

Crime data integrity

Inspection of City of London Police

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Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Methodology | 4 |
| The scope and structure of the report..... | 4 |
| Part A: Summary of inspection findings and recommendations | 5 |
| Leadership and governance..... | 5 |
| Systems and processes..... | 6 |
| People and skills..... | 10 |
| Recommendations..... | 11 |
| Part B: Audit findings in numbers | 13 |
| Part C: Additional detailed inspection findings | 14 |
| Leadership and governance..... | 14 |
| Systems and processes..... | 16 |
| People and skills..... | 20 |

Introduction

In its 2013/14 inspection programme¹, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) committed to carry out an inspection into the way the 43 police forces in England and Wales record crime data. All 43 forces will be inspected by mid August 2014, with a full thematic report published in autumn 2014. The central question of this inspection programme is:

“To what extent can police-recorded crime information be trusted?”

Accurate crime recording underlines the police service's commitment to public accountability, ensures that local policing bodies² can match resources to the risks identified in communities and enables the police to provide a proper service to victims of crime.

Recent HMIC inspections have revealed weaknesses in police crime recording, particularly the under-recording of crimes. In our interim report of 1 May 2014 we said that *“we are seriously concerned at the picture which is emerging”*.³

We strongly recommend our findings in this report are read alongside the interim report, *Crime recording: A matter of fact - An interim report of the inspection of crime data integrity in police forces in England and Wales*, available at www.hmic.gov.uk.

The interim report sets out the full context of this inspection programme including the rules and standards governing crime data integrity: the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS)⁴ and Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR)⁵.

¹ The 2013/14 inspection programme was approved by the Home Secretary under section 54 of the Police Act 1996.

² Police and crime commissioners for police areas outside London: the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime for the Metropolitan Police Service; and the City of London Corporation for the City of London Police.

³ *Crime recording: A matter of fact – An interim report of the inspection of crime data integrity in police forces in England and Wales*, paragraph 1.20.

⁴ NCRS is a standard of crime-recording introduced in 2002 and published as part of the Home Office Counting Rules; it has the twin objectives of ensuring the police focus more on victims of crime and ensuring consistency in crime-recording in all police forces.

⁵ HOCR are rules in accordance with which crime data – required to be submitted to the Home Secretary under sections 44 and 45 of the Police Act 1996 – must be collected. They set down how the police service in England and Wales must record crime, how crimes must be classified according to crime type and categories, whether and when to record crime, how many crimes to record in respect of a single incident and the regime for the re-classification of crimes as no-crimes.

Methodology

Each force inspection involves:

1. An examination of crime records for the period 1 November 2012 to 31 October 2013;
2. A dip-sample of out-of-court disposals (cautions, Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND), cannabis warnings, community resolutions) and no-crime decisions for rape, robbery and violence;
3. Visits to forces where inspectors assess local crime recording arrangements under three headings: leadership and governance; systems and processes; and people and skills; and
4. A peer review of audit findings by an NCRS expert from outside HMIC.

The audit examined for compliance a small sample of crime records from each force. Taken together, these samples are sufficient to provide a reliable national estimate, but are too small to produce a force estimate of compliance. Force compliance rates typically result in a margin of error of around +/- 10 percent and therefore a range of 20 percent. This range of uncertainty means that few, if any, conclusions can be drawn from individual force compliance rates or comparisons of rates between forces based on the data alone. (Samples large enough to make more reliable force judgements, while desirable, were not affordable.) Our conclusions and recommendations are, therefore, based upon the evidence drawn from our inspection of the force's crime-recording arrangements.

The scope and structure of the report

This report is divided into the following sections:

1. Part A: A summary of our findings, and recommendations;
2. Part B: Our findings in numbers;
3. Part C: Additional detailed inspection findings.

This report, undertaken at a force level, allows a qualitative assessment of the force's crime recording arrangements and to make recommendations for improvement.

