



VERA BAIRD_{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

**POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT**

10 JANUARY 2017

**THEMED REPORT - POLICE RECORDED CRIME AND CRIME SURVEY FOR
ENGLAND AND WALES**

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the differences between recorded crime levels and the alternative measure reported by the Office for National Statistics.

2. Background

The Crime Survey for England and Wales

- 2.1 The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is conducted on behalf of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) with a sample size of 35,000 households (minimum of 650 per police force area). The survey asks people aged 16 and over living in households in England and Wales about their experiences of crime in the last 12 months. The key aim of the CSEW is to provide robust trends for personal and household crime for the population it covers; the survey does not aim to provide an absolute count of crime and has notable exclusions such as crimes against businesses, public sector bodies, homicides and sexual offences.
- 2.2 Although not included within the headline data, the survey has also included children aged 10 to 15 since January 2009. From October 2015, the ONS introduced questions on fraud and computer misuse; however, estimates derived from these elements of the survey do not contribute to the headline figures¹.

Police Recorded Crime

- 2.3 Police recorded crime is governed by the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). Following an assessment of crime statistics by the UK Statistics Authority, published in 2014, the

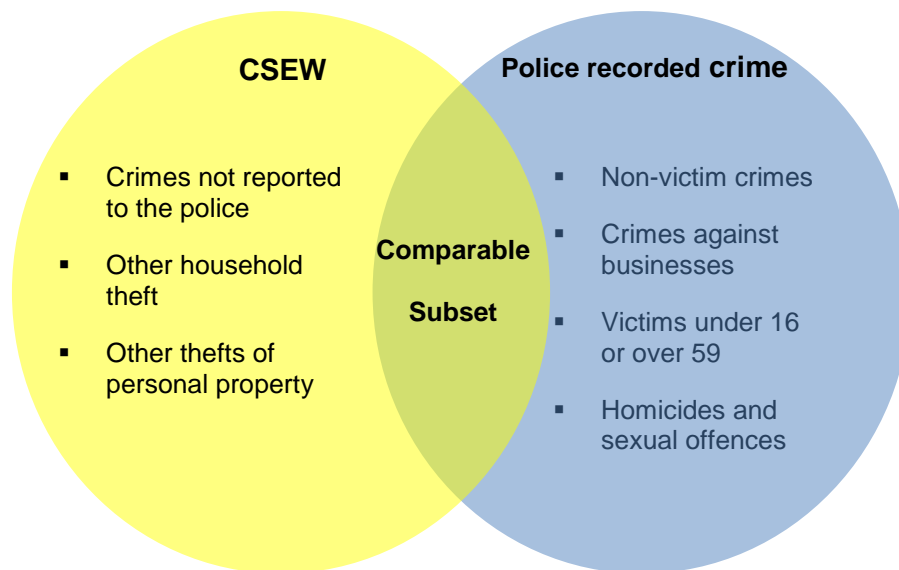
¹ The ONS intend to include estimates of fraud and computer misuse in their headline figures in the January 2017 bulletin. Based on experimental statistics, adults aged 16 or over experienced an estimated 5.6 million fraud and computer misuse incidents.

statistics based on police recorded crime data were found not to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics.

- 2.4 Since the UK Statistics Authority decision, the Public Administration Select Committee reported that the cessation of regular audit of police force crime reporting in 2007 was a mistake and recommended the reinstatement of annual audits. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has undertaken a national inspection of the integrity of police recorded crime and concluded that, an estimated 1 in 5 offences (19%) that should have been recorded as crimes were not. This initial inspection has been followed up with a rolling programme of crime data integrity inspections at individual force level.
- 2.5 The renewed focus on the quality of crime recording means that caution is needed when interpreting statistics on police recorded crime; apparent increases may reflect a number of factors:
- Improvements in recording practices.
 - Increases in reporting by victims.
 - Genuine increases in the levels of crime.

