



# Forensic Capability Network

## Quarterly report

Oct-Dec 2023

Welcome to FCN's latest quarterly report, here to keep our stakeholders updated on progress against our annual delivery plan. You'll find all the key activities we've progressed in the previous quarter. Please share, and send questions to [fcn@dorset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:fcn@dorset.pnn.police.uk)—and thank you for reading.

<b>1. Quality of forensic science &amp; accreditation compliance</b> (approx. 29%)	x4 onsite accreditation support visits completed in Q3 (comprised of x3 CSI and x1 SARC) totalling 22 year to date. <b>Complete</b>
	Quality Matters being published at least monthly. <b>Ongoing</b>
	Advice and guidance shared including FSR Code Declaration, Mitigation Guidance and first FAQs. <b>Ongoing</b>
	<a href="#">Validation awareness webpage</a> and <a href="#">video</a> finalised and ready for publication in Jan 24. <b>Complete</b>
	SARC next steps to support further readiness for accreditation and share lessons learnt. <b>Ongoing</b>
	Fire Investigation technical forum established and compliance survey conducted. Outline process map of FI activities has been developed for discussion with FSR and UKAS to identify validation requirements. <b>Complete</b>
	National working group for SARC Chemgene has produced a cleaning validation report, now at independent review stage. <b>Ongoing</b> .
	Performance framework data collection surveys for CSI activities, resource and cost of accreditation sent to all forces in Nov 23 for completion by Dec 23. <b>Ongoing</b> .
	Swab Out Crime project continued with further sampling events at University of Wolverhampton, and development of a postal option enabling home donations. <b>Ongoing</b> .

All about validation | FCN  
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# VALIDATION

## All about validation

Validation is a vital process for ensuring quality and building confidence. In Q3 we finalised a suite of awareness-raising materials including a new [video](#) and [webpage](#) ready for publication in January.

**Find out more at**  
[www.fcn.police.uk/validation](http://www.fcn.police.uk/validation)

<b>2. Digital forensics</b> (approx .16%)	<b>DF validation</b> working groups for phones/computers occurring quarterly, and ground truth data managed as BaU and shared with 66 organisations to date. <b>Ongoing</b>
	<b>Cell-site radio frequency</b> collaborative learning exercise timeline, funding and other requirements agreed with RFDUG. Exercise due Q4 as planned. <b>Ongoing</b>
	KPIs documented and DF risks assessed with Home Office and NPCC Digital Forensic Programme on DF operating model. <b>Complete</b>
	<b>DF apprenticeships</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 4 recruitment underway in the Met, Notts, NCA, SFO and West Yorks. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Draft Level 7 apprenticeship submitted to Institute of Apprenticeships. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• All six professional DF profiles live on College of Policing website. <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>
	AI research legislative and ethical frameworks in progress, slightly delayed and due to complete Q4. <b>Ongoing</b>



## Funding agreed

In December, NPCC agreed to fund FCN from its operating budget from April 2024 to the value of £2.8m. FCN was previously funded by reallocation of the Home Office police grant.

*"FCN has been an important part of the police family for several years now and this agreement cements that"*  
—NPCC Forensic Lead, CC Nick Dean

<b>3. Whole supply chain and marketplace reform</b> (approx. 26%)	<b>Forensic Marketplace Strategic Plan</b> - FCN facilitating on behalf of NPCC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 work packages re-established and project plan set-up. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Subject matter expert leads now in place for each work package. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Further in-person 2-day workshop planned for Jan 24</li> </ul>
	Pay benchmarking underway with CSI data arriving in Q3 for analysis in Q4. <b>Ongoing</b>
	Wellbeing wearables project in Leics completed Dec 23, report due Q4. <b>Complete</b>
	Ongoing support for Op Kettledrum and Tox Silver.
<b>4. NPCC support</b> (approx. 16%)	National landscape view of R&I in forensics developed and published on webpage with info on bid process and areas of interest. <b>Complete</b>
	National Control Strategy development delayed, but draft framework now built and due to be shared with forensic community for discussion in Q4. <b>Delayed.</b>
	Support to NPCC Forensic Portfolio Board and strategic boards. <b>Ongoing</b>
<b>5. CJ partners</b> (4%)	Criminal justice partnership workshop in October, with more planned in Q4. <b>Complete</b>

## Q4 upcoming highlights

<b>Performance framework</b> collation, analysis and reporting to take place.
<b>Cell-site Radio Frequency collaborative learning exercise</b> to complete in Q4.
<b>Wellbeing wearables</b> research report due.