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Collaborating with university academics, a research training programme has been initiated to build a research culture and capacity within the Cyber Crime Team (CCT) and Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) of one of the largest police forces in the UK. An evidence-based approach is employed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of investigating cyber enabled crime. The needs assessment has been completed and areas of needs identified.

Aims

- Cybercrime is not exclusively a technical problem
- This research will analyse the cyber-investigation lifecycle:
  - from the experience of the public when reporting cybercrime, to the call taker, the attending officer, investigator, and the various support units,
  - to identify key knowledge gaps and needs in the policing of cyber enabled crime
- Deploy evidence-based solutions with the Police force
- Enable force personnel to engage in research

Stages of the project

- Perform needs analysis
  - Identify priority areas and projects

- Develop research & cyber investigation potential
  - Perform secondary research

- Facilitate research within HTCU
  - Engage in primary research

- Evaluation of the collaboration
  - Formally evaluate overall outcomes

- Dissemination
  - Organise conferences and publish papers

References


Abstract

- The needs assessment was conducted using:
  - Kaufman’s Organizational Elements Model (OEM), and SWOT
  - Individual and group interviews involving a wide range of police specialist units and strategic leads
- Academics are currently working with force personnel to perform secondary research

Areas of needs

- Training/ Knowledge
  - Raising awareness of cybercrime / digital evidence
  - Bespoke and evidence awareness training
  - Access to knowledge and training

- Procedures
  - Triage practices
  - Practices across districts
  - Action Fraud delays
  - Flagging of cyber cases

- Communication/ Structures
  - Communication between specialist units
  - Feedback loop with Action Fraud
  - Clarity of roles and units
  - Non-technical summaries in reports

- Software/ Hardware resources
  - Tools to support strategic focus
  - Standalone PCs
  - Automation of manual work

- Legal issues
  - Lack of clarity over RIPA application
  - Insufficient legal training

What next

- Academics and force personnel will:
  - jointly conduct primary research
  - explore ways to maximise the efficacy and efficiency of cyber investigations
- Postdoctoral research fellows and “research champions” will be embedded within the force
- Propose and evaluate process, practice and solutions based on the outcome of the Needs Assessment
- Train and equip the force to engage in research and professional development
- Dissemination of findings