The prospective detective: Developing the effective detective of the future

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Abstract

This study explored the challenges to ensuring detectives are effective in the future. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty experienced detectives from five different police services in Australia and New Zealand. A content analysis of the interviews identified four main challenges for the future – the retention and recruitment of detectives, the rapid growth of technology, training and on-going professional development, and accountability. The implications of these findings for having an effective and efficient detective workforce and developing practice relevant research agenda are discussed.

The world is changing and, if police detectives are to be effective, they must change with it. For instance globalisation, developments in science and technology, and changes to public expectations about policing may all impact on the efficacy of detectives. Police detectives are entrusted with the reactive, retrospective and proactive investigation of serious crime. A failure of detectives to adapt to change may result in failed investigations and prosecutions that leave the most dangerous criminals free to commit more harm. As the leading cause of wrongful convictions, errors in the investigation process may also result in the incarceration of innocent people (Gross et al., 2005) and, if the public become aware these failings, reduce public confidence in the police more generally (Innes, 2010). Understanding the future challenges for detectives also has important implications for academia and police. For academia, there is a scarcity of research about criminal investigation (Brodeur, 2010; Innes & Brookman, 2013). Identifying future challenges to detective work can help provide a platform for scholars to work with police in developing research agenda that produce a timely and valid foundation for practice. For police, forecasting these challenges is essential to informing evidence-based policy and practice that enables detectives to keep pace and investigate crime effectively. With these purposes in mind, we conducted the present study to explore the views of detectives in Australia and New Zealand about the challenges for ensuring detectives are effective in the future.

We are unaware of any empirical research that directly examines the future challenges to effective detective work. Commentators on the detective role suggest that the role is becoming more complex, current training is inadequate, and there is a growing need for professionalisation (Tong, 2009; Tong & Bowling, 2006; Williamson, Newburn, & Wright, 2007). Williamson et al. (2007) suggest that this perceived increase in complexity of the role is due to a greater reliance on intelligence, advances in scientific understandings about investigative interviewing and

forensics, and a move towards information driven investigative practices. Indeed, in his seminal work on homicide investigation, Innes (2003) describes detectives in the current age as 'information workers'.

Two studies, both conducted in England and Wales, may offer some insight into the challenges detectives face to be effective in the future. Smith & Flanagan (2000) explored the views of thirty managers of detectives (Senior Investigating Officers; SIO's) about the factors that may influence their future performance. SIO's expressed a variety of concerns some of which may also affect detectives. For example, a perceived downgrading of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) status due to less promotion opportunities, financial constraints limiting resource availability, increased public expectation of accountability, and increased professionalisation. Yet, whether these findings generalise to detectives not in management roles is unclear. Further, this study was conducted over ten years ago and new challenges may have arisen since this time.

More recently, to explore problems with recruiting and retaining detectives, Chatterton (2008) held 27 focus groups with a variety of officers ranking from Constable to Inspector. He found that there were concerns about a loss of skilled and experienced detectives, the growth of specialist squads depleting the ability of generalist squads to attend to serious crime, under-resourcing, and a lack of recognition from senior management about the contribution detectives make. This study, which was conducted on behalf of the Police Federation, is helpful for understanding employment concerns but does not help with identifying other potential future challenges. There is also the possibility that the issues identified by Chatterton (2008) and Smith and Flanagan (2001) are specific to England and Wales. No research has gone beyond those borders.

Before discussing the present study, it is important to acknowledge that defining what is 'effective' detective work is in itself a problematic construct. While studies have attempted to define and reliably measure effectiveness, the complexity of detective work suggests one simple definition of effectiveness will not do (e.g., Cohen & Chaiken, 1987; Greenwood, Chaiken & Petersilia, 1977; Maguire, Noaks, Hobbs, & Brearley, 1991). More recently, Brookman and Innes (2013) empirical study in England and Wales about success in homicide investigations suggest effectiveness, in these types of cases at least, may be a multi-faceted construct. Case outcome, adherence to procedure, reducing the community impact of the homicide and prevention of homicides were all considered by detectives to be indicators of success.