Part A: Summary of inspection findings and recommendations

Leadership and governance

Chief officers in the City of London Police promote the importance of crime data integrity throughout the force. The assistant commissioner is the force lead responsible for crime data integrity.

The force has an established governance structure for monitoring performance including crime data integrity. The force has a current procedure for crime recording, which is compliant with the NCRS and HOCR, but this makes no specific reference to adopting an ethical approach.

The force has a professional standards department confidential reporting facility for staff to raise integrity concerns of any kind. Officers and staff we spoke to were aware of this. We found no evidence of direct encouragement for staff to use this facility in relation to crime recording matters.

Recommendation: Immediately, the force should ensure all police officers and police staff have a clear understanding that the confidential reporting facility is available and can be used to report concerns in relation to crime-recording.

Officers use a standard 16 point plan to assist in the recording of crime details to ensure a consistency of approach. This is supported by an effective daily process to review all recorded crime through a set of management meetings.

However, very few crime record audits have been conducted and the force does not have a current audit plan. One is being proposed for 2014 and this will be overseen by the force crime registrar (FCR).

Recommendation: Within three months, the force should introduce a structured regular audit plan, ensuring as far as is reasonably possible that the resources available to the FCR are sufficient to ensure full compliance with the HOCR and NCRS and the proper and timely operation of the audits. These should be subject to scrutiny through the performance management board.

Systems and processes

Accuracy of crime recording

Of the 65 incident records⁶ examined, 60 crimes should have been recorded. Of the 60 crimes that should have been recorded, 54 were. Of the 54, two were wrongly classified and one was recorded outside the 72-hour limit allowed under the HOCR.

The force has a centralised crime management unit. This unit records reports of crime directly from members of the public which do not require the creation of an incident record. Inspection of this unit involved a review of 20 crimes recorded by the unit. All 20 were recorded correctly with no mis-classifications of crime categories. This approach to crime recording by the force is generally effective.

Crimes are referred from other agencies, such as health and social services, directly to the force's specialist departments. From the 11 referrals we examined, 12 crimes (a single referral can include details of more than one crime) should have been recorded, 11 had been. This indicates a strong process in the management of reports of crime received through referrals from other agencies.

The centralised crime management unit does not operate for the full 24 hour period and out-of-hours the responsibility for crime recording falls to control room staff. At times, control room staff created sub-standard crime reports, which caused the victims to be re-contacted later on by the centralised crime management unit to complete the required details.

Recommendation: Within three months, the force should review the standards and consistency of approach to crime recording within the force control room and, as soon as practicable after that date, implement improvements to ensure that victims always receive an appropriate service.

Control room supervisors monitor calls received from the public to assess the standards of call handling and to ensure accurate crime recording and a victim-centred approach is adopted. However, there is no consistency or structured approach to this process.

⁶ An incident in this context is a report of events received by the police, recorded on the electronic incident systems, that requires police attention. Whether or not an incident report becomes a crime record is determined on the balance of probability that a notifiable offence has occurred as set out in the Home Office Counting Rules. If an incident does not turn out to be a crime, it must still be logged in an auditable form on the force's incident-recording system or some other accessible or auditable means.

Recommendation: Immediately, the force should ensure that a consistent and structured approach to call handling quality assurance processes in the force control room, and one that has NCRS at its core, is implemented.

On occasions, crimes that have occurred in other police force areas are reported to the City of London Police. The force has an established procedure for recording and transferring these crimes, in particular to the Metropolitan Police Service, but also to other forces. However, it is not sufficiently specific in terms of the transfer of evidential material.

Recommendation: Immediately, the force should amend the procedure to transfer crimes to another force to include guidance on the transfer of evidential material.

Out-of-court disposals

Out-of-court disposals include cautions, Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs),⁷ cannabis warnings⁸ and community resolutions.⁹ The HOCR (section H) states that national guidance must be followed¹⁰.

Cautions – Of the 20 cautions dip-sampled, in all cases the offender's previous history made them suitable to receive a caution. In all cases we found evidence that the offender was made aware of the nature and future implications of accepting the caution. Out of the 16 cases where there was a victim to consult, 14 showed that the victims' views had been considered.

