

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2021**Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex**

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1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide a biannual update in relation to the progress of Crime Data Accuracy (CDA) by Essex Police.

2.0 Recommendations

For the board to consider and note the contents of this report.

3.0 Executive Summary

- Crime recording compliance rates for June, July and August 2021 have averaged 82%. This compares to an average of 78% for the corresponding months in 2019. It is important that the force continues to sustain a high crime recording level. During the months of July and August the NCRS Support and Review Team (NSRT) were unable to complete all of their allocated audits. This accounts for the drop in the proxy measure as demonstrated in the body of the report.
- The Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar continues to ensure that victims of crime sit at the forefront of everything we do. Additionally, the activity of the CDA Team continues to be aligned to the proposed areas of audit by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), when they begin their Victim Service Assessment (VSA) which will be included as part of the (PEEL) inspection during the latter part of this year.
- A Gold Group, chaired by ACC Nolan, continues to oversee the improvement plan regarding incidents that are closed under the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) closing codes. As a result of the intervention that has been put in place more crimes are now being identified at a much earlier stage.
- A violence audit conducted by the CDA Audit Team, has identified that in some instances officers are failing to identify and record crimes such as Common Assaults, Harassments and Public Order Offences. An 85% compliance rate was recorded during the audit process.
- The Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar has reviewed the various on-line reporting routes used by the force, which may potentially contain reports of notifiable crimes. Contact Management and the Quality of Service Teams have suitable processes in place to capture the required data.
- A new Crime Data Accuracy training package has now been launched. The training has been designed to provide comprehensive guidance in a consistent and standardised format. The one-day single course is being delivered to anyone who records crime at Inspector level and below; Contact Management, Front Counter Staff, PCSO's and Police Staff Investigators.

4.0 Introduction / Background

This report provides an overview of the Essex Police CDA strategy and the progress that has been made against the CDA Improvement Plan. It also sets out how the force intends to sustain its compliance rates and commitment to always putting victims at the forefront of crime recording arrangements.

5.0 Current Work and Performance

5.1 Performance

5.2 Internal Audit NCRS Support and Review Team (NSRT)

The NSRT moved from Contact Management to the Strategic Change and Analytics Command on 5th July 2021 and are now managed by the Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar.

They continue to provide frontline support and a quality assurance (QA) function to support the Force in improving and have now become an established team.

The results of the audits conducted by the NSRT are supplied to the Performance Analysis Unit (PAU). Their analysis helps inform senior managers of the individuals and teams responsible for errors during the crime recording process. It also allows managers to provide constructive feedback to individual officers and assist them to improve in this critical area of their business. The results are then included in the Force Balanced Scorecard.

Table 1 below, sets out the compliance results for each command up to and including August 2021.

Table 1 -Overview of incident reviews undertaken by NSRT

<i>Monthly Results</i>						
Command	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21
Contact Management	83.2%	83.6%	82.2%	83.5%	82.2%	81.5%
Crime and Public Protection Command	90.5%	77.1%	65.0%	56.7%	69.6%	83.3%
Local Policing Area North	82.3%	81.9%	81.4%	81.5%	82.0%	80.9%
Local Policing Area South	81.8%	79.7%	80.4%	82.0%	78.8%	77.2%
Local Policing Area West	78.6%	82.6%	80.4%	80.7%	79.6%	76.0%
OPC Operational Policing Command	80.6%	80.0%	75.0%	76.7%	91.7%	82.4%
Support Services (Probationers)	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	-	100.0%	-
Total	82.4%	82.6%	81.5%	82.4%	81.3%	83.9%

In addition to the audits conducted by the NSRT, the force is continuing to track crime recording performance, by closely monitoring and analysing the percentage of crime incidents which subsequently result in the recording of a crime. This proxy measure tracks reports received by the Force Control Room (FCR) and entered as a crime incident onto the Command and Control system (STORM), which following the resolution of the incident, result in the formal recording of a crime.

