

NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S CRIME STATISTICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

 UK Statistics Authority, Meeting room 3, Drummond Gate, London, SW1V 2QQ
 Thursday 5 May 2016, 14:00 – 16:00

Agenda Item No.	Timings	Order of Business		
1.	14:00 – 14:05			<i>Introduction and announcements</i> Adrian Smith (Chair)
2.	14:05 – 14:10		NSCSAC(16)1	<i>Minutes, correspondence and matters arising from the meeting held on 14 December 2015</i> Adrian Smith (Chair)
3.	14:10 – 14:30			<i>NS Designation of Crime Statistics – oral update</i> Ed Humpherson
4.	14:30 – 14:50	For Discussion		<i>Letter from Jonathan Shepherd to Sir Adrian Smith</i> Jonathan Shepherd
5.	14:50 – 15:00			<i>HMIC Crime Data Integrity – oral update</i> Mark Stainforth
6.	15:00 – 15:30		NSCSAC(16)2	<i>Crime index feasibility work: Update paper</i> Chris Lewis
7.	15:30 – 15:40			<i>Child Abuse data – oral update</i> Allan Brimicombe and Fiona Glen
8.	15:40 – 15:45		NSCSAC(16)3	<i>National Crime Registrar's Report</i> Steve Bond
9.	15:45 – 15:55		NSCSAC(16)4	<i>Review of Issues log and agreement on priorities for the Committee over the next 12-24 months</i> John Flatley
10.	15:55 – 16:00	Any other business		All Members

MINUTES OF
THE NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S CRIME STATISTICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING ON 5 MAY 2016
Meeting room 3, 1 Drummond Gate, Pimlico, London, SW1V 2QQ

CHAIR

Adrian Smith UK Statistics Authority Board

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Blunt	Home Office
Steve Bond	Home Office
Allan Brimicombe	University of East London
Roma Chappell	Office for National Statistics
Jeff Farrar	National Policing Lead for Crime Statistics
Junaid Gharda	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire
Gavin Hales	Police Foundation
Glyn Jones	Welsh Government
Mike Levi	Cardiff University
Chris Lewis	University of Portsmouth
Stephen Shute	University of Sussex

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES

Diana Luchford	Home Office
Jon Martin	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
Mark Stainforth	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

SECRETARIAT

John Flatley Office for National Statistics

APOLOGIES

Steve Ellerd-Elliott	Ministry of Justice
Fiona Glen	Independent expert
Patricia Mayhew	Independent Criminological Consultant
Mike Warren	Home Office
Tom Winsor	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

1. Chair's Introduction and announcements

- 1.1. Adrian Smith welcomed Gavin Hales to his first meeting of the Committee.
- 1.2. Adrian Smith thanked members for responding with their comments to a draft letter to the National Statistician giving advice on a recommendation in the Curtis review about the future of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Adrian Smith noted that a final version of the letter will be circulated with the minutes (see Annex A) and reported that the Committee's advice was accepted by the National Statistician. A

subsequent exchange of letters between the National Statistician and the Home Secretary has been published on the NSCSAC webpages¹.

- 1.3. Steve Bond reported that the intention was that Home Office officials would consult key stakeholders and work up options to take this forward. The Committee would be kept informed of developments and their advice sought at the appropriate points.
- 1.4. Jeff Farrar reported that it had been agreed that the NSIR portfolio, within the National Police Chiefs Council, would transfer to him in order to bring greater alignment between crime and incident recording.

2. Minutes and matters arising from meeting held on 14 December 2015- NSCSAC(16)¹

- 2.1. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.
- 2.2. With regard to Action 2 from the last meeting, Roma Chappell reported that, following the last meeting, ONS had been reflecting on the advice given and would be circulating a paper to the Committee, within the next few weeks, to inform them of plans for handling the discontinuity in Crime Survey trends once new estimates of fraud and computer misuse were added to the official statistics in July 2016.
- 2.3. The Chair noted that all the other actions, as summarised in the Action Log at the end of the minutes, had been completed or were to be covered by agenda items at this meeting.

Action 1: Secretariat to circulate ONS paper on plans for handling the discontinuity in the CSEW time series to members for information.

3. National Statistics designation of crime statistics – Ed Humpherson

- 3.1. Adrian Smith welcomed Ed Humpherson, UK Statistics Authority Director General for Regulation, to the meeting to bring the Committee up to date with his latest thinking about the possible future re-designation of police recorded crime (PRC).
- 3.2. Ed Humpherson reported that the Authority were aware that progress had been made to address concerns about the quality of recorded crime since they decided to withdraw National Statistics designation. The Authority was minded to recognise the progress made by police forces and ONS in an interim report. He thought it unlikely that the Authority would see sufficient evidence to reinstate National Statistics status in the near future but he thought it important for there to be a public record of progress made towards eventual reinstatement.
- 3.3. While there might be a slight risk that such a statement may re-ignite media interest and undermine public trust, the consensus view of the Committee was that a public statement recognising the improvement to police recorded crime would be welcome.

¹ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports-reviews-guidance-and-advisory-committees/national-statisticians-advisory-committees/crime-statistics-advisory-committee/crime-statistics-advisory-committee-correspondence/>

- 3.4. Ed Humpherson summarised evidence of progress supplied by ONS and invited the Committee to comment on whether there was any additional evidence that the Authority should be made aware. It was agreed that results from the forthcoming HMIC inspection of crime recording would be a key component of the evidence base and that this would take time to emerge given the rolling nature of the inspection programme.
- 3.5. Ed Humpherson said that before the Authority could re-instate National Statistics status they would require evidence that a movement in PRC figures reflects a change in society rather than recording practices or different management approaches between forces. The Authority also wanted re-assurance that there is greater consistency in recording between forces and that increases due to improved recording practices have stabilised. There were some concerns raised about the wording of the “test” as set out by Ed Humpherson since PRC, by its nature, is prone to changes in practice and approach. Ed Humpherson said that he was happy to reflect further on the wording.

Action 2: Update to be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

4. Letter from Jonathan Shepherd about violence data

- 4.1. Adrian Smith welcomed Jonathan Shepherd to the meeting to discuss the letter (Annex B) that he had sent to the Committee concerning his proposal to improve the data available on violence.
- 4.2. Jonathan Shepherd noted that the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) had published a standard for the recording and sharing of de-personalised data on violent assaults. This had been adopted as a “local standard” and became mandatory for all NHS trusts to adopt under the standard NHS contract. The proposal to make this a national standard would allow the HSCIC to collect such data and publish it.
- 4.3. A number of Committee members spoke in support of the proposal. It was noted that at the moment the most problematic area of crime statistics was violence because of the apparently divergent trends between the two main series. Therefore independent data from accident and emergency departments would provide a valuable additional source of evidence.
- 4.4. Adrian Smith noted that the Committee advises the National Statistician on how best to ensure that official statistics on crime for England and Wales are accurate, clearly presented, comprehensive, transparent and trustworthy. As the Government’s principal adviser on official statistics, it is for the National Statistician to reflect on advice given to him by the Committee. In this case, if the National Statistician accepts the advice of this Committee, he would need to write to both the Secretary of State for Health and the Welsh Health Minister as health is a devolved matter.