Due the absence of research about the future challenges to effective detective work, we adopted an exploratory approach and used qualitative methods to 'generate findings that are useful' (p.1634, Patton, 2005). We used interviews to obtain the views of those who have a first-hand knowledge of what challenges may directly affect detective work – detectives themselves. Our purpose was to explore detectives' own understanding of the main challenges that may affect the effectiveness of detectives in the future. We purposefully sampled a heterogeneous sample of detectives, not to compare and contrast their views, but to examine what challenges hold across all detective roles (Patton, 2005). To obtain maximum variation we sampled detectives from different policing services generalist and specialist roles; urban and rural regions; detectives, detective trainers and detective supervisors; and of different genders. The small sample sizes in each role prevent us from capturing whether the challenges vary according to these roles, but allow us to inductively identify any common themes in the detectives' responses (Gifford, 1998; Patton, 2005). Detectives' views about what is effective are of course subjective, but this method provides a basis to test whether detectives' perceptions are valid and can help to

form the foundation for future research agenda that prioritises areas that are likely to have the biggest impact on practice.

Methodology

The purpose of the present study was to explore the challenges for ensuring that detectives are effective in the future by interviewing detectives in Australia and New Zealand. Australia and New Zealand both have similar legal and policing structures to England and Wales, with investigators generally working in the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB), which is a separate division from the General Duties Branch of policing. Australia consists of five states and two territories, with a separate police service in each and the Australian Federal Police providing an inter-jurisdictional and international crime response. In contrast, New Zealand has one service that polices the entire country. Ethical approval was granted to conduct the study and Australian Federal Police, Queensland Police Service, New Zealand Police, Western Australia Police, and New South Wales Police Force all agreed to participate. Discussions with the participating police services suggest that to become a qualified detective in these services, officers are typically recruited through an expression of interest process and interviewed by a senior manager of detectives. If recommended for the role by the manager, they receive two to three years training integrated with workplace experience before becoming qualified as a detective.

Each police service was asked to request a senior manager in the detective branch nominate qualified detectives, who they thought were effective in the role and could contribute useful insight, to participate in the study. A limitation of this approach is that managers' views about who is effective are subjective. Managers may also have nominated those who they believed would represent the police well and were more open-minded than others (see Ericson &

Haggerty, 1999, about police resistance to change). Nevertheless, without an objective measure

for effectiveness, the day-to-day contact managers have with their staff means they are most

likely to know who is effective in the role. To obtain a heterogeneity of views, we also asked the

managers to nominate detectives who were in a variety of roles (specialist, generalist and

training; metropolitan and rural; detective and supervisor) and a mixture of genders. All

detectives who were nominated by the services agreed to participate in an interview for

approximately one hour during work time ($N = 30$; the interview also covered other topics not

reported in this article). The demographics of the sample are displayed in Table 1, and show a

broad range of detectives were interviewed and they generally had a high level of experience

both as police officers and as detectives. This experience suggests they should have a good

understanding of detective work, but also means they were an older age group and may hold

different views to less experienced or younger detectives.

 All detectives participated in a semi-structured interview that was conducted in person

except for one interview, which was conducted via telephone due to the remote location the

detective was working in. We developed three main questions to guide the interview process.

Each detective was asked 'what three challenges do you think will be faced in the future to

ensure detectives are as effective as possible?', 'Describe each of these challenges' and 'How

might these challenges be overcome?'. Apart from these main questions, our approach was to use

no fixed wording but instead have the detectives drive the interview process with minimal

influence from the interviewer thereby allowing us to gain a better understanding of how

detectives themselves perceive these issues (Robson, 2002).

 The first researcher conducted all the interviews and manually recorded each detective's

responses. Due to the absence of research on this topic, we content analysed responses using

inductive analysis where categories are derived to reflect the themes of the detective's responses. This type of analysis enables us to gain an understanding of what detectives consider important challenges rather than relying on pre-existing theories to frame detective's views (Gifford, 1998). The first researcher coded all the challenges identified by detectives into discrete units before analysing the inter-relationships of these challenges and categorising them into themes. Another researcher coded a random selection of 20% of the individual challenges into the different themes. Inter-rater reliability was calculated to determine consistency between the coders. The analysis found that the coders agreed 89% of the time. Disagreements in coding were discussed and resolved through consensus.

Results

Each participant identified three challenges for ensuring detectives are effective in the future. In total 35 different challenges were identified. Despite the broad range of detectives interviewed, there was a strong consistency of views and no discernable differences between the responses of those from different roles or of different genders. This finding suggests there are challenges relevant to detectives regardless of policing organisation or role. But, the sampling method used did not enable us to examine any specific differences that may have existed between each role. Four main themes were identified by at least 25% of the sample. As displayed in Table 2, from most to least frequent, were 'recruitment and retention', 'technology', 'training and on-going development' and 'accountability'. The 'miscellaneous' category included challenges around resourcing and legislative reform. Specifically, detectives were concerned about a lack of administrative and financial support and that legal processes were sometimes overly restrictive and slow to change. We now describe each of the four main challenges in turn.

