



UK Statistics
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Overcoming barriers to trust in crime statistics:

Discussion of interim report



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Findings and interim recommendations

Richard Laux

UK Statistics Authority

Aims of the review

- To identify barriers to trust
- To review steps taken to overcome those barriers and
- To make recommendations as appropriate

Building on.....

- Review of Crime Statistics: A Discussion Document (Jon Simmons) July 2000
- Crime Statistics: User Perspectives (Statistics Commission) September 2006
- Crime Statistics: An Independent Review (Adrian Smith) November 2006
- Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime (Louise Casey) June 2008

Main findings: summarising the available evidence

- General background of distrust in official statistics
- Public perceptions about crime and sentencing are at variance with actual trends
- Smaller 'perception gap' at a local level – views more rooted in actual experience
- Media criticism appears to have an influence
- Police more trusted as a source of information than civil servants or politicians

Main findings: Specific factors that hinder trust in crime statistics

- Recorded crime 'versus' British Crime Survey – confusion and/or cherry picking
- Notifiable list, classification of crime etc – impression of complexity and constant change
- High level of political and media interest/scrutiny – sometimes very critical

Main recommendations (1/2)

Independent oversight of production arrangements

Maintain and enhance access to comprehensive data but

- Move the commentary up a gear
 - More comment, less description
 - Addressing the big issues
 - Commissioned by the National Statistician
 - Independence, objectivity and expertise need to be widely accepted

Main Recommendations (2/2)

A guide to preferred sources

More guidance on communicating statistics at a local level

Improved access to recorded crime and BCS data

A more joined up approach to statistics across the criminal justice system

Next steps

- January Written comments on the report
authority.consultations@statistics.gsi.gov.uk
- February Project board meets to review comments
- Additional research/meetings/interviews
 (eg quality of data on recorded crime)
- April Publication of final report



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Overcoming barriers to trust in crime statistics – Interim report

Initial views from Home Office Statistics

David Blunt
Chief Statistician

18 January 2010

Structure of presentation

- Recent changes within the Home Office to improve trust in Home Office statistics
- Some key messages in the Interim report from a Home Office statistician's perspective
- Home Office statistician's initial reactions to the 8 recommendations
- Other things to bear in mind moving forward



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Overcoming barriers to trust in crime statistics – Interim report

Julian Corner
Head of Crime Strategy

18 January 2010

Outline

- The purpose of the crime statistics, including the overarching principles that govern our approach and that should drive any future changes
- The integrity of the crime statistics
- Who should be responsible for crime statistics



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Providing information to the public about crime and policing

Paul Quinton

A qualitative understanding

- Crime statistics presented by the local police were generally more trusted than national figures
- At the time, awareness of crime maps was low
- Most people thought they had a 'right' to crime information about their local area
- But they were not sure when they would use local crime maps – unless making a personal decision – because they already 'knew' which areas were safe
- Respondents felt additional information on local policing and police performance would increase the usefulness of the crime maps to the public

A quantitative evaluation

- There is limited evidence on the impact of crime maps on public perceptions
- A US study showed maps were no worse, and in some cases better, than statistics in their effect on worry about crime & neighbourhood stigmatisation
- The NPIA is conducting a randomised controlled trial to assess the impact of crime maps and/or information about local policing on perceptions
- The qualitative research suggests an 'across-the-board' impact may be unlikely, but that a positive effect may be detected for some social groups



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