Action 3: Adrian Smith to write to National Statistician advising him of the Committee’s support for Jonathan Shepherd’s proposal.

5. HMIC Crime Data Integrity – oral update

- 5.1. Adrian Smith invited Mark Stainforth to give an update on HMIC's Crime Data Integrity (CDI) inspections.
- 5.2. Mark reported that the plan was for ten forces to be inspected in the 2016/17 financial year, then twelve during 2017/18 and 2018/19 and nine during 2019/20. It was likely that individual force reports would be published in batches with the first anticipated in late August/early September and a second batch at the end of November. A summary would be provided on an annual basis with the current thinking that this would be part of Sir Tom Winsor's annual report on the state of policing in February each year.
- 5.3. Currently four forces were subject to ongoing inspection and the aim was for estimates of recording accuracy to have confidence intervals of plus or minus 3% for violence against the person offences, sexual offences and all other recorded crime.
- 5.4. Mark Stainforth was asked how much notice forces were given on the impending audit. Mark replied that each force was given 5 weeks' notice that they had been selected for inspection. This lead-in time was necessary to allow forces to assemble the sample of records for HMIC. When asked whether this would allow forces to check and correct records that were likely to fail an audit, Mark explained that it was normal for logs to record dates and times when they had been revised and thus any such attempt to amend records would be spotted by the auditors.
- 5.5. Stephen Shute said that he thought HMIC should be commended for the decision to embed audits of crime recording in their inspection programme.

6. Crime Index feasibility work - NSCSAC(16)2

- 6.1. Adrian Smith invited Chris Lewis, as Chair of the Task and Finish Group to present his update to the Committee.
- 6.2. Chris outlined the methodology behind the index and presented some slides giving examples of how it could be used. The work was nearly complete pending the resolution of some decisions on minor methodological points as set out in the paper. Chris Lewis requested that members send specific comments on these points within the next 2-3 weeks.
- 6.3. There was a discussion about whether the index should be dubbed a harm or severity index and ONS agreed that further consideration needed to be given to how it would be titled.
- 6.4. There was a question about the choice of 2002/03 as the base year and whether ONS had done any sensitivity analysis looking at the impact of selecting a different base year. For example, what might the impact of the Shipman murders have on the series.
- 6.5. On the issue of whether there should be one index for all recorded crime or two (e.g. victim-based and state-based crimes) the general consensus was that two indices might cause confusion. However, views of users could be sought during the proposed consultation.
- 6.6. Some members were skeptical of the value of an index and whether it added value to the existing time series. Concerns were also expressed about possible perverse

recording incentives, for example to downgrade recording of serious offences into categories with lower weights. There was also a concern that the different weights for rapes against males and females could be misunderstood and ONS should think about how this could be managed.

- 6.7. However, there was broad support for the proposal for ONS to complete work on the index and publish as experimental statistics in the autumn, followed by a consultation with users.

Action 4: Committee members to send any comments on the report to the Secretariat by the end of May.

7. Child abuse data – oral update

- 7.1. Adrian Smith invited Allan Brimicombe to give an oral update on the work of the Task and Finish Group. Allan reported that the group had met twice since the last Committee meeting and were aiming to have a written report for the next Committee meeting in September.
- 7.2. Allan reported that the group had representatives from the NSPCC, Department for Education, Home Office and Department for Health and had received terrific support from the ONS crime team. Glyn Jones expressed a concern about whether the work was English-centric and said he would get in touch with Allan outside the meeting to ensure Welsh data was covered.
- 7.3. Allan said that the group had assembled information on 70 measures of child abuse and that new data would be available from the Home Office Data Hub with added value from offences being flagged, for example to indicate those with a child sexual abuse or child sexual exploitation element.
- 7.4. Allan made the point that little was known about the quality of recording and it would be helpful if HMIC could incorporate this at some point in their crime recording inspections. Mark Stainforth responded by pointing out that HMIC were already doing some work on child abuse and would contact Allan outside of the meeting to discuss further.

Action 5: Allan Brimicombe to present final report to the September committee meeting.

8. National Crime Registrar's Report - NSCSAC(16)3

- 8.1. Steve Bond introduced the National Crime Registrar's Report. The Committee noted the contents of the report.
- 8.2. A question was raised about a comment in paragraph 6 that "College continues to consider training for the wider community involved in crime recording" and whether this meant the roll-out of training beyond Force Crime Registrars had been delayed. Steve Bond confirmed that the College had not yet set out firm plans for such training. Stephen Shute said that he thought it very important that this be kept on their priority list.

Action 6: Secretariat to add the issue of NCRS training to the issues log so that it remained on the Committee's radar.

9. Review of issues log NSCSAC(16)4

9.1. John Flatley informed the Committee that the issues log had been updated and two new issues had been added since the last meeting: the first around improving the communication and presentation of crime statistics and the second on the perceived tension between recording standards and "criminalisation of children". These were issues for the Committee to consider at future meetings.

10. Any other business

10.1. There was no other business and the Chair reminded members that the date of the next meeting had been fixed for 27th September 2016.

**NSCSAC Secretariat
9 June 2016**

ACTION TABLE FROM MEETING OF 5 MAY 2016

	ACTION	ACTIONEE	PRIORITY/COMPLETION DATE	PROGRESS
1	Secretariat to circulate ONS paper on plans for handling the discontinuity in the CSEW time series to members for information.	Secretariat	High – end of May 2016	Complete – ONS refining plans following further comments received from members
2	Update to be provided to the next Committee meeting on future assessment of the quality of recorded crime	Secretariat/DG Regulation UKSA	Medium – September 2016	
3	Adrian Smith to write to National Statistician advising him of the Committee's support for Jonathan Shepherd's proposal.	Chair	High – mid June 2016	Complete – copy issued with minutes of meeting

4	Committee members to send any comments on the Crime Index paper to the Secretariat by the end of May.	Committee members	High – end of May 2016	Complete
5	Final report of the Child Abuse Task and Finish Group to be presented to the September committee meeting.	Allan Brimmicombe	Medium – September 2016	
6	NCRS training to be added to the issues log.	Secretariat	Medium – September 2016	

Crime Index feasibility work: Update paper

NSCASC(16)2

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the work to date on the development of a crime index measure, outlines the methodology used, gives examples of what the index looks like and sets out the proposed next steps.

Action

2. The Committee are asked to consider the issues covered in this paper and give their views on the proposal for ONS to proceed to publish a Crime Index as 'Experimental statistics' and seek feedback from users on the utility of such a measure.

