



Metropolitan Police Authority

**CRIME DATA RECORDING SCRUTINY  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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**Metropolitan Police Authority**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) was established seven years ago as an independent body to manage and monitor the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). It is a statutory body made up of twenty-three members, twelve of whom are drawn from the London Assembly, part of the Greater London Authority (GLA). Of the remainder, seven are independently appointed and four are magistrate members. The MPA is responsible for ensuring an effective and efficient police service for the people of London. Since it has been established the MPA has undertaken a number of scrutinies into areas of concern or poor performance, including rape, mental health and stop and search.

The MPA has proposed to undertake a scrutiny of the processes and data accuracy of MPS crime recording.

## **BACKGROUND**

High quality data is vital for effective policing. Without access to such accurate data the police cannot establish the extent, location and victimisation levels of crime and anti-social behaviour and therefore cannot provide a robust response. Health & Safety risk assessments rely upon accurate crime data as do strategic and tactical planning. The people of London also rely on this data for both information and reassurance that the police are meeting the needs of London and Londoners.

The MPA is responsible for ensuring that the MPS has sufficiently robust processes in place to guarantee the ongoing delivery of accurate crime recording. The Home Office has set out standards for both crime and incident recording under the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) and the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). These standards are underpinned by the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and the National Standard for Incident Recording – Counting Rules. One of our seven strategic priorities for the next three years is for information and intelligence to be of the highest quality to enable the MPS to deliver the policing service that London needs.

The Audit Commission has stated “compliance with national requirements is not just about recording the right levels of crime; it is equally about being responsive to victims, and about the quality and timely availability of recorded information to support policing activities. Police authorities and forces need to satisfy themselves and others that they are using accurate information to make their strategic and operational decisions when committing resources and making choices over priorities. “

## **MPS crime data responsibilities**

Command and Control supervisors at the MPS are responsible for ensuring that, where a member of the public calls the police regarding an incident, the matter is accurately

recorded on the CAD system and information passed to relevant people for a crime to be recorded where necessary.

Where a crime is investigated either on the phone, at the front counter or by an officer attending the scene, it is the responsibility of the person carrying out the investigation to obtain sufficient information to allow them to make an accurate record on the Crime Recording Information System (CRIS). This entry should be checked for accuracy by a supervisor. Where a crime receives an ongoing investigation, it is the responsibility of the investigating officer to update the crime record and the responsibility of his/her supervisor to check the crime on a regular basis.

Specific responsibilities are given to Crime Management Units whereby they, and only they, can confirm the classification of a crime for Home Office counting purposes and record detections. They also have a supervisory responsibility to check the accuracy of other data on the system and to carry out data quality assurance checks. The central Territorial Policing Crime Management Unit is responsible for providing local units with data accuracy reports and performance indicators and for making changes to Home Office data on crime records in certain circumstances. It also provides data accuracy checks for local units to run to identify data errors.

Borough Senior Management teams (the crime manager and the Borough Commander) take overall responsibility for the accuracy of the crime data on their borough. The Assistant Commissioner is responsible to the management board for the data accuracy of crime data within their jurisdiction.

The Data Accuracy Team, led by the Force Crime Registrar (FCR), provides an independent audit function to check the compliance of crime and incident recording against the HOCR makes justifiable changes to Home Office data, is the MPS liaison with the Home Office on issues and concerns with the HOCR, provides guidance re crime recording policy and brings non-compliance to the attention of ACPO. The FCR is the final arbiter on crime recording and detection issues within the MPS

### **Rationale for scrutiny**

The MPA has recently joined the MPS Crime Recording Oversight Group (CROG) and, following discussions with other members of the group, has highlighted the need for a review of all the related processes.

Recent Crime Control Strategy Meetings (CCSMs) managed by the MPS and attended by the MPA have highlighted problems with consistency of crime data recording across a number of crime types.

The Home Office yearly crime data audit plan commenced in 2002 with the Audit Commission as lead auditor. It has now completed its fourth and final audit under the plan. Over those years the MPS performance for compliance in crime recording has moved from being considered fair to poor to good and is now graded as 'fair', with its data considered to be 'satisfactory' and 'fit for purpose'. An action plan has been developed by the MPS in response to the most recent Audit Commission Police data quality review.