Penalty Notices for Disorder – Of the 21 PND disposals dip-sampled, the offender was suitable to receive a penalty notice in 18 cases. In all cases the

⁷ A form of immediate financial punishment used by police to deal with low-level offending such as being drunk and disorderly, retail theft, and minor criminal damage.

⁸ A cannabis warning is a non-statutory disposal for cases of possession of cannabis for personal use. It constitutes a warning to the offender and confiscation of the cannabis.

⁹ Resolution of a minor offence or anti-social behaviour incident through informal agreement between the parties involved, for example often involving the offender making good the loss or damage caused.

¹⁰ National guidance for the use of out-of-court disposals is detailed in a number of documents:

- *Home Office Circular 016/2008: Simple Cautioning – Adult Offenders*. Available from www.xact.org.uk
- *Simple Cautions for Adult Offenders*, 14 November 2013. Available from www.justice.gov.uk
- *Code of Practice for Adult Conditional Cautions*, 8 April 2000. Available from www.justice.gov.uk
- *Home Office Police Operational Guidance for Penalty Notices for Disorder*, March 2005. Available from www.justice.gov.uk
- *ACPO Guidance on Cannabis Possession for Personal Use*, 28 January 2009. Available from www.acpo.police.uk

offender had been made aware of the nature and future implications of accepting the penalty notice. Out of the 15 cases, where there was a victim to consult, six showed that victims had their views considered when the police decided to issue a penalty notice.

Cannabis warnings – Of the 20 cannabis warnings dip-sampled, the offender was suitable to receive a warning in 18 cases. In all cases, no evidence existed that the offender had been made aware of the nature and implications of accepting the warning.

Recommendation: Immediately, the force should review the recording and quality assurance of the use of cannabis warnings to ensure they are only used in appropriate cases, are subject to effective supervisory oversight and that the implications to the offender of accepting the warning are explained and recorded.

Community resolutions – Of the 9 community resolutions dip-sampled, the offender was suitable to receive the disposal in all cases. All cases showed that the wishes and personal circumstances of the victim had been properly considered, and all 9 cases showed that the agreed outcome was meaningful and appropriate¹¹.

Out-of-court disposals are monitored and managed initially through supervisors within the crime management unit. However, there is an inconsistent approach to frontline supervision. The content and completion of community resolution and PND forms is lacking in detail.

Recommendation: Within three months, the force should develop and implement a standard approach which ensures effective frontline supervision of out-of-court disposals, with particular emphasis on the content and completion of community resolutions and PND records.

No-crime

No-crime refers to an incident that was initially recorded as a crime but has subsequently been found not to be a crime on the basis of additional verifiable information.

Of the 41 no-crime records examined, 34 were found to be compliant with HO CR and NCRS. 6 incorrect decisions were identified in the violence crime

¹¹ National guidance for community resolution directs that at the point the community resolution is administered an officer will need to confirm the offender admits the offence and explain the process to the offender – including how the offender will make good the harm caused. The implications of receiving a community resolution need to be explained to the offender – it does not form part of a criminal record but may be disclosed as part of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. The community resolution is to be recorded appropriately, in accordance with the NCRS and HO CR.

category (out of 35 no-crime records) and related to a mistaken interpretation of additional verifiable information.¹²

The authority to make no-crime offences, other than rape, rests with the detective chief inspector (crime).

Recommendation: Immediately, the force should ensure guidance is provided to officers and staff who are engaged in requesting or making no-crime decisions which clearly describes the standard of additional verifiable information required in order to authorise a no-crime in accordance with the NCRS.

Victim-centred approach

Chief officers, through briefings and guidance, promote a victim-centred approach to crime recording. The force has identified that there are lower levels of satisfaction where crimes are initially reported to an outside force, and subsequently transferred to the City of London Police for action. The force is working to understand this issue better before putting solutions in place.