Background

3. At the National Statistician's Crime Statistics Advisory Committee meeting in May 2015, ONS presented a paper on 'Proposed feasibility work on a Crime Index' (CSAC(15)12), which outlined a proposal to produce a crime index.
4. The Committee agreed that ONS should further research the possibility of producing a police recorded crime index, including the specific approaches undertaken by others and determining whether appropriate data for England and Wales are available.
5. A Task and Finish Group was created to provide feedback and methodological advice on the development of a crime index. The composition of the group can be found in Annex A. Two progress papers were presented to the Task and Finish Group (in September 2015 and March 2016).
6. Based on feedback from the Task and Finish Group, ONS have almost completed work to develop a methodology for a crime index measure.

Developing a methodology

7. The proposed methodology is outlined below, followed by a summary of points still to be agreed or developed.
8. In developing the methodology ONS have reviewed methods adopted for existing crime index measures. We have drawn upon elements of the Crime Severity Index (Canada), Justice Sector Seriousness Score (New Zealand) and Crime Harm Index (University of Cambridge); all of which use sentencing information as a basis for determining

seriousness of offences. We have extended the approach adopted in these measures by applying a severity weighting to each individual offence classification, rather than aggregated groups of offences.

Agreed methodology

9. As noted above, the index will be based upon the most detailed breakdown of offence types available in the police recorded crime series – this will provide a better degree of accuracy when determining offence severity weights than more aggregated categories.
10. The index will take into account custodial sentences, community orders and fines in the calculation of offence severity weights. Other sentencing outcomes, for example: out of court disposals, conditional discharges, etc, will not be incorporated in the offence severity weight calculations, either owing to lack of available data or it not being appropriate to include them.
11. Equivalent custodial sentence lengths have been derived for community orders and fines – details of these (although the fine equivalency methodology is yet to be finalised) are provided in Annex B.
12. The index will use Ministry of Justice (MoJ) sentencing data as the metric for determining seriousness for custodial sentences and fines, and sentencing guidelines for community orders (severity of punishment is not available for community orders from the sentencing data). Other metrics – such as using costs of crime, severity perception data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) or employing a dimensional score approach¹ – have been researched and considered, but not been deemed appropriate. This is either owing to the complexity of the methods involved that would make it difficult for users to understand how the measure has been derived (i.e. dimensional score approach), or the lack of availability of sufficiently detailed data (i.e. costs of crime – not been recently updated; CSEW severity perception – only available at a very aggregate level and would not include a lot of police recorded categories).
13. Five years of sentencing data will be used to construct the offence weights (calendar years 2011 to 2015, the latest five years available at the time ONS plans to publish the results). The offence weights will be updated every five years to ensure that they reflect changes in sentencing patterns or new legislation introduced, yet not be too burdensome to repeatedly re-produce. This is the same approach taken by Canada and New Zealand in their respective crime index measures.

Areas still to be developed

14. The crime index could be based upon all police recorded crime (including fraud recorded by NFIB) or could be restricted to victim-based crime only – the rationale for the latter being that trends in the ‘Other crimes against society’ often reflect changes in police activity and workload. However, such crimes do cause harm to wider society and, if the index is to be used to inform the police response to harm, then there is an argument for including all categories. **ONS intend to base the index on all police recorded crime for the purposes of user consultation. The views of the Committee are welcome on the index instead being restricted to victim-based crime only or, as a further alternative, both indexes being produced.**

¹ [Developing Measures of Severity and Frequency of Reconviction, Francis et al](#)

15. A further issue to resolve is the coverage of fraud offences in the index. For England and Wales as a whole all the data required to include fraud in an index measure are available – a mix of police recorded crime prior to April 2013 and offences recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) from April 2013 onwards. However, there is currently no breakdown of NFIB fraud offences available at a sub national level, meaning it is not currently possible to include fraud offences in an index measure for police force areas, and so there is a possible consistency concern between the offence coverage of the national and police force area indexes. **This currently needs to be investigated further and the views of the Committee on this issue are sought.**
16. Life sentences for murder could be based upon average sentence length (which is currently estimated at approximately 16 years) or treated as having a fixed length (for example, 30 years – the longest length that can be imposed below ‘whole life sentence’ – which would make them more severe). Linked to this is how ‘Other life’ sentences are dealt with – for which there appears to be no consensus within the Task and Finish Group. It is likely that the impact on the overall index would be minor, although for some specific offences the effect on their severity weights might be more substantial. For completeness sake, ONS would lean toward taking ‘Other life’ sentences into account – as it would seem to more accurately reflect the severity of some of the more serious offences. **Again, the Committee is invited to give their view.**
17. There are a few additional minor issues that require resolving – most notably, finalising the calculation of the custodial sentence equivalency for fines. A suggested approach is outlined in Annex B; further consideration is required to confirm that this is the preferred one. Paragraph 35 outlines a proposed timetable for finalising the methodology.
18. Annex C provides an indication of the weights assigned to selected individual offences based upon the methodology ONS is currently using.

Preliminary results

19. Preliminary results have been produced for a Crime Index based on all recorded crime (excluding fraud) for England and Wales as a whole and for individual police forces (four forces have been selected for illustrative purposes in this paper) – charts and tables are presented in Annexes D and E, and a summary of some of the findings are presented below.
20. Across the last 13 years, aggregate police recorded crime totals and the Crime Index follow a largely similar trend; both show decreases across most of the time period.
21. However, over the last two years, the volume of overall police recorded crime remained stable, but the crime index rose by 9%, indicating that although the volume of crime showed little change, there was an increase in the severity of the crime recorded.
22. This is owing to there being large increases in violent and sexual offences and a large decrease in theft offences. In volume terms these largely cancel each other out, but in index terms violent and sexual offences are typically more serious than theft offences, so the increases outweigh the decreases. Sexual offences, in particular, proportionally contribute substantially more weight to the index measure (25% of all offences in the

year ending March 2015 compared to only 2% of all offences for the traditional crime total in the same period).

23. It is known that this increase is likely to reflect the recent improved recording practices, which have been most evident in violent and sexual offences. Nevertheless, these changes illustrate how an index measure can help to identify and express a change in the recorded crime mix and overall severity, which is not as evident in the overall crime rates per population.
24. Looking at the index measure for separate police forces illustrates its potential to aid comparisons between and within different areas. For example, Merseyside and South Wales both recorded a similar amount of crime (rate per population) over the last eight years, but according to the crime index, Merseyside recorded comparatively more serious crime than South Wales over most of this period. In particular, over the last two years, South Wales' crime index score remained the same whereas Merseyside's increased by 18%. Merseyside saw notable falls in their crime index score over the course of 5 years between 2004/05 and 2008/09 in line with falls in their crime rate.
25. The Metropolitan Police have recorded the highest police force crime index score since the year ending 2006; although they are the only force whose crime index score has decreased over the last two years (in line with their reduction in crime rate). Additionally, the crime rate has shown a steeper rate of decline than the index score, indicating falls have been more pronounced in less serious offence types.
26. Surrey have recorded one of the lowest police force crime index scores in every year since the year ending March 2003. Over the last two years, although the crime rate has remained fairly stable (actually decreased slightly), their crime index score has increased by 19%, indicating a marked increase in the severity of the similar volume of crime recorded that the force is now dealing with.

