioner experts who provide continuous feedback on problem-solving activity, will assist effective implementation and can help to push problem-solving beyond neighbourhood policing teams.

Effective problem-solving is shown to be more evident where officers staff and volunteers have access to suitable analytical, data and systems support. Dedicated problem-solving systems can help to enable analysis and identify good practice.

Accessible training, guidance and examples of good practice are also required by staff to ensure effective problem-solving.

Infrastructure

Identifiable problem-solving tactical leads, advisors and analysts who understand how problem-solving works for the organisation – including the benefits associated with problem-oriented policing – can help officers, staff and volunteers to problem-solve effectively.

Specifically, they can:

- support officers and staff in applying problem-solving to a diverse range of functions and issues
- help to coordinate and prioritise problem-solving activity across the force
- monitor problem-solving activity to ensure that it is taking place, is effective and is evidence-based
- capture learning and ensure that it is available and accessible for future problem-solving
- contribute to incentivising activity and to sharing experiences and practice

Forces should also ensure that appropriate analytical support is available to help problem-solving specialists – as well as other officers and staff – to maximise the use of information sources and data, in order to inform all components of SARA.

Force practice examples

One force is implementing specialist problem-solving teams that work with frontline officers and staff. These teams provide bespoke assistance to practitioners, either with applying the problem-solving methodology in practice, or with extracting and analysing data.

Data for problem solving

Easy-to-use systems should be in place to inform and record problem-solving activity. Forces should consider how data from multiple sources (inside and outside of policing) can be accessed and used by officers and staff to inform problem-solving.

This can include automated data reports (for example, in relation to crime and incident rates involving repeat victims, offenders and locations), in addition to proactively using different data sources.

Consideration should also be given to developing a data strategy (what data sources are available), as well as a knowledge strategy (how data is used), in order to help problem-solving activity.

Force practice examples

Several forces are using locally developed analytical or off-the-shelf intelligence applications to produce routine analysis that shows officers and staff where, when and for whom high-demand problems are occurring.

These approaches are helpful even when basic and not live, as they still allow practitioners to work independently without outside expert help and to concentrate problem-solving activity.

Capability

Effective learning and CPD are needed to ensure that officers and staff understand, and can deliver, high-quality problem-solving.

Forces should consider developing blended approaches to learning and CPD. For example:

- providing brief inputs (one or two hours) that are suitable for all on basic problem-solving methods, delivered by senior champions or tactical advisors
- incorporating problem-solving into established training courses
- bite-size online inputs
- problem-solving workshops aimed at various levels of the organisation (for example, newly promoted sergeants, supervisors and senior leaders)
- learning events that focus on practical examples of using problem-solving approaches outside of the traditional neighbourhood policing issues
- refresher and ongoing CPD opportunities for all officers and staff to reflect effective problem-solving in the force

Chief officers should ensure that their officers, staff and volunteers have access to simple and clear guidance on how and when to problem-solve. Guidance should combine problem-solving approaches with practical examples of good problem-solving activity. Guidance should be

applicable, meaningful and proportionate to all officers and staff across the organisation. Different products may be required for different audiences and departments in the organisation.

Guidance can be made available as a bespoke product (for example, a beginners' guide to problem-solving) or incorporated into existing products and processes (such as advice on problem-solving being included within the PSP). Forces should consider making use of – or adapting – existing guidance that relates to problem-solving, rather than developing new products.

Forces should consider methods for ensuring that guidance and practice can be shared across the organisation. This may require establishing force repositories (systems) and/or networks (force leads, specialists and other interested parties).

Problem-solving advice and practice is also available and accessible at a regional and/or national level. Some of these national resources – for example, the [College of Policing practice bank](#) and the problem-solving community on Knowledge Hub – can also be used to share practice beyond the force. Officers and staff should be able to make use of force, regional and national resources to access and share problem-solving practice.

Supporting resources

- [Neighbourhood policing guidelines and supporting information](#)
- [Crime reduction toolkit: Problem-oriented policing](#)
- [Problem solving: Learning and development interim practice advice](#)
- [Implementing and sustaining problem-oriented policing: A guide](#)
- [Center for Problem-Oriented Policing](#)

Tags

Evidence-based policing