There is currently another review being carried out by HMIC on detections, which early feedback suggests will result in a change from 'fair' to 'poor'.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE SCRUTINY

The objectives of the scrutiny are:

- To ensure that the MPS crime recording processes comply with legislative, investigative and customer requirements.
- To ensure crime recording data within the MPS is fit for purpose
- To ensure that the MPS oversight processes and structure are sufficiently robust to assure the quality of crime data recording.

This will be accomplished by examining and reviewing:

- The progress in implementing and complying with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) and associated Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR).
- The progress in implementing and complying with the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR) and associated National Incident Category List (NICL).
- The MPS governance system for oversight of implementation and interpretation of NCRS, NSIR and HOCR.
- The current cost of administering NCRS, NSIR and HOCR against the benefits accrued in performance and data quality. Additional cost and benefits of full implementation and compliance required.
- Any disproportional impact of non-compliance on different crime types.
- The local MPS oversight and scrutiny process to ensure a strong performance culture operates within a regime of compliance with the NCRS, NSIR and HOCR.
- Recommendations from the Audit Commission and the HMIC
- The MPS NCRS action plan

NB If the scrutiny identifies any issues that require urgent action, these will be acted upon immediately.

### Key exclusions

Data recording and accuracy across the MPS covers a wide range of issues. It is important to ensure that the review remains focussed on the key issues of crime data recording. As a result the following will be adhered to:

- Information technology systems will not be focused on in this review except where it directly impacts the ability to conform with requirements
- Only data on crime and incident recording by the MPS systems will be included in the review

**APPROACH**

The approach will follow elements of best practice as developed in previous MPA scrutinies in relation to consultation and gathering statements from witnesses. The scrutiny will include elements of the select committee process with the option of inviting witnesses from external organisations to set out their perspective. It is anticipated that the resources to carry out the review will be provided primarily by the MPA, with assistance from the MPS. Richard Sumray will chair the review with Karim Murji.

The review will use a mix of research, written consultation, statement gathering from witnesses and anonymised interviews. Other methods may be used if considered appropriate by the panel, although there will be a cost attached to this.

The MPA communications unit will carry out the handling of media relations, but we will ensure links are maintained with the MPS Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA).

**Panel meetings and statement gathering**

Statements will be gathered from witnesses following research and written consultation and will be used to explore key issues in depth. Witnesses attending statement-gathering sessions will be provided with information about the format of the meeting in advance, and a summary of their evidence following the meeting.

A timetable for the scrutiny is attached as Appendix 1. The scrutiny will include a review of:

- Written MPS reports
- MPA committee reports
- Home Office Counting Rules guidance
- HMIC and Audit Commission reports on data quality

Suggested contributors include:

- ACPO Leads – Deputy Commissioner; AC Godwin; Stephen Rimmer; Commander Simmons; Commander Bray; Commander Foy; Commander Wilkinson
- Policy Leads – Detective Superintendent Way; Detective Chief Superintendent Barron; Mr Duncan (Force Crime Registrar) and; Chief Inspector Phillips (Force Incident Registrar)
- Chief Insp. Carl Robinson National Crime Registrar.
- Supt. Peter Major National Incident Registrar.
- Carol McDonald Head of PIB
- Borough Commanders
- Borough Crime Managers
- Crime Management Unit Managers
- Frontline Constables and Detective Constable
- SCD staff as appropriate

- CMU staff and supervisors.
- MetCall staff and supervisors.
- Home Office
- HMIC
- Audit Commission
- MSF (West Mids, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, Merseyside)

### **Deliverables**

The review will deliver a written report setting out:

- What was reviewed and why
- How the review was undertaken (including witness list)
- Findings
- Conclusions
- Options (where applicable)
- Recommendations for the MPS, and/or others with rationale and an agreed action plan

### **EQUALITIES IMPACT**

The review will seek to identify disproportional non-compliance of crime data recording. The nature of these offences may mean there is a disproportional impact on specific demographic groups. Additional equality and diversity implications will be assessed as an integral part of the review

### **COSTS AND BENEFITS**

#### **Costs**

It is hoped that the staffing costs for the MPA scrutiny will to a large extent be absorbed through the workload of the Planning and Performance team. Offers of support have been made by the MPS to help with research and production of papers. Additional administrative support may be required to supplement the work of the MPA Planning and Performance team PA.