Challenge 1: Recruitment and retention

Most frequently, detectives identified the challenge of both retaining experienced detectives and recruiting suitable applicants for the detective role. We included recruitment and retention together in one category because detectives commonly linked these two related concerns and cited the same causes to both. Detectives described the role as involving a high workload and growing amounts of paperwork. In addition, they reported the need to be on-call and work over-time so they could be available to respond to serious crime as it happens and the needs of victims. These responsibilities were seen to result in high stress levels and a poor work-life balance that was causing experienced detectives to leave and made the role unattractive to potential applicants. Younger police officers expecting more of a work-life balance and no longer considering the detective role as a lifetime career were seen to exacerbate this problem. Many participants described a vicious cycle where an inability to fill vacancies meant those detectives who remain became even more over-worked, stressed and de-motivated, and hence more likely to leave.

A lack of organisational recognition and remuneration to reflect the responsibilities of the role were seen to contribute to this problem. In addition, a low number of management vacancies and limited other career options were seen to result in experienced detectives leaving to take up positions (within and outside of police) that had less responsibility, provided a better work-life balance and more pay. The loss of experienced detectives was seen to result in an overall decline in investigative effectiveness. It was also perceived as costly for police due to the considerable amount of time and money invested in their training. Many detectives noted that a loss of experience reduced the ability to mentor new trainees leaving these trainees in the tenuous position of having to learn through trial and error.

Detectives suggested some solutions to the problems of recruitment and retention. Many stated that 'it's not a job you do for the pay'. Instead, effective detectives were perceived as those who join because of a genuine desire to do detective work and hence it was seen as important to recruit those who have a genuine desire for detective work. Setting realistic expectations for potential candidates, but also highlighting what makes detective work attractive, were also seen as important. Detectives thought senior managers taking the time to value and acknowledge the contribution detectives make could easily improve organisational recognition. Increasing career incentives was seen as another option, such as specialist promotion streams, removing tenure limits in specialist squads, or simple gestures such as receiving a gold badge after five years as a qualified detective. Reducing bureaucratic processes, so that detectives are free to spend more time conducting investigations, was also seen as a way of reducing the de-motivation of detectives.

Challenge 2: Technology

Another common theme in detectives' responses was the challenge of keeping up-to-date with technology. There were three main sub-themes to detective's responses – how technology influences crime, the evidence available and the investigation process. Detectives perceived that technology was creating new crime especially in relation to child internet pornography and cybercrime. They also saw technology was changing how crime was committed by the increasing the ease of organised criminals could communicate with each other and establish networks, even across borders. Detectives also reported that technology was generating more evidence. For example, security surveillance, email, social media and videos recorded on mobile phones.

The focus of detectives' responses was the practical implications to the investigation process of these changes to crime and evidence. Both gathering and analysing technology-generated information was considered a routine part of detective work, but was not without difficulties. Detectives' were concerned about their ability to access technology-generated data. Sometimes data was encrypted or difficult to trace or police were dependant on private industry, such as telecommunication companies and website providers, to access this electronic data. Detectives perceived that many companies were reluctant to carry the costs of storing and providing data, and to risk losing customers to another service provider that would provide more anonymity. Access was also impeded by bureaucratic processes that were seen to cause delay, such as the preparation of search warrants or, with the dispersion of crime, needing to make requests to different states or countries. Some detectives also reported difficulties in conducting investigations at their workplace due to a shortage of computers and police internal internet abuse prevention systems blocking employee access to relevant websites such as Facebook.

Detectives' main concerns about analysing the large amounts of technology-generated information were that this process was time consuming and thereby slowed down the investigation and added to an already heavy workload. Detectives felt they needed constant training on how to identify, access and analyse technology-generated information in order to keep up with the rapid advances in technology. They were also concerned that some detectives were now relying on the abundance of electronic information instead of face-to-face communication, causing these detectives to lose or never develop the core skill of talking to people.