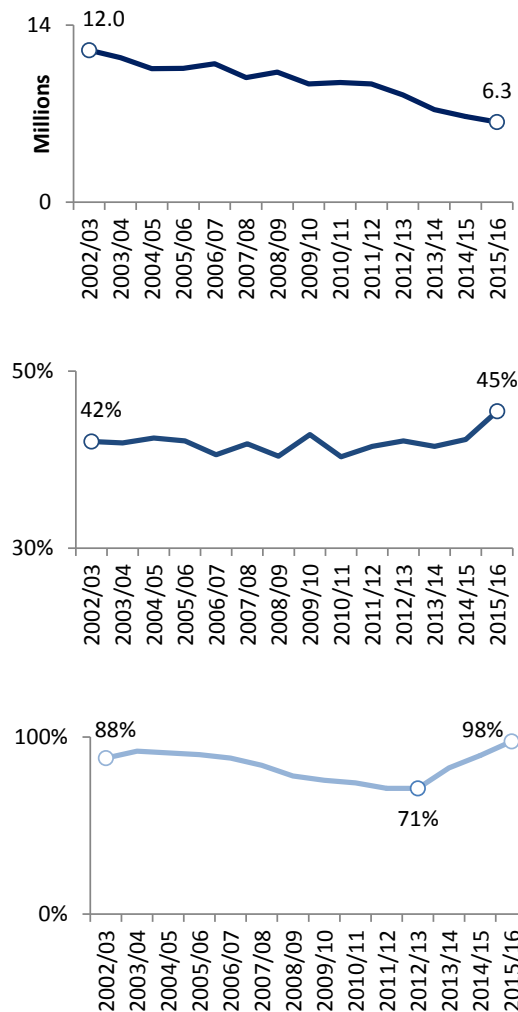
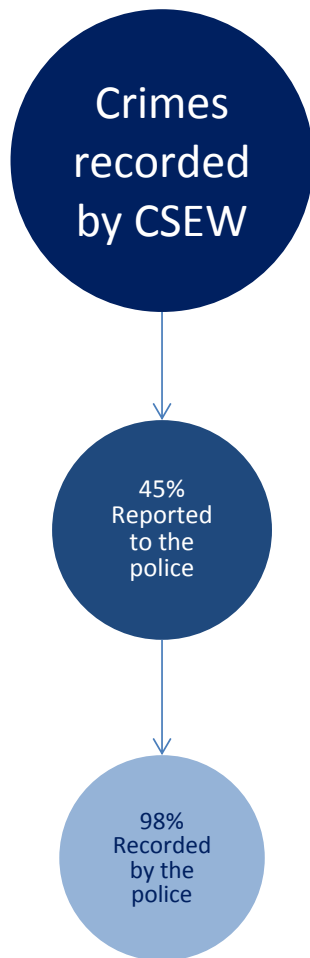
Comparing data sets

- 2.6 Each of the two data sources have different strengths and limitations and are not directly comparable.
- 2.7 The CSEW currently excludes fraud and crimes against society, for example, possession of drugs. The CSEW does not cover the population living in group residences (for example, care homes or halls of residence) or other institutions, nor does it cover crime against commercial or public sector bodies. While police recorded crime covers a broader range of offence types and victims, it is limited to only those offences reported to the police and is subject to NCRS compliance.
- 2.8 Although the mapping between CSEW categories and police recorded offence codes are approximate, it is possible to compare a subset of offence types that are covered by both measures (vehicle theft, burglary, bicycle theft, theft from the person, vandalism, assault without injury, assault with minor injury and wounding, and robbery).



2.9 The number of crimes identified by CSEW has reduced since 1995 with a reduction of 47% since the introduction of NCRS in April 2002. Over the same period (2002/03 to 2015/16), national police recorded crime reduced by 33%; Northumbria's recorded crime reduced by 43%.

2.10 Respondents who were a victim of crime are asked if they reported the offence to the police. Typically, 42% of public and household crimes are reported to the police (this varies by the type of offence from 9% for attempted theft from the person to 95% for theft of a vehicle). In 2015/16, the crime reporting rate increased to 45%; the offence types with a noticeable increase in reporting rate are violence involving a stranger and vehicle related theft.