The case for and against adopting a crime index

For

27. An index measure better reflects the level of harm to society resulting from crime. Current police recorded crime data treat all offences to be of equal severity; a crime index would better reflect changes in the incidence of more serious crimes and reduce the impact of high-volume, less serious offences.
28. Such a measure would allow better understanding of the 'crime profile' in police force areas and be used to inform the police response.
29. The index could inform the police funding formula or the allocation of resources within a force as it provides a more sophisticated measure than current crime rates.
30. Following the work done by Cambridge University, it is known that some police forces have already started looking at developing their own crime indexes, indicating that there is a clear user demand for such a measure. Incorporating a crime index measure in the Official Statistics would help minimise the risk of different, non-comparable approaches

being adopted across forces. ONS will shortly be writing to police forces to inform them of our work.

Against

31. Adding another measure of crime to the suite of official statistics has the potential to cause confusion and allow more “cherry picking” and misuse of crime statistics which could undermine trust.
32. A police recorded crime index is also susceptible to changes in recording practices, like the existing police recorded crime measure, so any indication of change in ‘harm/severity’ may not be a true reflection of changes in crime (e.g. could be skewed by recent improvements in recording of violent and sexual offences which are typically more serious than other offences).
33. An index is more complex to understand than a simple aggregate count of offences and risks being perceived as an attempt to massage the figures.

Proposed next steps and timetable for publication and user consultation

34. The Task and Finish Group believes there is merit in publishing a prototype index as ‘experimental statistics’ and seeking feedback from users on whether or not there is value in having this published alongside our regular outputs.
35. ONS proposes the following timetable for future milestones:
 - August 2016: Finalise methodology behind crime index and compute all individual offence weights.
 - September / October 2016: Publish initial results as experimental statistics and request feedback from users on whether they find the crime index useful and would like to see it, or an alternate version(s), published alongside the Official Statistics releases.
 - January 2017: Collate consultation feedback from users and report results to NS-CSAC.
 - April 2017: If user feedback is positive and a decision is made to incorporate the index in Official Statistics, publish latest findings alongside the ‘Crime in England and Wales, year ending December 2016’ release, and from thereon, subsequent quarterly releases.
36. While the development of the index methodology has required resources additional to business as usual activities, once development is complete, it is anticipated that maintenance to and ongoing publication of the index would be absorbed by existing resources. The only planned exception to this is the updating of the offence severity weights, which is scheduled to take place once every five years.

Chris Lewis

Chair of the Crime Index Task and Finish Group

May 2016

Annex A: Crime Index Task and Finish group composition

- Chris Lewis – Chair of Task and Finish Group; University of Portsmouth

Some of the members are also members of NS-CSAC:

- Steve Ellard Elliot – Chief Statistician, Ministry of Justice
- Jeff Farrar – National Policing lead for crime statistics
- John Flatley – Head of ONS' Crime Statistics team

Other members have been invited either because of their direct involvement in the project or their expertise in the topic area:

- Mark Bangs – Office for National Statistics; Grade 7 lead on the crime index
- Richard Cheeseman – Office for National Statistics; part of the project team working on the crime index
- Eleanor Neyroud – University of Cambridge; joint author (with Larry Sherman and Peter Neyroud) of recent papers proposing a Crime Harm Index for England and Wales.
- Stephen Roe – Home Office; Grade 7 analyst recently involved in work to investigate the feasibility of an index measure of crime
- Zoe Sargent – Office for National Statistics; part of the project team working on the crime index
- Adrian Shepherd – Ministry of Justice; Grade 7 analyst leading on criminal justice statistics

Annex B: Calculation of fine and community order equivalences

Fines

The equivalences have been calculated by assessing the number of days it would take to earn the money to pay the fine for an adult working full-time at the UK average wage.

The current average hours worked (full-time workers, seasonally adjusted) = 37.5 hours / week ⇔ 7.5 hours / day

The (as at end of 2015) UK average wage = £465 / week ⇔ £93 / day (if assume worked 5-day week)

⇒ **1 day in prison ≈ £93**

Therefore, where information on average fines is available from the sentencing data, dividing the average fine by 93 will produce the equivalent prison length (in days).

Note: One of the issues still to be finalised is the use of average wage / minimum wage / Jobseeker's Allowance (as the majority of offenders are unemployed) in the calculation of the fine equivalency. Using Jobseeker's Allowance data seems to yield a small equivalency amount – which then results in longer than appropriate prison lengths (longer than the community order equivalencies) – but minimum wage data could be used as a compromise (and produces a sensible looking equivalency amount).

Where information on average fines is not available from the sentencing data, the sentencing guidelines can be used as a proxy.

Fines are usually based on one of three bands (A, B and C); although in certain circumstances a band D, E or F financial penalty can be imposed on an offender:

- Band A: 25-75% of weekly income; mid-point (starting point) = 50% => would need to work for 2.5 days to pay off the fine;
- Band B: 75-125% of weekly income; mid-point (starting point) = 100% => would need to work for 5 days to pay off the fine;
- Band C: 125-175% of weekly income; mid-point (starting point) = 150% => would need to work for 7.5 days to pay off the fine.

⇒ **Band A fine ≈ 2.5 days in prison / Band B fine ≈ 5 days / Band C fine ≈ 7.5 days**

(Band D fine ≈ 12.5 days in prison / Band E fine ≈ 20 days / Band F fine ≈ 30 days)

A Band C fine (the highest usually imposed) results in a slightly less severe punishment than a low community order – see below.

Community orders

Information on average community order length is not available from the sentencing data, but the sentencing guidelines can be used as a proxy.

Although there are several types of punishment that could be imposed when a community order is handed down, a specified range of unpaid work is consistent across all three levels of community order that an offender can receive. This, therefore, is the basis for determining a community order equivalency for a custodial sentence.

Again, the current average hours worked (full-time workers, seasonally adjusted) = 37.5 hours / week ⇔ 7.5 hours / day.