The force regularly conducts surveys of people who report incidents and crime and who call the non-emergency 101 number. The results of these surveys are used to improve crime recording processes, particularly in relation to victim follow-up. All victims of crime are, in the near future, to receive victim leaflets which will contain contact details for support groups.

Rape offences

The force policy provides clear guidance on how rape crimes should be managed, and it directs that it is the responsibility of the first officer dealing with the victim to create the crime record. We found that not all officers have a clear understanding of the policy and this requirement.

Recommendation: Immediately, the force should take steps to ensure frontline officers have an understanding of the guidance and their responsibilities, when dealing with reports of rape.

A rape steering group, chaired by a detective inspector, scrutinises all new cases of rape and reviews all updates on other current cases to quality assure the investigation and management of the cases.

Where it transpires that the rape has been committed in another force area, the force procedure provides clear direction and emphasises the need for continued support to the victim during the period.

¹² Additional verifiable information is information that was not available at the time the original crime recording decision was made, that shows the crime did not occur, and this information is capable of verification in terms of the origin, reliability and relevance to the crime in question.

IT systems

The force has a separate computer system for each of its incident and crime recording functions and these systems are linked. Both of these systems are well managed, with regular audits and information weeding. There are no other integrated or standalone systems in operation that contain reports of active crime investigations.

People and skills

We found that staff and supervisors responsible for managing out-of-court disposals and no-crimes and working in specialist departments had an appropriate knowledge of NCRS and HOCR.

Training on NCRS and HOCR has been delivered to control room staff; however, due to a number of changes of personnel within this department particularly at a supervisory level, a number of people had not received this training.

Frontline staff have access to a reference document on crime recording guidance and the force intranet has recently been updated to provide advice to staff on crime recording matters. However, there is no structured approach within the learning and development department which focuses on accurate and ethical crime recording.

Recommendation: Within six months, the force should conduct a NCRS and HOCR training needs analysis. Immediately thereafter, it should introduce a tiered, co-ordinated training programme on NCRS and HOCR, prioritising personnel in roles which impact on quality, timeliness and victim focus. In particular, it should ensure the training is always made available to new personnel, including supervisors, during their induction to the control room.

We found that officers and staff had heard and understood the chief officer team messages about the expected standards of behaviour and conduct with regards to crime recording. We did not find any evidence of performance pressures leading to failures in crime recording.

Force crime registrar¹³

The FCR has extensive knowledge and experience in the management of crime data and the application of the NCRS and HOCR.

¹³ The person in a police force who is responsible for ensuring compliance with crime-recording rules. The HOCR provide that he is ultimately responsible for all decisions to record a crime or to make a no-crime decision, as the final arbiter. The force crime registrar's responsibilities include training staff in the crime-recording process and carrying out audits to check that the force is complying with all applicable rules.

The FCR has the full support of, and access to, the assistant commissioner in his role as force lead for crime data integrity. All crime-recording disputes are appropriately referred to the FCR, who is seen as the final arbiter in any disputes arising in the crime recording process.

The FCR is the author of the force procedure document on crime recording and he offers advice to authors of other force documents that contain elements of crime data integrity.

Recommendations

Immediately

1. Chief officers should ensure all police officers and police staff have a clear understanding that the confidential reporting facility is available and can be used to report concerns in relation to crime-recording.
2. The force should ensure that a consistent and structured approach to call handling quality assurance processes in the force control room, and one that has NCRS at its core, is implemented.
3. The force should amend the procedure to transfer crimes to another force to include guidance on the transfer of evidential material.
4. The force should review the recording and quality assurance of the use of cannabis warnings to ensure they are only used in appropriate cases, are subject to effective supervisory oversight, and that the implications to the offender of accepting the warning are explained and recorded.
5. The force should ensure guidance is provided to officers and staff who are engaged in requesting or making no-crime decisions which clearly describes the standard of additional verifiable information required in order to authorise a no-crime in accordance with the NCRS.
6. The force should take steps to ensure frontline officers have an understanding of the guidance and their responsibilities, when dealing with reports of rape.