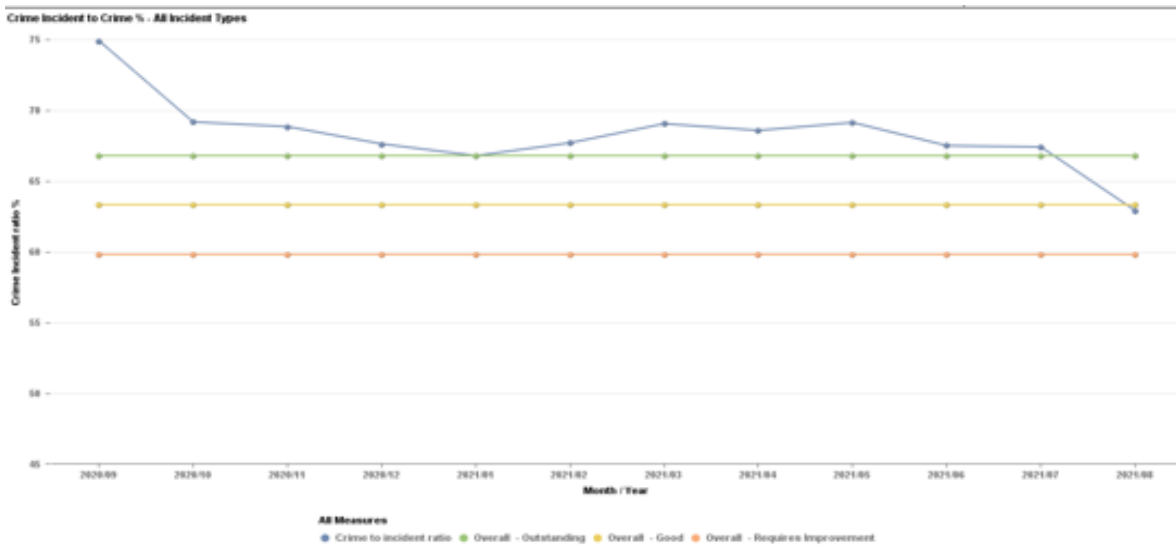
Having a high incident to crime ratio provides us with a good indication that our crime recording compliance is being maintained to a very high standard.

During the months of July and August, the NSRT were unable to complete some of their allocated number of incidents. When this occurs, there is generally a drop in the overall level of crime recording when assessed through the proxy measure, as demonstrated in the graph below. The Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar is currently looking at how the audit process can be improved and is preparing a report for DCC Prophet which will set out a number of options to streamline the process moving forward.

Table 3 Breakdown of the percentage of All Crime Incidents subsequently recorded as a crime and represented in the graph above.

Crime Incident to Crime - Overall Rate			
Year Month	All	C Disposal	%
2020/09	3971	2710	68.24%
2020/10	6684	4623	69.17%
2020/11	5991	4124	68.84%
2020/12	5842	3950	67.61%
2021/01	5433	3628	66.78%
2021/02	5301	3588	67.69%
2021/03	6318	4362	69.04%
2021/04	6112	4191	68.57%
2021/05	6847	4733	69.13%
2021/06	7432	5015	67.48%
2021/07	7784	5235	67.25%
2021/08	7335	4287	58.45%

The graph below demonstrates the proxy measure of the overall crime recording compliance rate of the force during this period of reporting.



5.3 Accessibility and Visibility of CDA Team

Accessibility to senior leaders and all staff who are involved in crime recording has been maintained throughout this period of reporting.

A number of key messages have been delivered through a variety of forums including:

- The attendance of the Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar at the South LPA Quality of Investigations Board.
- Further training delivered to North LPA Inspectors, Sergeants and Tutors. The training focused on their collective responsibilities regarding recording of rapes, following disclosures made by victims of Domestic Abuse.
- Attendance at the Investigation Improvement Board, to ensure that any learning from the internal audits conducted by the CDA Audit Team are shared, and the clear links between the quality of investigations and the need for accurate crime recording is reinforced.
- Attendance at the Victims and Witnesses Action Group (VW&AG) board, to reinforce the importance of accurate crime recording and ensuring that the correct outcome is used to support the victims of crime.
- Regular meetings with the Head of Contact Management.

5.4 Support to Crime & Public Protection Command

The CDA Audit Team currently review any responses that are made by victims of Domestic Abuse during the risk assessment process, which is completed by officers attending a Domestic Abuse incident.

The current auditing process ensures that where officers have failed to recognise that an allegation of crime has been made, the crime can still be recorded at the earliest opportunity and the victim can be afforded the most appropriate support and safeguarding advice.