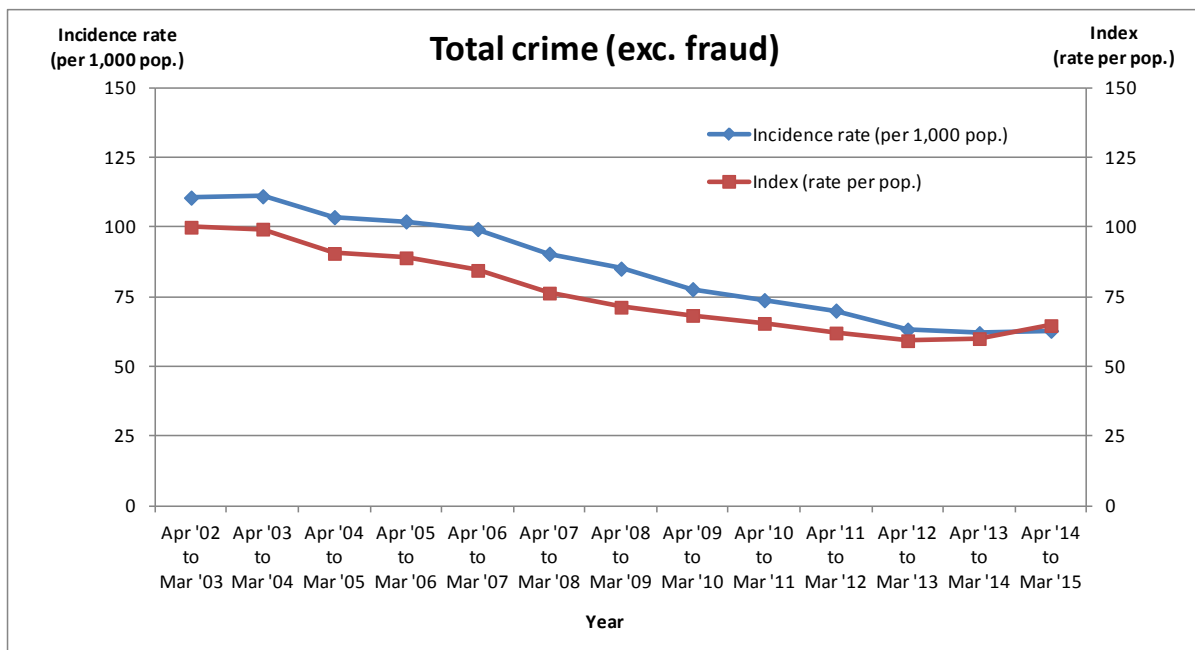
There are three levels of community order an offender can receive:

- Low = 40-80 hours unpaid work; mid-point = 60 hours ⇔ 8 days in prison
- Medium = 80-150 hours unpaid work (mid-point = 115 hours) ⇔ 15 days in prison (rounded from 15.333)
- High = 150-300 hours unpaid work (mid-point = 225 hours) ⇔ 30 days in prison

⇒ **Low community order ≈ 8 days in prison / Medium community order ≈ 15 days / High community order ≈ 30 days**

Offence	Weight
Homicide	5,393
Attempted murder	3,338
Rape of a female	2,117
Rape of a male	1,918
Aggravated burglary in a dwelling	1,311
Inflicting grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent	1,273
More serious wounding or other act endangering life	1,245
Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs	1,059
Trafficking for sexual exploitation	1,031
Kidnapping	785
Arson endangering life	576
Blackmail	566
Abuse of children through prostitution and pornography	563
Robbery of personal property	480
Possession of firearms with intent	449
Trafficking in controlled drugs	328
Burglary in a dwelling	283
Child abduction	211
Threats to kill	190
Arson not endangering life	121
Assault with injury	116
Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	78
Burglary in a building other than a dwelling	74
Theft from the person	58
Threat etc. to commit criminal damage	42
Theft by an employee	40
Handling stolen goods	36
Possession of article with blade or point	36
Stalking	30
Harassment	25
Other theft	23
Theft from a vehicle	22
Assault without injury	11
Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle	11
Shoplifting	9
Criminal damage to a dwelling	5
Criminal damage to a vehicle	4
Possession of controlled drugs (excluding cannabis)	3
Possession of cannabis	2
Soliciting for prostitution	1

Annex D: Total crime (excluding fraud) index – England and Wales



Year	Incidence rate (per 1,000 pop.)	Index (rate per pop.)
Apr '02 to Mar '03	111	100
Apr '03 to Mar '04	111	99
Apr '04 to Mar '05	104	91
Apr '05 to Mar '06	102	89
Apr '06 to Mar '07	99	85
Apr '07 to Mar '08	90	76
Apr '08 to Mar '09	85	71
Apr '09 to Mar '10	78	68
Apr '10 to Mar '11	74	66
Apr '11 to Mar '12	70	62
Apr '12 to Mar '13	63	59
Apr '13 to Mar '14	62	60
Apr '14 to Mar '15	63	65

% change:		
Apr '02 to Mar '03 vs. Apr '14 to Mar '15	-43.2	-35.3
% change:		
Apr '13 to Mar '14 vs. Apr '14 to Mar '15	1.4	7.8

Methodology currently used:

- Victim-based crime and other crimes against society included (fraud excluded)

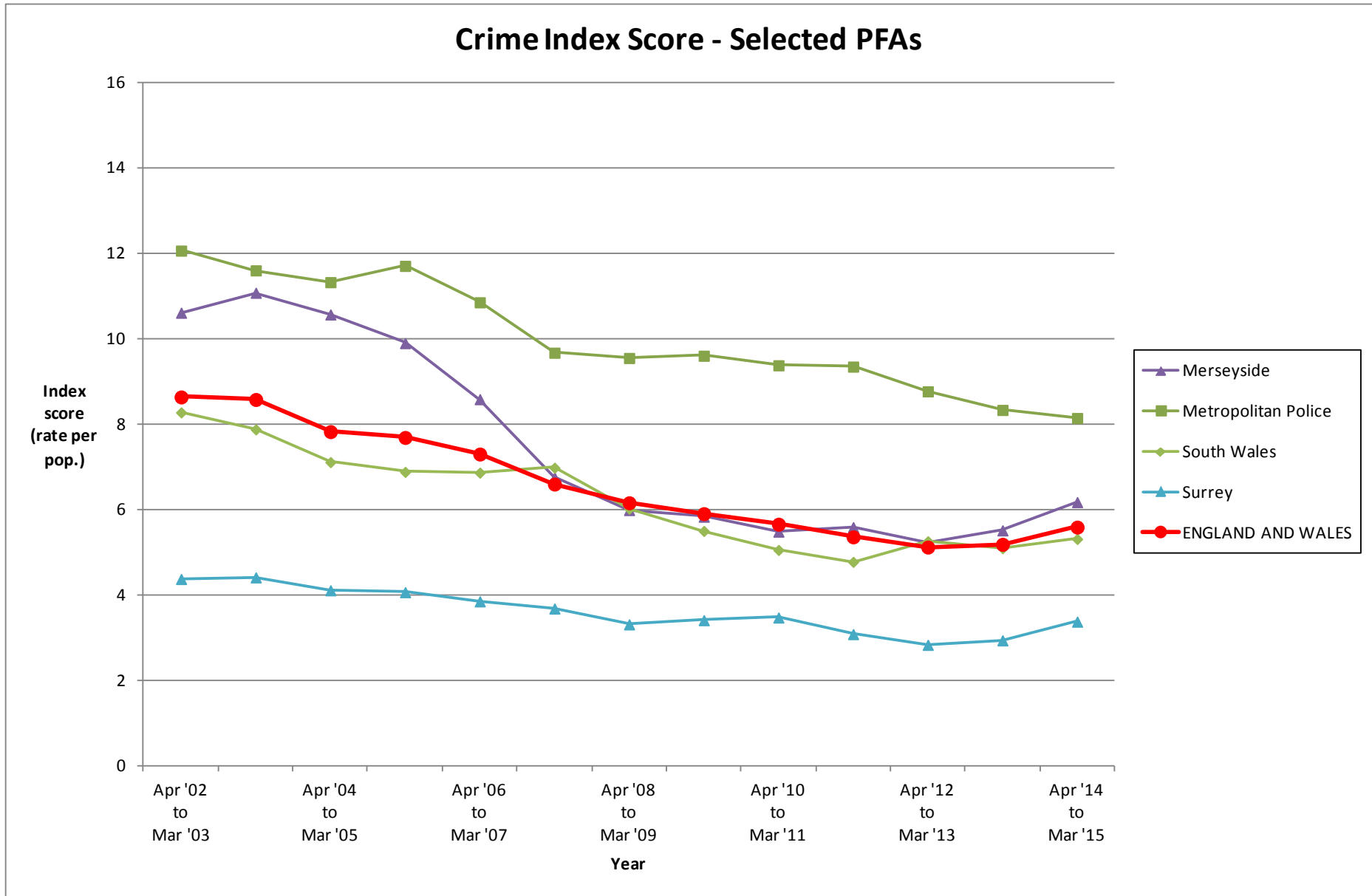
- Murder assigned a fixed sentence length (30 years – maximum below ‘whole life’)
- No ‘Other life sentence’ calculation included
- Fine equivalency calculation based on UK average wage