Although detectives reported that it was difficult, if not impossible, to keep up with technology, they did have some ideas about what police could do. These included: more research

and development; police agencies that perform highly in this area sharing information internationally across jurisdictions; building partnerships with the private sector providers to ensure information captured and stored; and legislators keeping up-to-date with changes so that legalisation enables access to emerging forms of technology-generated information. Detectives also suggested that resourcing to help collect and analyse the information needed to match the influx of information. Many suggested that taking advantage of the benefits of technology may assist with this process, such as having laptops in cars and using handheld electronic smart devices. Some thought training needs could be met by having specialist groups that deal with technology related issues, while others suggested that the problem would solve itself because younger generations who have grown up with technology are better equipped to use it.

Challenge 3: Training and on-going development

The third most frequently cited future challenge was training and on-going development. During the interviews, detectives linked these two sub-themes closely together and were concerned about how they were supported by their organisation to develop and maintain a high level of knowledge and skill. In relation to training, detectives expressed concern that initial training was often laborious, so much so that it was sometimes a hindrance to recruitment. It was perceived that there was need to update to new methods of learning, to get back to basic investigative skills and make the training more relevant, flexible and timely. Some detectives suggested training needed to incorporate more on-the-job learning and performance evaluation. Developing formal systems to mentor trainees and up-skilling supervisors to perform this role were other suggestions.

For on-going professional development, some detectives suggested that the increased specialisation of roles meant it was important to expose detectives to a broad range of roles so

their skill-set was not restricted by specialisation. Detectives also expressed the desire for on-going development to keep up to speed with rapid changes in legislation, technology, and forensic science. For example, the scientific advances in DNA evidence. Many suggested that a formal system of on-going professional development after becoming a qualified detective was one way of addressing these needs.

Challenge 4: Accountability

The fourth most frequently cited future challenge was accountability. There were two main sub-themes in detectives' responses – an increase in external scrutiny of investigations and internal police management responding to this scrutiny by increasing bureaucracy. Detectives noted that there was a growing need for police to be accountable and transparent in order to maintain public trust and confidence. An increased transparency through technology, such as recordings on smart phones, was seen to put police under more scrutiny with the selective reporting of poor policing often over-emphasising poor practice and damaging public trust. This increased transparency was also perceived to heighten public awareness about police investigative methods to the detriment of effective investigations. For example, in one instance a list of unmarked police car registration numbers was posted the internet. Detectives commented that increased expectations to justify decision-making both to the media and for legal investigative powers such as the issuing of search warrants, were further adding to their workload.

Detectives were especially concerned that police agencies were responding to the public desire for accountability by increasing oversight by adding bureaucratic processes in an attempt to manage performance. Many participants noted that these processes may improve the consistency of service delivery and reduce corruption, but it was producing what one participant

termed 'process paralysis'. In other words, less time was spent conducting investigations due to the burden of bureaucratic processes. A reduction of support staff to assist with these processes was seen to exacerbate this problem, especially a lack of typists and data entry operators. Many detectives were frustrated that some administrative processes were not streamlined and required a duplication of effort. Frustration about this extra workload was one of the factors perceived as contributing to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining detectives. Some detectives also felt they were being micro-managed to avoid the risk of adverse public scrutiny and were concerned that this sometimes meant management were driving investigative decisions in response to media pressure, instead of investigators to the detriment of investigations.

When asked about potential solutions to external accountability, some detectives suggested proactively meeting public expectations of transparency and accountability rather than waiting until an investigation comes under scrutiny. To address increased internal bureaucracy, detectives suggested a better balance between risk mitigation, preventing corruption and efficiency is required. Other comments included that managers needed to trust detectives to do a professional job and provide support staff to help gather performance-monitoring information more efficiently. Another suggestion was to ensure audit systems are intuitive to operate and efficient by consulting more with detectives as end-users.

Discussion

We identified a number of common challenges to ensuring detectives are effective in the future – recruitment and retention, technology, training and on-going development and accountability. With limited research on the detective role, these findings provide a starting point for research that examines the validity of what detectives' perceive are the pressing issues for practice. While research on this topic is still in its infancy, when the themes of detective

responses are compared to the broader literature on detective work a clear picture begins to emerge.

Firstly, the complex demands of the role mean a highly skilled and motivated detective workforce is required (Tong & Bowling, 2006; Westera, Kebbell, Milne & Green, in press; Williamson et al., 2007). Secondly, the difficulty in recruiting and retaining detectives may be a result of the high workload, limited work-life balance, a lack of both career pathways and organisational recognition. Chatterton (2008) found similar concerns about the recruitment and retention of detectives in England and Wales (also see Smith and Flanagan, 2001). Thirdly, more bureaucracy and advances in technology are contributing to an increased workload. This is also supported by the work of Malm et al. (2005) who examined general policing in British Columbia and found a four-fold increase in administrative tasks over the last 30 years (from 2003 backwards; see also Heaton, 2010; Mulgan, 2000). Increasingly detectives are 'workers of information' (Innes, 2003) and their ability to efficiently manage information is essential to investigative performance now and in the future (Williamson et al., 2007). Taken together, these factors suggest that to be effective detectives and their working environment must change to meet future needs.

