

MEETING	POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
DATE	19/06/14
TITLE	POLICE CRIME DATA REPORT
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POLICE CRIME DATA REPORT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The paper intends to update the Police and Crime Panel on the National Interim HMIC Crime and Data Inspection and provides detail of the current Constabulary activity including a revised audit procedure now adopted to ensure compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime (HOCR) and the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS).
- 1.2. Crime recording practices have recently been the subject of media interest nationally and any negative stories in relation to crime recording have the potential to damage public confidence locally. The PCC has requested an update report on the situation in Hertfordshire given the issues identified by HMIC.
- 1.3. This is the most thorough inspection into crime-recording integrity that HMIC has carried out to date.
- 1.4. The Hertfordshire HMIC report was anticipated in June 2014 but will not be available until late July 2014. The full thematic national HMIC report is due to be published in October 2014. This report provides an interim update pending the publication of these further inspection reports.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The HMIC has completed and reported on 13 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales.
- 2.2. The purpose of this inspection is to provide the answer to the question:

'To what extent can police recorded crime information be trusted'

- 2.3. The National Crime Recording Standard is a principle adopted nationally in 2002 and relates primarily to victim service and victim needs. Crime recording is generally victim-based rather than more evidence based as was prior to 2002. This means that if a person believes they are the victim of a crime, then on the balance of probabilities and with no evidence to the contrary a crime will be recorded. Where doubt remains, the police may make reasonable enquiries, however as soon as the officer is satisfied that a crime has occurred the crime will be recorded.

3. HMIC NATIONAL FINDINGS

- 3.1. The inspection is concerned at the picture which is emerging nationally. It is one of weak or absent management and supervision of crime-recording, significant under recording of crime, and serious sexual offences not being recorded. Some offenders have been issued with out-of-custody disposals when their offending history could not justify it, and in some cases they should have been prosecuted.
- 3.2. If the findings for the first set of forces are representative across all forces, and all crime types, this *implies* that 20 per cent of crimes may be going unrecorded.
- 3.3. The reason for failures will sometimes be a combination of factors, and sometimes one or two. In some cases, it is simply poor knowledge of the rules and inadequate or absent training in their content and application. In others it is poor supervision and management of police officers will be responsible. Pressure of workload, where police officers have been managed in such a way as to overload them with cases, is also a key factor.

4. HERTFORDSHIRE RESPONSE

- 4.1. The HMIC Crime and Data Integrity report on Hertfordshire Constabulary is due for public release in July 2014. It is anticipated the report will be in part critical of our crime recording standards. Therefore it is crucial to determine the impact of the changes already made so as to be in a position to reassure the public that we have acknowledged any areas of non-compliance and put things in place to remedy the situation.
- 4.2. The Constabulary has moved to the new methodology applied by the HMIC as the norm. This will provide a more broader and in-depth diagnostic by including more crime types and examining the end to end process from caller to crime finalisation. This will bring a greater degree of transparency and control.
- 4.3. Statistically significant sample sizes are now audited such that 85% of crime types will be audited to a confidence level of 95% with a statistical precision of $\pm 5\%$. The number of records analysed has been increased from 100-150 records per month to about 600 records per month. It is estimated that this will more than triple the time taken to carry out the audit process and therefore there is to be an increase in resources committed to the crime and data audit processes until such time that we are totally satisfied that the recorded crime information is reliable.
- 4.4. In addition, the Constabulary has introduced an additional A6 Senior Managers post within Corporate Services to provide a dedicated Force Crime Registrar function, which is their primary responsibility, and not as ancillary to any other role or responsibility.
- 4.5. The FCR will manage the Inspection and Review team and will be responsible for developing a robust audit plan and manage its implementation in order to ensure compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards, the Home Office Counting Rules and the National Standards of Incident Recording.
- 4.6. The Constabulary has acknowledged the findings of the Interim National HMIC Inspection and a comprehensive NCRS Performance Improvement Delivery Plan is in place to address the issues raised. Many of the issues identified have already had some scrutiny and response in Hertfordshire some of which were reported to the February PCP. These include the recording of rape and sexual offences, multi-agency child protection and adult safeguarding protocols,

making off without payment and issues of misinterpretation of NCRS and HOCR. Work continues to address these which has and will continue to have the impact of increased crime recording in some areas namely those alluded to above. The main thrust of Hertfordshire activity includes:

4.6.1 Review the interface and process between attending officer, Force Control Room and crime recording to ensure that there is sufficient ownership, scrutiny and supervision of the process at the front end.

4.6.1.1 This is a key area for improvement and therefore the Hertfordshire Policing Model is currently under review to determine the appropriate structure to ensure that there is more scrutiny at the 'front end' of the process. A proposal is being considered by the Chief Officers within the next two weeks and changes will be implemented in the near future.

4.6.2. Uplift in resources to meet the demand in improving the diagnostic process to fully understand the level of compliance and the reason for failure.

4.6.2.1 Additional staff have been recruited into the audit and scrutiny process. The FCR role is now a distinct function and all ancillary responsibilities have been removed.

4.6.3. Improved communication across the organisation regarding the importance of the National Crime Recording Standards and data integrity.

4.6.3.1 A defined communication plan is being developed by the Head of Corporate Communications and the Force Crime Registrar to reinforce the message that there is a necessity for accurate and ethical crime recording.

4.6.3.2 The findings of the HMIC inspection and the future direction for ensuring National Crime Recording Standards compliance was a significant feature of the recent Senior Management Meeting, which was chaired by the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable.

4.6.4 Improve communication across the Constabulary regarding the role and profile of the Force Crime Registrar.

4.6.4.1 The Director of Force Performance supported by Force Crime Registrar is conducting a series of workshops

across the County on the National Crime Recording Standards and how to apply the rules more accurately.

4.6.5 Review and rectify the failures highlighted by the HMIC and take the learning back into the work place.

4.6.5.1 All the failures have been reviewed and the learning has formed part of the NCRS Workshops.

4.6.6 Deliver NCRS Training to Student Officers and all operational police officers and staff.

4.6.6.1 Over 800 frontline staff have now received the training and this will continue over the next few weeks until all front line staff have received the training.

Whilst there is an on-going risk in relation to crime recording, this has been properly identified through the strategic management framework, reinforced by the HMIC Inspection and a full response is in place to ensure compliance. The Hertfordshire HMIC report is due by the end of July 2014 after which the Constabulary will review and augment as necessary its NCRS Improvement Plan in light of its detailed findings. Both the full National Thematic HMIC Report as well as the Hertfordshire specific HMIC report and the Constabulary response will be available to the November PCP.

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