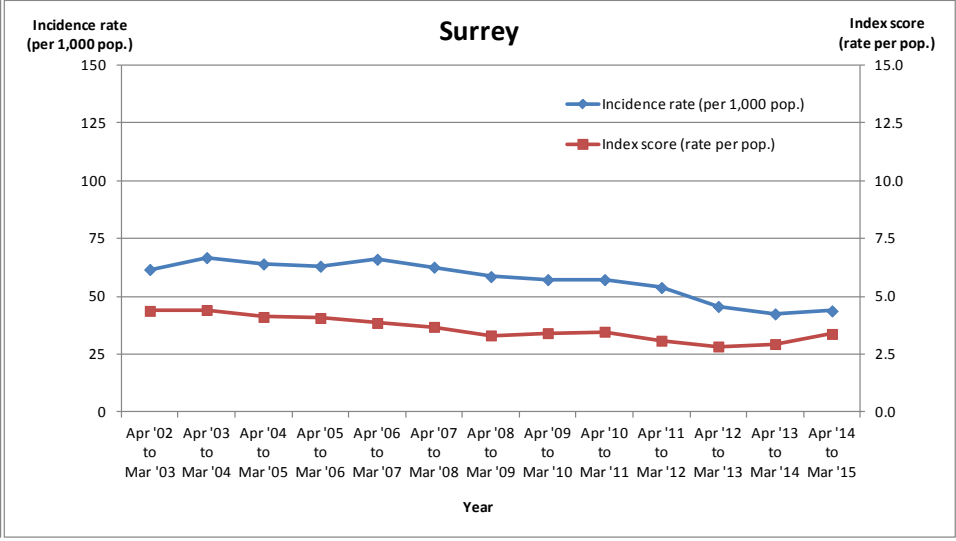
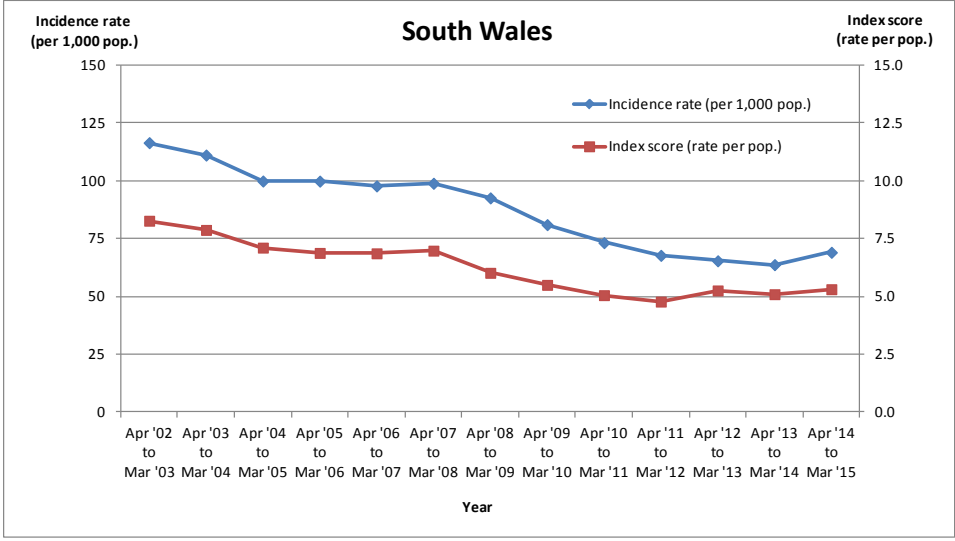
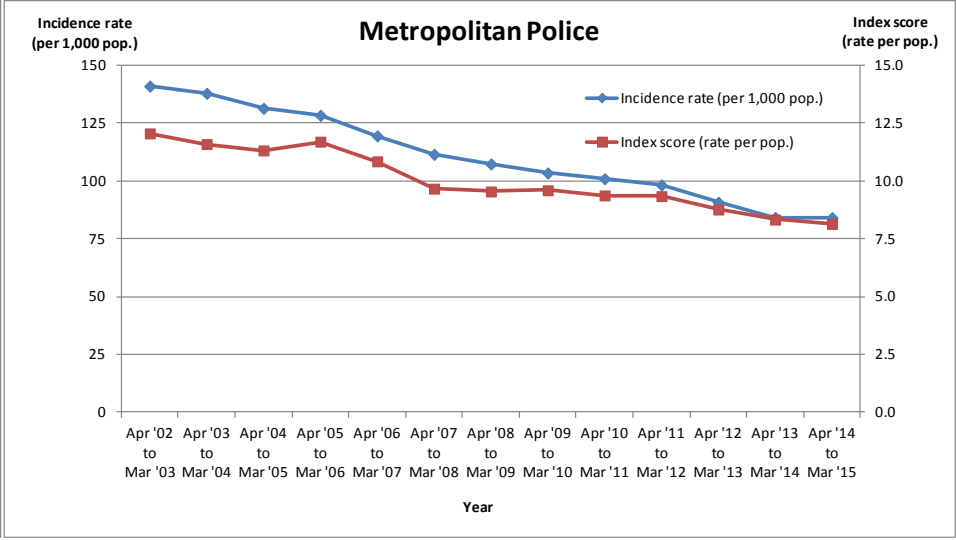
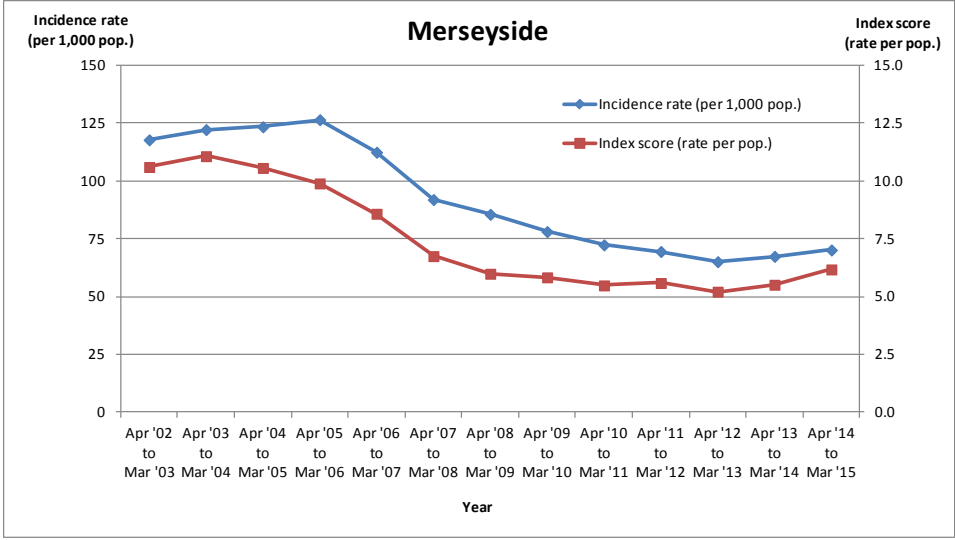
To calculate the index:

- (a) Weight is calculated for each individual offence
- (b) For all offences, values for (a) are multiplied by the number of incidents recorded by the police in England and Wales
- (c) For each year, values for (b) are summed
- (d) For each year, values for (c) are divided by the mid-year population of England and Wales (akin to a rate per population)
- (e) For the base year (year ending March 2003) the value for (d) is set to equal 100; for all other years the values for (d) are scaled to the base year

The same methodology and index calculation has been used in the production of the police force area level indexes – apart from step (e), which has been omitted – substituting the relevant police force area in place of England and Wales in steps (b) and (d).

Annex E: Total crime (excluding fraud) index score – selected police force areas





CRIME STATISTICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report of National Crime Registrar

NSCSAC(16) 3

Purpose/Issue

1. This paper is the regular report to the Committee from the National Crime Registrar. These reports are intended to either outline any proposed changes to the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) in detail where the committee's advice is sought or to inform the committee of non-significant changes for information. These reports have also been used to inform members of other developments that may impact on the quality of crime recording.

Action

2. No significant changes to the HOCR are brought forward at this time. The Committee is invited to note the contents of this paper.

Background

3. In establishing the Crime Statistics Advisory Committee to give independent advice on proposed changes to the Home Office Counting Rules for police recorded crime it was agreed that the National Crime Registrar (NCR) had delegated authority to determine, in agreement with the Chair, whether changes proposed to the HOCR were significant enough that they required referral to it for consideration prior to implementation. It was agreed that minor changes would be reported to the committee for information only.

Crime Recording Strategic Steering Group

4. The National Crime Recording Strategic Steering group (NCRSSG) has met twice since the last meeting of the committee, in January and March 2016. The SSG continues to focus on their oversight of Home Office actions in relation to the ONS re-designation project (some of which may continue after re-assessment) as well as some initial proposals to consider some revisions to the HOCR for 2017 as part of normal business. The committee will be notified and consulted on any such developments once they are more mature and the SSG wishes to take them forward.

2016/17 HOCR

5. The Home Office counting Rules for 2016/17 were published on 1st April 2016. The documents are publically available on-line and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counting-rules-for-recorded-crime>

Training for Force Crime Registrars

6. The committee has previously expressed a close interest in the plans for formal training and accreditation for registrars. Since the last meeting of the committee

two training courses have been held each lasting for a full week. Twenty nine delegates attended and all successfully achieved accreditation as being operationally competent (100% pass rate). Feedback from both courses has been extremely positive and all delegates advised that they found the assessment process challenging and stretching. Thus far fifty eight individuals have taken and passed the formal course. Of those thirty have now moved to be fully accredited and entered onto the College of Policing professional register. There has now been some delay in arranging further courses. A small number of forces (six) have yet to have anyone undertake the course and with some small staff churn elsewhere and with most forces wishing to train at least two members of their staff. The College are now looking to schedule two further courses for the summer/autumn of 2016 The College continues to consider training for the wider community involved in crime recording. The 2016 senior command course included an exercise scenario for delegates based on an ethical crime recording issue.

HMIC Inspection Progress

7. HMIC commenced the new round of crime data integrity inspections in March 2016 with first force (Sussex) being notified. During April two further forces (GMP and Staffordshire) have been notified that they will be subject of inspection. The audit phase in Sussex was completed in early April and work in GMP is underway. HMIC will advise the results in due course. I attended several days of the Sussex audit and can report that the process appears robust and comprehensive with the HMIC well aware of the need to complete the sample sizes specified to provide appropriate statistical accuracy.

Steve Bond
National Crime Registrar
21 April 2016

Issue	Key Points	Timeframe	Latest Developments	Next Steps
<p>Accuracy of police recorded crime data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accumulation of evidence that police recorded crime led the UK Statistics Authority to withdraw National Statistics designation in January 2014. • HMIC inspection of Crime Data Integrity (published November 2014) found unacceptable level of under-recording of crime, particularly violent and sexual offences. • Widely accepted that police recorded crime will never be a good measure of “total crime” but accurate data critical in enabling police efficiency and effectiveness; ensuring victims received the service they require; and enable democratic accountability. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of significant improvement in crime recording processes. • ONS PRC re-designation board (Stephen Shute is NSCSAC representative) met in October to review and recommended draft evidence pack prepared by ONS. • Sir Tom Winsor wrote to Chief Constables in October 2015 announcing that HMIC would be returning to forces to inspect crime recording through a series of unannounced audits. • HMIC started new programme of inspections with first force visited in April 2016. This on-going programme will see all 43 forces inspected over 4 years. • ONS has shared evidence of improvements in crime recording with UKSA Monitoring & Assessment team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKSA Monitoring & Assessment team expected to give a view on progress in late spring/summer 2016. • HMIC expected to publish findings from first seven force inspections in November 2016.
<p>Coverage of fraud and cyber-crime in the official statistics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that CSEW and PRC have failed to keep up to date with changing nature of crime and not up to the job of informing society’s response to it. • Predecessor committee supported proposals to extend scope of police recorded fraud 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to administrative and survey data on fraud have been made and new questions on fraud and cyber-crime were added to the CSEW on 1st October 2015. • Results of field test of new questions published by ONS as research outputs in October 2015 and generated considerable attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First official statistics from CSEW extension to cover Fraud and Computer Misuse Act offences to be published as experimental statistics on 16th July 2016.