Given the difficulties that would need to be overcome to address the challenges facing detectives it is worthwhile asking 'can we do without highly skilled detectives in the future?' Crime prevention and early interventions may reduce crime in years to come, but a reactive role – investigating serious crime – is likely to remain for the primary function for detectives the foreseeable future. Thorough investigation and prosecution file preparation are central to effective case outcomes and a detective is best placed to perform most of the tasks involved (Brodeur, 2010; Greenwood et al., 1977). It is likely that the public will continue to want serious

crime properly investigated, yet we are not aware of any research that asks the public how important serous crime investigation is compared to other policing tasks. It is also likely that highly trained detectives are needed because of increases in accountability and legitimacy, risk of miscarriages of justice, and the general public will not tolerate anything less (Gross et al., 2005; Stone & Travis, 2011). The importance and complexity of the detective role also means it is unlikely that the role can be entirely civilianised or privatised, although some parts could be. Indeed, because of the monopoly police have on investigating serious crime, when discussing the problems of 'unpayable police', van Renin (1999) stated: "police investigation has become more costly in terms of manpower per crime. The reasons for that are that the activities that require people instead of machines remain essential and that criminals often learn very fast" (p.137). The specialist skills and knowledge of detective's may also place them in an ideal position to contribute more to proactive crime control (Braga, Flynn, Kelling, & Cole, 2011). In the present study, however, the detectives did not mention crime prevention and instead seem already overworked with the core function of investigating serious crime.

So, if we need highly skilled detectives, how can police leaders and managers ensure this workforce is cost-effective? Gascón and Foglesong (2010) identify two ways to make policing more affordable that may be particularly relevant – revaluing policing and re-engineering policing. Revaluing policing involves assigning values to police work that is poorly measured (Gascón & Foglesong; 2010). Unlike roles such as road policing or proactive response to street crime, the complexity of the detective role means that its importance has always been difficult to quantify and measure. Indeed, a focus on proactive policing may mean managers and leaders neglect the role of detectives, who are primarily reactive in their work. In the present study, this could account for the detectives expressing that they felt undervalued by management. A culture

of secrecy around detective work (and sometimes distrust of scholars by police) also means that

academic researchers have little access to data that may help to increase understandings about

how to effectively value detective work (Crank, 2004; Innes, 2003; Weisburd & Neyroud, 2011;

for a discussion of open and 'backstage' versions of policing see, for example, van Hulst, 2013).

Police and academics working together to revalue detective work is therefore one possibility.

Re-engineering detective work would involve rethinking police structures and processes

(Gascón & Foglesong, 2010). This could involve investing in developing highly skilled

professional detectives, but reducing other costs by increasing efficiency. Both police managers

and scholars could re-examine what tasks need to be completed by highly skilled detectives and

what tasks do not. Civilianisation or technology may be a more cost-effective solution to some

tasks and free-up detectives to complete tasks that require a higher skill level and that they find

more challenging and rewarding. In England and Wales for example, police services have

civilianised crime scene examination and intelligence (Evans & Kebbell, 2012; Mazerolle &

Ransley, 2006). The use of typists and data entry staff may increase efficiency. Technology, such

as smart devices or voice recognition software, may add to these efficiency gains, but only if

managed effectively (a matter we discuss later; Garicano & Heaton, 2010).

Police leaders and managers are also likely to have an important part in re-engineering

the detective role. In Smith and Flanagan's (2000) study, detective managers reported that they

were concerned about becoming de-skilled in investigations due an increased focus on

managerial tasks. This possibility is also reflected by one of the few scholarly publications on the

management of detectives, which discusses how to measure and monitor detective performance,

but makes no mention of the role of managers in improving the performance of the detectives

(Neyroud & Disley, 2007). If the detective role is becoming more complex, the absence of

developmental support from managers may leave an even greater gap between the skill level

required for effective practice and the opportunity to develop those skills. Whilst the skills

required for effective detective work may be complex (Westera et al., in press), an obvious

implication of our research is that detectives are feeling unrecognised and neglected. Maybe

police leaders taking more of an interest in what detectives are doing and acknowledging good

detective work would remedy this problem. Although studies suggest that mid-career police

employees more generally often feel discontent, so detectives concerns may reflect a broader

problem that is not so easily resolved (Chan & Doran, 2009; Hoath, Schneider, & Starr, 1998).