Within three months

7. The force should review the standards and consistency of approach to crime recording within the force control room and, as soon as practicable after that date, implement improvements to ensure that victims always receive an appropriate service.
8. The force should develop and implement a standard approach which ensures effective frontline supervision of out-of-court disposals, with particular emphasis on the content and completion of community resolutions and PND records.

9. The force should introduce a structured regular audit plan, ensuring as far as is reasonably possible that the resources available to the FCR are sufficient to ensure full compliance with the HOCA and NCRS and the proper and timely operation of the audits. These should be subject to scrutiny through the performance management board.

Within six months

10. The force should conduct a NCRS and HOCA training needs analysis. Immediately thereafter, it should introduce a tiered, co-ordinated training programme on NCRS and HOCA, prioritising personnel in roles which impact on quality, timeliness and victim focus. In particular, it should ensure the training is always made available to new personnel, including supervisors, during their induction to the control room.

Part B: Audit findings in numbers

Our audit of records will be used as part of a statistically robust national audit to allow HMIC to report a figure for national crime recording accuracy across the 43 Home Office forces within our final report to be published in autumn 2014. The audit undertaken at a force level is not of a sufficient size to be statistically robust and is therefore used alongside our fieldwork interviews to form qualitative judgments only.

| Crimes reported as part of an incident record | | |
|---|--|---|
| Incidents reviewed | Crimes identified | Crimes recorded |
| HMIC reviewed the following number of incident records in the City of London Police. These include reported incidents of burglary, violence, robbery, criminal damage and sexual offences. | From these incidents HMIC identified the following number of crimes. | From these identified crimes the City of London Police recorded the following number of crimes. |
| 65 | 60 | 54 |
| Crimes reported directly from the victim | | |
| HMIC reviewed the following number of reports of crimes that were reported directly by telephone to the City of London Police centralised crime recording unit. These include reported incidents of burglary, violence, robbery, criminal damage and sexual offences. | From these reports received directly by telephone from the victim by the centralised crime recording unit HMIC identified the following number of crimes that the City of London Police should have been recorded. | From these identified crimes the City of London Police recorded the following number of crimes correctly. |
| 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Crimes referred from other agencies directly to the City of London Police specialist departments | | |
| Referrals | Crimes identified | Crimes recorded |
| HMIC reviewed the following number of referrals reported directly to the City of London Police specialist departments from other agencies which contained reports of crime. | From these referrals to specialist departments HMIC identified the following number of crimes that the City of London Police should have recorded. | From these identified crimes the City of London Police recorded the following number of crimes. |
| 11 | 12 | 11 |
| No-crimes | | |
| HMIC reviewed the following number of recorded crimes of rape, violence and robbery which the City of London Police had subsequently recorded as no-crime. | From these HMIC assessed the following number as being correct. | |
| 41 | 34 | |

Part C: Additional detailed inspection findings

Our detailed findings are set out against three headings: leadership and governance, systems and processes, and people and skills.

Leadership and governance

1 Does the force have arrangements at a senior level to ensure there is confidence in recorded crime figures and all aspects of the HOCR?

1.1 How is the City of London Police ensuring that leadership responsibilities and expectations for crime data integrity are clearly defined and unambiguously communicated to staff?

The assistant commissioner is the responsible officer for crime data integrity and he chairs a number of key meetings which monitor crime data integrity: the performance management group, the information management board and organisational learning forum. The force also has a data quality working group chaired by a senior manager.

The Commissioner adopts a highly visible approach reinforcing the message that the force must get it right, which is having a positive impact across the organisation. He also maintains a blog on the force intranet which periodically highlights the importance of ethical and accurate crime recording. There is no evidence of performance pressures leading to unethical recording practices within the force.

The force has a confidential reporting facility for staff to raise integrity concerns of any kind; officers and staff we spoke to were aware of this. This is an e-mail based system, accessed through the front page of the intranet or the professional standards department area of the website. However, we found no evidence of direct encouragement for staff to use this facility in relation to crime recording concerns.