On some occasions, officers are failing to recognise that a crime is being alleged by the victim when the risk assessment is being completed. During the process the victim is asked; ***Does (.....) do or say anything of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? Please specify who and what?*** The officers are then either failing to record the crime or provide sufficient detail so that the crime can be negated.

A meeting chaired by Detective Superintendent Judge with LPAs has taken place to discuss the reasons for officers and their supervisors failing to recognise that a crime of rape should have been recorded with local audits now being conducted to identify the specific reasons for the failures. Additionally, the CDA Learning and Development Team are continuing to reinforce the importance of recognising and recording the crime of rape at the first point of contact.

5.5 Violence Audit

An internal Violence Audit conducted by the CDA Audit Team identified that a number of crimes had not been recorded.

The Audit Team reviewed **255** incidents and found an **85% compliance rate**.

Of the crimes that were not recorded, the Audit Team identified that police officers and staff had failed to recognise that a notifiable crime should have been recorded in the following key areas:

- A failure to identify offences of **Violence without Injury, Public Order Act offences** and **Harassments**. (15)
- Officers failing to conduct reasonable enquiries. (13)
- Allegations of the crime not being transcribed onto the STORM Incident correctly from officer's updates. (6)

Where crime recording failures were identified, these have been rectified.

These areas have already been discussed with the CDA Learning & Development Team, who have already started to reinforce the importance of recognising and recording crimes. Exactly the same message is being emphasised by the three LPA Commanders and the LPA CDA SPOCs, with a view to improving performance.

5.6 Anti-Social Behaviour

An internal audit conducted by the CDA Audit Team in December 2020, identified that in some instances, frontline officers and staff within the Force Control Room failed to recognise, and record crimes such as assaults, public order offences and harassments associated to an Anti-Social Behaviour incident.

It is essential that the service provided to victims accords with the force plan, policy, and statutory responsibilities. A Tactical Group chaired by Chief Superintendent Simons has continued to develop and implement an ASB delivery plan, with oversight from ACC Nolan as the Gold Commander. In addition to providing the necessary support and assistance to victims of ASB, it aims to:

- understand the reasons for inaccuracies.
- ensure immediate improvements in ASB incident recording.
- deliver and embed a sustainable business as usual approach to ASB incident recording.
- develop and deliver a communications strategy to raise awareness, develop cultural change and ensure appropriate focus.
- consider and make recommendations to the force approach to investigation of ASB.
- identify learning and good practice.

Frontline police officers and Force Control Room staff have now been provided with additional guidance and advice regarding the importance of identifying and recording crimes connected to ASB. The strategic oversight applied by ACC Nolan at the ASB and Hate Crime Oversight Board has remained in place and the force is continuing to monitor how ASB is being dealt with across all its platforms.

The Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar is working closely with the Head of Contact Management, Chief Superintendent Wilson, and Chief Superintendent Simons and other internal stakeholders to look at new ways of auditing ASB incidents, identifying crimes and ensuring that they have been closed correctly within FCR to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of current processes.

5.7 Outcomes

Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) dictate that all recorded crimes must be assigned an outcome. It is essential that Essex Police follows the national guidance and the rules for deciding which outcome it applies to individual crime reports. There are a whole range of options available, and in deciding the outcome, the force must ensure that they consider the nature of the crime, the offender's history and most importantly, the needs of the victim.

How the force uses and applies outcomes is constantly reviewed and audited. The results of the outcome audits are supplied to each of the LPA Commanders monthly, which gives them the opportunity to address any issues at a local level. The results are also presented to the CDA Board.

Overall, there has been an improvement in the use and application of Outcomes. Much of the improvement can be attributed to work that is being undertaken by the respective LPA CDA SPOCs, who continue to provide personal feedback and guidance to individual officers.

5.8 Crime and Incident Reporting Routes into Force

It is important that the force fully understands all its potential crime recording routes which are available to victims who want to report a crime. A recent review conducted by the Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar of our current structure has identified that there are three main platforms, they include:

- **The Single online Home reporting**
- **Live Chat**
- **Quality of Service Team**

A review has concluded that there is confidence that the systems and processes implemented by Contact management and the Quality of Service Team adhere to the requirements of the National Standards for Incident Recording (NSIR) regarding the recording of incidents.