Leaders taking a greater role in managing the bureaucracy and the efficiency and effectiveness of

police technology systems may also help (see Garicano & Heaton, 2010).

Another possibility is to increase public and organisational trust in detectives by having a

more professional workforce (O'Neill, 2012), but this would require a fundamental change to the

police culture around accountability. Instead of using audit systems (that are often easily

manipulated) to appear as though police are taking accountability seriously, managers would

need to invest in supporting employees to be more professional and autonomous (Chan, 1999;

Heaton, 2010; Neyroud, 2012). If this were to happen, an evidence-based recruitment, learning

and on-going development regime would need to be developed. The recent recommendations by

Peter Neyroud (2012) in England and Wales, for police to recognise lateral skills, expertise, in

addition to vertical skills, strategic leadership, provide an example of how this could be done.

These countries also have developed investigative doctrine, workplace standards, and a

competency framework through the Professionalising Investigations Programme (PIP; Stelfox,

2007). Although, this program, like many other policing programs, lacks any formal processes

for continuously evaluating practice and ensuring practice is evidence-based (Stelfox; 2007).

This situation would need to be remedied if detectives were to genuinely become more professional.

Professionalisation would also require scholars and police to work together to extend the evidence-base for detective work and how it can be effectively implemented into practice (Weisburd & Neyroud, 2011). There is a need for scholars to increase the evidence-base around the specific knowledge and skills required for detective work. There is already a robust research base for how to develop evidence-based learning regimes (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Römer, 1993; Hattie, Biggs & Purdie, 1996; Powell, Fisher & Wright, 2005). Yet, police generally rely on traditional teacher-centred learning methods rather than encouraging independent learning and skill development through practice and expert feedback (Birzer, 2003; Shepherd & Milne, 2006; Westera et al., in press). Policing organisations also often have a culture of scepticism about the merits of learning from those outside of the police working environment (Crank, 2004; Weisburd & Neyroud, 2011).

One benefit of the reactive nature of detective work is that many of the skills and knowledge requirements are likely to be generic, rather than changing because of different community needs (see Sklansky (2011) for a discussion on the conflict between professionalism and community driven policing). This creates the possibility of police services saving costs by having consistent national or international standards and learning products (Neyroud, 2012). Coherent national or international standards provide an opportunity to make the role more legitimate, reduce pockets of poor performance in this high stakes role that can create considerable risk to police, and increase the efficiency of the growing number of investigations that are likely to cross borders (Neyroud, 2012; Stone & Travis, 2011). For example, New Zealand and many parts of Australia have adopted investigative interviewing learning programs

based on those developed in England and Wales with minor modifications that take into account legislative differences (but again this approach has not been properly evaluated; Hill & Moston, 2011; Schollum, 2006).

Conclusion

The findings of this study not only have implications for detectives keeping pace with a rapidly changing world, but also the criminal justice system more generally. The challenges identified by detectives, especially in relation to technology and accountability, are also likely to flow-on to the criminal justice system more generally. For instance, an influx in technology-generated information also requires lawyers and the courts to spend the time reviewing this evidence and decide how to best present it to judges or jurors. An increased transparency and public awareness of police investigative practice may influence the fairness of the court process for defendants. There is an urgent need for scholars to work with stakeholders to forecast arising challenges for practice so that the criminal justice system can function efficiently and effectively in the future.

Footnotes

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Table 1

Demographics of the detectives interviewed

Demographic		Measure
Gender	Male	19
	Female	11
Detective role	Specialist	15
	General	9
	Training	6
Detective rank	Constable	15
	First tier manager	11
	Second tier manager	4
Location	Metropolitan	24
	Rural	6
Age	Mean years	39.60
	SD	(4.72)
Time in police	Mean years	15.43
	SD	(5.01)
Time in detective branch	Mean years	10.47 (4.90)
	SD	

Table 2

Overall rankings and frequency of detectives who identified each challenge for ensuring

detectives are effective in the future

Rank	Challenge	Number of detectives* (N=30)
1	Recruitment and retention	22
2	Technology	20
3	Training and on-going development	16
4	Accountability	9
5	Miscellaneous	9

* The number of detectives who identified this challenge during the interview