

Wendy Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

By email

Andy Marsh QPM
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Dear Andy,

AVON AND SOMERSET CONSTABULARY CRIME DATA INTEGRITY RE-INSPECTION

I am writing to you regarding our re-inspection of crime data integrity (CDI) in your force.

2. Following your CDI inspection in July 2016, we published our [report of this inspection](#) in February 2017 and concluded that the force's crime recording arrangements required improvement. Our 2017 report gave recommendations and areas for improvement aimed at improving crime recording in Avon and Somerset Constabulary. This re-inspection assessed the progress made since that report. My findings and expected next steps resulting from this re-inspection are set out below.

3. During January 2020, my inspectors completed an audit of incident records. This audit assessed the extent to which reported crimes were now being recorded, followed by a series of interviews with members of the workforce. My inspectors found that the constabulary has made changes to its crime recording arrangements and has implemented all the recommendations from our 2017 report. As a result, the recording of rape and modern slavery crimes has improved. However, the inspectors found a deterioration in overall crime recording standards, including those for violence and sexual offences, since the 2016 inspection. This deterioration is not statistically significant in any category, but the constabulary will no doubt seek to address this feature of performance given the need for improvement we had previously identified.

4. Our re-inspection audit established that crime recording accuracy had deteriorated principally due to persistent failures by officers and staff to identify and record domestic abuse related violent crimes and all crimes reported in incidents involving more than one crime.

5. Overall, we found a crime recording accuracy of 86.3 percent (with a confidence interval of +/-2.74 percent). This compares to a previous rate of 89.6 percent (with a confidence interval of +/-1.66 percent). For violent crimes, we found a recording accuracy of 82.6 percent (with a confidence interval of +/-4.35 percent). This compares to a previous rate of 88.5 percent (with a confidence interval of +/-3 percent). For sexual crimes, we found a recording accuracy of 91.1 percent (with a confidence interval of +/-4.52 percent). This compares to a previous rate of 91.9 percent (with a confidence interval of +/-2.63 percent).

6. It must be noted that we applied different target confidence intervals for each audit. In 2016 this was +/- 3 percent; in our latest audit we worked to within +/- 5 percent. Also, our 2016 audit sample of force crime and incident data was drawn from a six-month period whereas our latest audit was drawn from a three-month period.

7. I note that, prior to this inspection, the constabulary had already identified that it was still under-recording reported crimes. A crime recording review was commissioned early in 2019 which resulted in some recommendations to implement process and workload changes to address this under-recording. Those changes were implemented on 1 November 2019. Regrettably, it is too early to assess the effect of these changes on crime recording performance, however I am encouraged that the constabulary has worked to understand its crime-recording standards and is clearly determined to get it right.

8. A comprehensive debrief was supplied to you immediately after this latest inspection. This contained full details of areas where the constabulary has further work to do to better understand and resolve the factors limiting its ability to improve crime recording accuracy. I look forward to hearing of the action you are now taking to further enhance crime recording standards in Avon and Somerset Constabulary and would be very pleased if you will work with my new Force Liaison Lead, Steve Gittins, to keep him apprised of progress.

Yours sincerely,



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