2.11 It is possible to compare the volume of personal and household crimes reported to the police (as estimated in the CSEW) and the number of crimes recorded by the police. The HOCRs were introduced in 2002/03; at that time, 88% of those crimes reported to the police were recorded. This ratio reduced gradually to 71% in 2012/13, but has since increased to 98% in 2015/16.

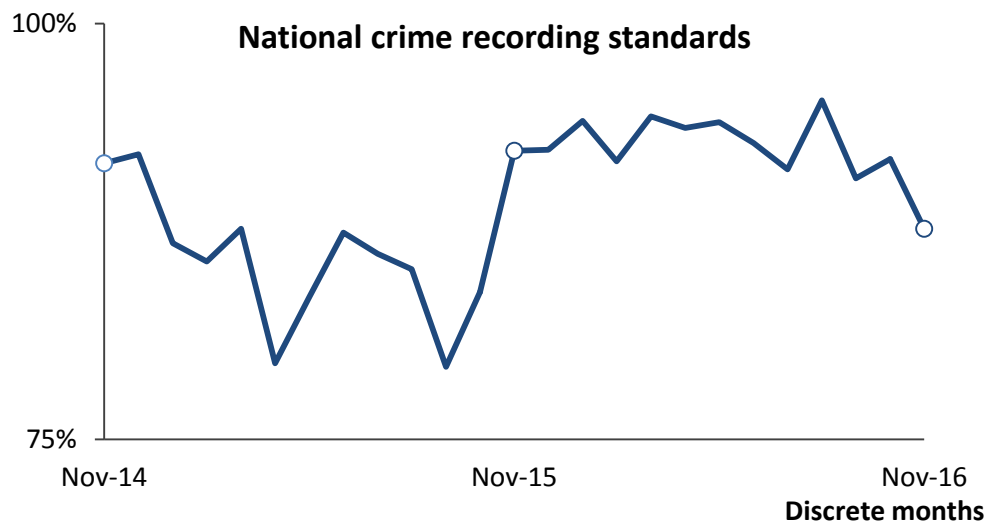
2.12 While the principle reason for the difference relates to compliance with NCRS, there are a few other considerations:

- Telescoping – Respondents often recall crimes outside of the 12 month reference period.
- Comparable periods – Owing to the timescales of conducting the survey, CSEW data is most comparable to police recorded crime from six months previous.
- Socially desirable responses – Non-disclosure of some offences and claiming they reported crimes to the police when they did not.

- Capping² – The treatment of high frequency repeat victimisation reduces the CSEW estimate of total crime.
- Age range – Changes in victimisation outside the 16-59 age range will affect the police recorded crime, but not CSEW (the comparable subset is not adjusted with respect to the age of the victim).

NCRS compliance

2.13 Following renewed focus on the importance of accurate crime recording, the Force's compliance with NCRS has increased to 92% for the period April 2016 to November 2016 from 84% for the same period in the previous year.



Trends in offending

2.14 The most recent ONS bulletin for crime in England and Wales (year ending June 2016) estimates 6.4 million personal and household crimes; similar to the previous year.

2.15 Over the past five years, all offence categories covered by CSEW have reduced between 16% and 43%; all of which are statistically significant reductions with the exception of violence without injury.

2.16 The most recent CSEW findings show the long term reduction in violent crime may have ended with no statistical change from the previous year. Research from Cardiff University shows the number of people in England and Wales injured in serious violence (resulting in hospital treatment) has not decreased for the first time in seven years.

² The CSEW currently caps repeat victimisation at 5 crimes per person; repeat victimisation beyond this threshold is not included in the headline trend figures. Following consultation, the ONS will increase the cap to the 98th percentile.