Publication of the report will cost approximately £2000.

Additional funding requirements will be highlighted for approval should they be identified through the scrutiny process.

#### **Benefits**

It is envisaged that the review will directly influence MPS crime recording procedures and the structure of oversight and management of the data accuracy of crime recording. Any shortcomings in processes that require urgent corrective action will be acted on immediately.

The results of the scrutiny will further develop the MPA ability to oversee data accuracy.

**APPENDIX 1: Scrutiny plan**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Activity / product</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1	a. Principle of review agreed by MPA	September 2007
2	a. Basic fact-finding via research and initial meetings b. Prepare draft terms of reference (ToR) and plan	September 2007
3	a. First full scrutiny panel meeting approves ToR b. Continued desktop research	September 2007
4	a. COP Committee endorses ToR and plan on behalf of MPA b. Arrange anonymous interviews with staff c. Prepare questions for interviewees	September 2007
5	a. Preparation and completion of written consultation and collation of responses b. Prepare questions for witnesses c. Carry out interviews d. Prepare briefing material for witnesses e. Arrange statement sessions and/or other scrutiny methods f. Invite witnesses; provide briefing and questions	October 2007
6	a. Hold statement sessions and/or other scrutiny activity. b. Summarise evidence and report back. c. Produce draft interim report	October 2007
7	a. Prepare draft final report and recommendations. b. Panel approves draft report and recommendations.	November 2007
8	a. Draft report / recommendations circulated for feedback b. Feedback from MPS and key partners.	December 2007
9	a. Propose amendments to draft based on feedback. b. Panel approves final report and recommendations	January 2008
10	a. Final report / recommendations published formally.	January 2008

NB If the scrutiny identifies any issues that require urgent action, these will be acted upon immediately.



## APPENDIX 2: FURTHER READING

The following is a list of documents that were used in the initial drafting of the Terms of Reference:

- Audit Commission (August 2007) *National Standard for Incident Recording – Metropolitan Police Authority Audit 2006/07* Audit Summary Report London: Audit Commission
- Audit Commission (May 2007) *Police Data Quality Review – Metropolitan Police Authority Audit 2006/07* London: Audit Commission
- Audit Commission (September 2006) *Police Data Quality Reviews 2006/07 Audit guide* London: Audit Commission
- Audit Commission (June 2006) *Crime Recording 2005: Improving the quality of crime records in police authorities and forces in England and Wales* London: Audit Commission
- Audit Commission (December 2004) *Crime recording: improving the quality of crime records in police authorities and forces in England and Wales* London: Audit Commission
- Home Office (April 2007) *Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime – General Rules* London: Home Office
- Home Office (March 2007) *Home Office Counting Rules (HOOCR) for Crime Changes for 1 April 2007* London: Home Office
- Home Office Police and Crime Standards Directorate (November 2006) *Police data quality assurance 2006/07 audit manual – detections* London: Home Office
- Home Office Police and Crime Standards Directorate (October 2006) *Police data quality assurance 2006/07 audit manual – domestic violence, stop and search, sickness absence, fairness and equality* London: Home Office
- Metropolitan Police Authority Planning and Performance Review Committee Report 10 (12 July 2007) *National Crime Recording Standards Update*  
<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/ppr/2007/070712/10.htm>
- Metropolitan Police Authority Planning and Performance Review Committee Report 10 (9 November 2006) *Crime recording*  
<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/ppr/2006/061109/10.htm>
- Metropolitan Police Authority Planning and Performance Review Committee Report 14 (9 November 2006) *National Crime Recording Standards Update*  
<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/ppr/2006/061109/14.htm>
- Metropolitan Police Authority Planning and Performance Review Committee Report 12 (24 April 2006) *National Crime Recording Standards Update*  
<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/ppr/2006/060424/12.htm>

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Simmons, J., Legg, C. & Hosking, R. (July 2003) *National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS): an analysis of the impact on recorded crime, companion volume to Crime in England and Wales 2002/03. Part One: The national picture* On-line Report 31/03 London: Home Office
- Simmons, J., Legg, C. & Hosking, R. (July 2003) *National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS): an analysis of the impact on recorded crime, companion volume to Crime in England and Wales 2002/03. Part Two: Impact on individual forces* On-line Report 32/03 London: Home Office