The force policy and procedure on crime reporting, management and investigation standards reflects the NCRS but this makes no reference to maintaining an ethical approach to crime recording.

1.2 How does the City of London Police ensure it has a proportionate approach to managing the strategic and organisational risk of recording crime data?

The force has an effective process to review recorded crime and the subsequent decision making processes. All crime related issues are subject to scrutiny at the daily crime management meeting chaired by the detective inspector (crime). If necessary, matters can be escalated to the force daily

management meeting chaired by a chief inspector or above for a wider debate on the issue.

Further scrutiny of recorded crime is provided by the designated decision maker¹⁴ and FCR who review key crime recording decisions. The deputy force crime registrar assesses key crime categories of sexual offences and violent crime on a daily basis.

We found that very few crime record audits have been conducted and that the force does not have a current audit plan; however, one is being proposed for 2014 and this will be overseen by the FCR.

1.3 How does the City of London Police use HOCR, NCRS, and NSIR to ensure there is confidence that crime is recorded accurately?

There is a single standard for crime-recording on the UNIFI crime management system and the crime management unit (CMU) has introduced a generic 16 point plan for all reported crime to ensure consistency of approach. This is currently being reviewed by the CMU to improve standards further.

All crimes are quality assured each day by the CMU sergeant who addresses immediately any issues before each is discussed at the daily crime meeting. Following this meeting, the crime is allocated to the relevant department/officer for action and is subject to further quality assurance by the CMU administration staff.

The force has identified the routes by which crime is reported to the force. This should allow an effective audit regime to be implemented.

¹⁴ The designated decision maker role in the City of London Police is to provide practical advice, guidance and act as arbiter at a local level to ensure the accurate recording of crime and crime-related incidents in accordance with national standards.

Systems and processes

2 Does the force have systems and processes in place to ensure that crime is correctly recorded in accordance with HOCR and NCRS; standards of out-of-court disposals are maintained; and no-crime decisions are correct?

2.1 How does the City of London Police effectively manage and supervise incidents, other reporting routes and crime records in order to ensure that crimes are correctly recorded?

Of the 65 incident records¹⁵ examined, 60 crimes should have been recorded. Of the 60 crimes that should have been recorded, 54 were. Of the 54, two were wrongly classified and one was recorded outside the 72-hour limit allowed under the HOCR.

Of those crimes reported directly to the centralised crime management unit, 20 crimes should have been recorded and 20 had been recorded correctly.

We examined crimes that are referred from other agencies directly to the force's specialist departments. From the 11 referrals we examined, 12 crimes should have been recorded and 11 had been.

The centralised crime management unit does not operate for the full 24 hour period and out-of-hours, the responsibility for crime recording falls to control room staff. At times, control room staff created sub-standard crime reports which caused the victims to be re-contacted later on by the centralised crime management unit to complete the required details.

Serious crime cases are subject to scrutiny from the on-call detectives with further scrutiny provided through the daily crime management arrangements where all crimes are subject to review. Online reporting is a relatively new concept in the force and is being managed through the CMU.

Control room supervisors monitor calls received within the control room. During the fieldwork there was evidence of review from supervisors who routinely monitor the standards of call handling to ensure accurate crime recording and a victim-centred approach. However, there is no consistency or structured approach to this process.

On occasion, crimes that have occurred in other police force areas are reported to the City of London Police. The force has an established process for

¹⁵ An incident in this context is a report of events received by the police, recorded on the electronic incident systems, that requires police attention. Whether or not an incident report becomes a crime record is determined on the balance of probability that a notifiable offence has occurred as set out in the Home Office Counting Rules. If an incident does not turn out to be a crime, it must still be logged in an auditable form on the force's incident-recording system or some other accessible or auditable means.

transferring these crimes, in particular to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), but also to other forces; however, it does not outline how the transfer of physical evidence should take place.