- 2.17 Police recorded offences involving the use of knives increased by 9% and those involving firearms also rose, by 7%. While these figures may reflect general improvements in recording practices, there is some evidence to suggest there has been a small, but genuine increase.
- 2.18 The ONS reports that increases in police recorded sexual offences are believed to have resulted from both an improvement in recording and an increased willingness of victims to come forward and report these crimes to the police.
- 2.19 Police recorded crime in Northumbria increased by +29% in 2015/16 (94,002 crimes) compared to the previous year. This year, recorded crime has increased by +30% (as at 29/12/2016). There have been increases in the majority of crime types, most notably, assault without injury (+67%, 3,248 crimes), harassment (including stalking) (+128%, 3,523 crimes), public disorder (+127%, 5,044 crimes) and other theft and handling (+23%, 2,046 crimes). Total crime levels are similar to levels of crime recorded in 2009/10 (89,790) and 2008/09 (105,458).
- 2.20 As an alternative to police recorded crime, calls for service with the potential to involve a crime (incidents) can be used at a local level to analyse crime trends without the influence of changes in recording practices. Such incidents in Northumbria have reduced by 11% over the past five years.

Force Control Strategy

- 2.21 The Force completes an annual Strategic Assessment of the current and emerging threats and then sets a Control Strategy and Delivery Plans to mitigate the threats identified.

The current Control Strategy has identified six priority areas and also includes an intelligence requirement for modern day slavery, cyber related crime and the supply of firearms.

- Vulnerable ASB
- Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
- Signal Crime (Burglary)
- Domestic Abuse and Serious Sexual Offences
- Counter Terrorism and Domestic Extremism
- Organised Crime

The Control Strategy areas are monitored through the Force Tasking and Co-ordination process (FTCG). This identifies ongoing threats within the priority areas and makes recommendations to counter the issues. It also holds to account, progress on each of the delivery plans.

The Strategic Assessment is currently being refreshed and cyber enabled crime, fraud and modern day slavery linked to organised crime are highlighted as key emerging issues.

Cyber Related Crime

- 2.22 Levels of cyber related crime are increasing, this impacts upon many crime areas such as violence, exploitation and fraud, but the ease with which the crimes can be committed is greater when it is cyber enabled. One particular area that has seen an increase, not just in recording (as highlighted above) but also in real terms, is harassment. The increase is particularly apparent in relation to the use of social media such as Facebook. It is now much easier to harass a victim on social media. Preventative actions through an E-Safety campaign have been implemented, raising awareness of how to block people and maximise online safety.
- 2.23 The number of victims of fraud identified within the Northumbria area is increasing and some of these victims are very vulnerable. Again, this is a type of crime that is cyber facilitated and allows offenders to target people en masse.
- 2.24 Operation Halt is in place and includes bespoke crime prevention visits and advice to the most vulnerable victims. An action plan structured around Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue has been developed. A dedicated Cyber Crime Unit deals with all online investigations in relation to 'paedophile hunters' and has overseen in excess of 30 investigations in the last 12 months.

Modern Slavery/Sexual Exploitation

- 2.25 Crime in which the commodities used are people is increasing (such as slavery and exploitation). The increase is partly based on raised awareness by both the public and partner agencies and new legislation (Modern Slavery Act), but is also due to the increasing movement and vulnerability of migrants throughout Europe and beyond. There is a growing intelligence case to suggest that certain communities (Eastern European) are more vulnerable to exploitation, slavery and trafficking. However evidence of slavery, servitude and exploitation are also apparent within other communities.
- 2.26 Preventative action is ongoing through Operation Sanctuary which also provides reactive investigative support to identified victims. Engagement with particularly vulnerable hard to reach communities is progressed through partner agencies such as the Children's Society and Girls Are Proud and is reinforced by Dedicated Liaison Officers for sex workers within Operation Sanctuary.
- 2.27 Operation Border is an investigation in response to Labour Exploitation within Newcastle involving the Roma /Polish community; victims were held in addresses before being transported to and from a place of work on a daily basis with workers' wages withdrawn by the main conspirators. Seven complainants have been accepted into the National Referral Mechanism. Five suspects have been charged and two are on bail pending charging decision.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The panel is asked to note the contents of the report.