5.9 Learning and Development Team

The delivery of CDA training continues to play a significant role in ensuring that all those involved in crime recording are aware of the importance and the correlation between accurate record keeping and victim care.

The Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar continues to attend the regularly held CDA Training sub-group. This forum is chaired by the Head of Investigative Skills Progression, Learning and Development. The meeting identifies any gaps and weaknesses concerning Crime Data Accuracy and addresses these issues in the delivery of CDA training.

The new CDA single training product was launched on 6th July 2021. The CDA Training Team have now transitioned the current CDA training from the existing two-day Sergeant's course to the new single course, comprising of one day distance pre-learn and eLearning completion, followed by one day face to face learning.

The cohort for the one-day single course will include anyone who records crime at Inspector level and below, Contact Management, Front Counter Staff, PCSO's and Police Staff Investigators.

There are 3,502 officers and staff who will receive this bespoke training. To date there are 3252 left to be trained.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

A failure to identify and accurately record all reported crime without delay would lead to an inability to provide an effective service to victims, this in turn delays their access to external support services and a loss in public confidence, and our inability to understand the full demand for the service and resources required.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

Crime Data Accuracy links directly to the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan, to ensure we accurately record crime, identify areas of under recording and ensure victims of crime have access to appropriate support services. It also allows the office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to provide the public with accurate information about crime in Essex.

6.2 Demand

Essex Police will continue to monitor the demand placed upon it; through the strong governance processes it has built. They will also closely monitor the impact that demand may have with regards to crime recording compliance.

The past year has seen a reduction in the number of crimes recorded by Essex Police, largely because of restrictions on public movement and social interaction in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This has resulted in less crimes being recorded, **a reduction of 3.4% in the 12 months to August 2021 compared to the same period last year.**

In the three months to August 2021 however, compared to the same period last year, crime has increased, and the increase has not been evenly distributed. Theft Offences have increased by 4.4% and Robbery by 1.3%. Sexual Offences and Violence Against the Person have seen increases of 21.9% and 6% respectively. Within violence, Stalking and Harassment increased by 6.7% and Violence with Injury by 2.9%. State based crime however, often generated by Police activity, saw a decrease of 3.3%.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

There is a risk recorded on the Essex Police Strategic Risk Register relating to Crime Data Accuracy. This risk is reviewed regularly at the Crime Data Accuracy Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

There are no equality and Human Rights implications identified in the development of this update paper. However, the force continually monitors the Equality and Human Rights implications to ensure services are accessible to all and to make it fair and easy to report crimes. EqIA's will always be undertaken when new force policies are developed or changes made to the operating model for public contact and reporting of crime. The force received a grading of outstanding in its most recent Crime Data Integrity Inspection giving the force confidence in the systems and knowledge it has in place for the accurate recording of crimes leading to access to support services for all victims of crime to help them cope and recover.

Every officer and staff is required to undertake training and adhere to the Victims' Code which came into force on 1 April 21.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

None

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

Crime Data Accuracy Board Members and Chief Officers.

8.0 Actions for Improvement

The internal audits conducted by the CDA Audit Team and the work now being conducted by the LPA, CDA SPOCs, has continued to identify the force's strengths and development areas, with regards to CDA compliance.

Against this backdrop, a focused and determined effort will continue to ensure that:

- the force continues to reinforce the importance of recording crimes connected to Anti-Social Behaviour and provide the necessary support and care to victims.
- supervisors and officers understand the need to ensure that victims of Domestic Abuse are listened to carefully, and where necessary crimes are accurately recorded.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

The Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar and his team are continuing to ensure that the needs of victims are fully understood, and any activity generated within the team is aligned to victim care.

Work is continuing to ensure that the force is prepared for the forthcoming inspection which will be carried out by HMICFRS.

The Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar is continuing to work with the CDA Learning and Development Team to ensure that any learning and guidance can be delivered quickly and efficiently by the team.

The Strategic Force Crime & Incident Registrar is working alongside senior leaders within the force to look at new ways of how we audit and process incidents of ASB and to ensure that crimes are identified immediately and victims are provided with the necessary support and advice from the outset.