2.2 How does the City of London Police ensure that out-of-court disposals suit the needs of victims, offenders and the criminal justice system?

Cautions – Of the 20 cautions dip-sampled, in all cases the offender's previous history made them suitable to receive a caution. In all cases we found evidence that the offender was made aware of the nature and future implications of accepting the caution. Out of the 16 cases where there was a victim to consult, 14 showed that the victims' views had been considered.

Penalty Notices for Disorder – Of the 21 PND disposals dip-sampled, the offender was suitable to receive a penalty notice in 18 cases. In all cases the offender had been made aware of the nature and future implications of accepting the penalty notice. Out of the 15 cases, where there was a victim to consult, 6 showed that victims had their views considered when the police decided to issue a penalty notice.

Cannabis warnings – Of the 20 cannabis warnings dip-sampled, the offender was suitable to receive a warning in 18 cases. In all cases no evidence existed that the offender had been made aware of the nature and implications of accepting the warning.

Community resolutions - Of the 9 community resolutions dip-sampled, the offender was suitable to receive the disposal in all cases. All cases showed that the wishes and personal circumstances of the victim had been properly considered, and all cases showed that the agreed outcome was meaningful and appropriate in relation to both the offender and the victim.

In most cases, the needs of victims are balanced along with those of offenders and the wider criminal justice system when applying out-of-court disposals. This was particularly evident within the custody environment where the victim features heavily in the decision making process. Regular contact is kept with the victim throughout the lifetime of the crime and a crime is not closed until the victim has been updated about how the crime is going to be disposed.

Out-of-court disposals are monitored and managed initially through supervisors within the crime management unit; however there is an inconsistent approach to frontline supervision. The content and completion of community resolution and penalty notices for disorder forms is lacking in detail.

2.3 Are no-crime decisions for high-risk crime categories correct and is there robust oversight and quality control in the City of London Police?

No-crime refers to an incident that was initially recorded as a crime but has subsequently been found not to be a crime on the basis of additional verifiable information.

The authority to make a no-crime decision rests with the detective chief inspector (crime). However the authority to no-crime a rape investigation is the responsibility of a detective chief superintendent. The FCR has the responsibility to review the accuracy of all rape no-crime decisions and, as with other offences, is the final arbiter in all cases.

Our audit revealed examples of the inappropriate use of the no-crime rule. From the 41 no-crime records examined, 34 were correctly authorised. 6 incorrect decisions were identified in the violence category (from 35 no-crime records) and related to a mistaken interpretation of additional verifiable information.

2.4 How does the City of London Police promote a victim-centred approach to crime recording and associated outcomes?

The force promotes and displays a victim-centred approach to crime recording, crime outcomes and no-crime decisions. Force policy and procedure focus on compliance prior to investigations being filed. All victims are contacted to update them on the outcome of their crime, including those cases where a no-crime decision has been made.

In cases of domestic abuse, the force uses the DASH model¹⁶ with all cases subjected to review by the public protection unit (PPU) where a victim's advocate maintains contact and provides ongoing support to victims.

The force has identified that there are lower levels of satisfaction where the victim makes initial contact with the MPS and the incident is then transferred to the City of London Police for action. The force is not entirely clear if victims are being advised that their crime has been transferred to the City of London Police and how soon victims are being contacted by the force upon receipt of the crime. The force is working better to understand this issue before putting solutions in place.

The force regularly conducts surveys of people who report incidents and crime. A process is in place to take random samples of crime reports on differing days to ensure that standards of reporting and victim care are being maintained. All

¹⁶ The DASH model; domestic abuse, stalking and so-called honour-based violence risk identification, assessment and management model is used to ensure consistent assessment of risk in these types of cases.

victims of crime are, in the near future, to receive victim leaflets which will contain contact details of support groups.

Satisfaction surveys are co-ordinated by the performance information unit and are used to improve crime recording processes, particularly in relation to victim follow-up. The FCR monitors the outcome of customer and victim satisfaction surveys and deals with identified issues where necessary. The outcomes of the surveys are examined at the organisational learning forum.