Issue	Key Points	Timeframe	Latest Developments	Next Steps
	<p>to cover reports to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau from industry bodies to provide a fuller picture and extend the CSEW to both fraud and some elements of cyber-crime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains issue that significant volume of fraud and cyber-crime experienced by private and public sector bodies will not be captured by existing sources. 			
Measurement of repeat victimisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criticism that the current approach on the CSEW to dealing with repeat victimisation masks high level repeat victimisation experienced by some victims and risked giving a misleading view of the differential experience of male and female victims. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS has established a project to review the current methodology for dealing with high frequency repeat victimisation and consulted the Government Statistical Service's Methodology Advisory Committee in November 2015. Independent survey methodologist commissioned to review options for alternative estimation methods and expected to report in Spring 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS to publish methodological review and consult with users over change to method ahead of regular quarterly release in July 2016. Issue to be discussed at the September NSCSAC meeting following end of user consultation.
Child abuse data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence base on the scale and trends in child abuse weak and not well covered by existing official statistics. At UKSA Better Statistics, Better Decisions event on crime statistics in June 2015, there was a call for a specific victim survey on child abuse to become part of the suite of official statistics on crime. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TFG has been established to map child abuse data to identify existing sources which have potential to be included within the official statistics on crime. The TFG will also identify obvious gaps and make suggestions for how they can be filled. ONS has added some questions to the CSEW, from April 2015, in the self-completion module which asks adult respondents about experiences of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on work of NSCSAC TFG to be given at May meeting. Release of first results from new CSEW questions on child abuse planned for summer 2016.

Issue	Key Points	Timeframe	Latest Developments	Next Steps
Crime Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summing individual offences into a police recorded crime total takes no account of the crime mix. Case has been made that a weighted index which takes account of seriousness of crime would provide a more helpful measure for the police and decision makers. 	Ongoing	<p>abuse (emotional, physical and sexual) experienced as a child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSCSAC Task & Finish Group has been established to review work being taken forward by ONS to explore the feasibility of incorporating a crime severity index as part of the official statistics. The Policing Journal published a follow-up paper by Sherman et al, in April 2016, on the Cambridge Crime Harm Index which attracted media interest and a number of police forces has contacted ONS about the ongoing work. TFG has completed further work on a crime severity index and ready to bring back to main committee for a steer on whether or not to recommend taking this forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper on the agenda of the May NSCSAC meeting to discuss whether or not an Index should form part of the suite of official statistics on crime in England and Wales.
Extending the official statistics on police recorded crime to cover more detail of the nature/circumstances of the offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User demand for more detailed breakdowns of police recorded crime. This was highlighted as weaknesses in relation to both domestic violence and child abuse. Official statistics are currently restricted to aggregate counts of offences and necessary for users to make Fol requests to forces in order to obtain basic information. 	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly all police forces expected to be live on the Home Office Data Hub (HODH) by April 2016 which will contain record level detail on individual offences. This will provide valuable breakdowns such as age/sex of victim and victim/offender relationships. Experimental statistics, based on a sub-set of forces, were published in the Compendium publication Focus on Violence & Sexual Offences in February 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HO and ONS statisticians in discussion about the use of HODH data in official statistics in preparation for data coming on stream during 2016/17.
Improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS are working to improve 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a first step the statistical bulletin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More radical changes are

Issue	Key Points	Timeframe	Latest Developments	Next Steps
communication and presentation of crime statistics	the presentation and communication of their quarterly crime statistics.		has been shortened from 100 to 40 pages to make the main findings more accessible.	<p>planned over the coming 6-12 months including a shift towards leading with rates, rather than numbers, and describing the distribution of crime victimisation to better inform the public and decision makers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views from the NSCAC to be sought with possible agenda item at the September meeting.
Improved measures of police performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded crime an inadequate measure of broader demand on the police. The National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR) could be incorporated within a common framework alongside the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). 	Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions being held within the Police Service/College of Policing about developing better metrics. Letter sent from Chair of NSCSAC to National Statistician (March 2016) supporting proposal in Curtis review that HO should take back ownership of NSIR, review it and incorporate alongside NCRS. In turn, National Statistician advised the Home Secretary on the benefits of this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Secretary expected to respond to National Statistician and HO to publish a response to the Curtis Review in near future. NSCSAC to maintain a watching brief.
Perceived tension between crime recording standards relating to sexual offences (e.g. sexting) and “criminalising” of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been recent revived media interest in the perceived tension between the crime recording rules and the possible “criminalising” of children engaged in sexting (i.e. the sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, 	Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Police Chiefs Council was reported, in the media, to be developing new guidelines on how to handle this issue. The existing NPCC position was set out by the lead, CC Olivia Pinkney, in September 2015.¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue to be added to the agenda for discussion at a future NSCSAC meeting.

¹ <http://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/sexting-and-social-media-police-will-always-try-to-avoid-criminalising-young-people>

Issue	Key Points	Timeframe	Latest Developments	Next Steps
	<p>primarily between mobile phones). Some of the media reporting could serve to undermine public trust in crime statistics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In part, this is due to a misunderstanding of the difference between the requirement within the Home Office Counting Rules to record an offence (committed under Protection of Children Act 1978) and guidance around possible future disclosure of the offence (e.g. during a criminal record check). There is also misunderstanding as to what “criminalising” means. There is an absence of hard evidence as to the reality of this in practice, for example there is no data that shows how many, if any, children, have been subject of formal criminal action (charge/caution) as a consequence. 			
<p>Joining up crime and criminal justice statistics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was also criticism that a lack of a common definitional framework across the crime and the criminal justice system makes it difficult for users. 	<p>Longer term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HO, MoJ and ONS have collaborated successfully in the past in production of compendium publications which join up their statistics, e.g. Sexual Offending, Race and the CJS. Work ongoing to develop a systems diagram helping guide users through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term ambition could be to use linked up data sets to enhance or replace existing official statistics outputs.

Issue	Key Points	Timeframe	Latest Developments	Next Steps
			the labyrinth of crime and justice statistics.	
Utilizing new sources of data (e.g. from other crime agencies, private sector & Big Data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The official statistics on crime published by ONS do not include crimes dealt with by agencies other than the territorial police forces (e.g. National Crime Agency and the UK Border Force) • Private sector could provide much more data on crime (e.g. private security firms may help with cyber-time). • Big Data may have the potential to improve crime statistics. 	Longer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work not actively being progressed at this time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSCSAC to establish a Task & Finish Group in 2016/17 to scope out possible work.

Annex – Recent media coverage of crime statistics issues

Sexting

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-35577506>

Repeat victimisation

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jan/13/hidden-rise-violent-crime-growth-violence-against-women>

Crime Index

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/crime-figures-governments-have-overstated-reductions-in-crime-due-to-out-of-date-recording-methods-a6966991.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3522058/Public-safety-accurately-worked-crime-rates-consider-harm-done.html>

ONS Crime Statistics Improvement

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3524929/Scale-historical-child-abuse-examined-time-official-crime-figures-nationwide-survey-ask-adult-country-victims.html>