2.5 How does the City of London Police ensure systems for receiving, recording and managing reported crimes of rape are robust?

The force has a policy providing guidance on how rape crimes should be managed, which directs that it is the responsibility of the first officer dealing with the victim to create the crime record; not all officers have a clear understanding of the policy.

The PPU deals with all reports of rape resulting in the deployment of sexual offence investigation trained officers. The inspection found high standards of investigation, even in the event of uncertainty over the precise offence location.

A rape steering group is chaired by the detective inspector of the PPU. It examines all new cases and reviews all updates on other current cases. This scrutiny is in addition to the daily review of rape and serious sexual offences at the crime management meeting and subsequent daily management meeting. Inspection of rape and serious sexual offence reports found that all had been accurately recorded on the CAD system, and that all had been correctly classified.

Force policy describes how to deal with no-criming of rape crime records. The process was understood by those officers interviewed. The authority to no-crime a rape investigation is the responsibility of a detective chief superintendent; however, the FCR has the responsibility to review the accuracy of all rape no-crime decisions and, as with other offences, is the final arbiter in all cases.

As regards reports of rape occurring in other forces, force policy provides direction and, in particular, emphasises the need for continued support to the victim during that period. Our inspection found that there was an audit trail for those incidents of rape transferred to the MPS as these cases can be sent electronically from the force to the MPS police public protection units.

2.6 How do the City of London Police IT systems allow for efficient and effective management of crime recording?

The force has a clear understanding of the IT systems it uses which may contain reports of crime. These are called CAD and UNIFI, and are linked. Both of these systems are well managed, with regular system audits and information weeding. There are no other integrated or standalone systems in operation.

CAD records over 12 months old automatically transfer onto another historical system for retention. All details remain accessible.

People and skills

3 Does the force have staff whose conduct and skills ensure accurate crime recording?

3.1 What arrangements does the City of London Police have in place to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to ensure accurate crime recording?

The FCR and CMU supervisors have delivered training to control room staff. Due to a number of changes of personnel within this department, particularly at a supervisory level, a number of people had not received this training. All crime management personnel, specialist staff and senior managers demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the HO CR, NCRS and National Standard of Incident Recording.

An initiative, led by the data quality working group, has led to the production of a reference document on crime recording which has been issued to frontline staff. The force intranet has recently been updated and provides advice to staff in crime recording matters. There is further advice and support available to staff through the CMU structure. There is no structured approach within the learning and development department that focuses on accurate and ethical crime recording other than the professionalising investigations programme (level two) course which is only available to detectives.

3.2 How do the behaviours of the City of London Police officers and staff reflect a culture of integrity for crime recording practice and decision-making?

The chief officer 'get it right' principles, reinforcing ethical crime recording practices, are having a positive impact at all levels within the organisation. During reality testing, staff recognised the importance of ethical crime recording and compliance with the NCRS and HO CR. In our inspection we did not find any evidence of performance pressures leading to failures in crime recording, whether under-recording or misclassification of crimes.

3.3 How is the accuracy of crime recording in the City of London Police actively overseen and governed by the force crime registrar (FCR)?

The City of London Police's FCR has extensive knowledge and experience in the management of crime data and is active in her oversight of crime recording systems and processes within the force. She has specific responsibility for ensuring NCRS and HO CR are consistently applied and she is well known to senior managers in the force.

The FCR reports to the head of strategic development and has the full support of, and access to, the assistant commissioner in his role as force lead for crime data integrity. The FCR is the final arbiter for the crime recording disputes which are appropriately referred to her if they cannot be resolved through an initial assessment and discussion with CMU supervisors.

Very few crime record audits have been conducted and the force does not have a current audit plan. A vacancy within the FCR team has recently been filled which will bring the team up to full establishment. This will assist in the delivery of the proposed 2014 force audit programme.

The FCR is the author of the key force procedure document on crime recording and she offers advice to authors of other force documents that contain elements of crime data integrity.