

# **Crime Statistics: An independent review**

**Carried out for  
the Secretary of State  
for the Home Department**

**November 2006**

***Dear Home Secretary,***

***I attach the Review of Crime Statistics commissioned by your predecessor, Charles Clarke.***

***The Review Group has brought together distinguished individuals differing widely in their ranges of expertise and interests relating to crime statistics and their personal positioning on the political spectrum. After considerable debate, we present to you a series of practical recommendations that we have all agreed on as a basis for immediate and significant changes to and enhancements of our current production, communication and use of crime statistics that will do much to restore public trust and confidence.***

***I hope you find our report helpful to you in the tasks you face in the Home Office.***

***Yours sincerely,***

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Smith', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

***Professor Adrian Smith, FRS***

# The Terms of Reference for the Review of Crime Statistics

*The Home Secretary is concerned that public trust in the crime statistics produced by the Home Office has declined to such an extent that it is no longer possible to have a debate about alternative criminal justice policies on the basis of agreed facts about the trends in crime. He wishes to be advised on what changes could be made to the production and release of crime statistics so that public trust is re-established.*

*In addition, he wants the Review Group to examine the key issues raised by the Statistics Commission about crime statistics and to make practical recommendations to the Home Secretary as to what changes are needed to address those issues. These recommendations will need to take account of the changes to strengthen the system of official statistics announced by the Chancellor in November, on which further detail will be published shortly.*

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## Executive Summary

The Review Group has addressed the Home Secretary's request to make recommendations on changes that should be made to the production and release of crime statistics in order to restore public trust.

The Review Group has taken into account that public trust in crime statistics can be undermined by any or all of the following: presentations of statistics that are perceived to be in conflict with – or of no relevance to – the direct individual experiences of members of the public; presentations of statistics using categories or definitions that do not accord with public commonsense interpretations; presentation of conflicting statistics apparently open to widely differing interpretations; lack of coverage of significant areas of criminal activity and victims; perceived potential for police or ministerial interference in the production and presentation of the statistics.

In our report, we present detailed analyses of these issues and a series of detailed recommendations aimed at addressing them. We believe all the recommendations will contribute positively to restoring public trust in crime statistics. However, we place considerable emphasis on the recommendations in Chapter 3. Our main conclusions can be summarised in the following broad terms.

**A shift in emphasis is required in the production and communication of crime information. The focus must shift from the publication, by the Home Office, of the aggregate national picture to a system of communication which encompasses local data at local level between police and their neighbourhood communities.**

**Both the scope and definitions of the national statistics that are produced need a radical overhaul. Significant groups of victims are not covered by current surveys and certain major current crime category definitions are confusing and misleading.**

**Governance, management and organisation of the police and Home Office environments in which crime statistics are produced and reported must be revised to provide the public with complete assurance of actual and perceived independence and integrity of the statistics.**



### **Crime statistics have a long history, based on court and police records and, since the 1980s, on a victim survey**

- 1.1 National statistics about crime in England and Wales have been collected and published by the Home Office since 1805. Initially, these only included court-based data about proceedings and convictions. From 1857, data about crimes reported to and recorded by the police were added, the latter providing the means by which the government was able to exercise oversight over what was then a highly localised policing structure accountable at the local political level.
- 1.2 Despite this long history of reported and recorded crime statistics being used to judge police performance, such statistics have long been recognised as having a number of weaknesses. First, there have been regular claims that the police adjust their crime statistics to improve measured reported performance. Second, the processes and categories used by local police to record crime have historically had a significant degree of local variability; this has made it difficult both to make comparisons among local forces and to form aggregates to provide a meaningful national picture. Third, the picture that emerges from recorded crime is potentially distorted by the unknown and uncontrollable variability in the public's reporting of crime to the police. A number of attempts have been made over the years to address these perceived problems but they largely remain.
- 1.3 In the late 1960s, American criminologists began experimenting with the alternative approach of using large-scale population surveys to measure the extent of crime by recording the experiences of victims of crime. This approach has the advantage of being free of the potential distortions of both the variability in police recording procedures and in the vagaries of public reporting of crime to the police.
- 1.4 In 1981, this approach was sufficiently well established for the Home Office to set up its own version, the British Crime Survey (BCS)<sup>1</sup>. The BCS soon became established as an alternative source of crime statistics<sup>2</sup>, complementing those derived from police recording of reported crime.

### **The statistics became politically more sensitive when governments undertook to reduce crime**

- 1.5 From the late 1960s, and for most of the remainder of the 20th century, crime in England and Wales rose, as it did in most developed countries. From a political point of view, the trend became so established that the main political parties tended to assume that their function was to manage these increases rather than to challenge them. However, in 1993, the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard, set about challenging the assumption that such rises were outside the control of government.

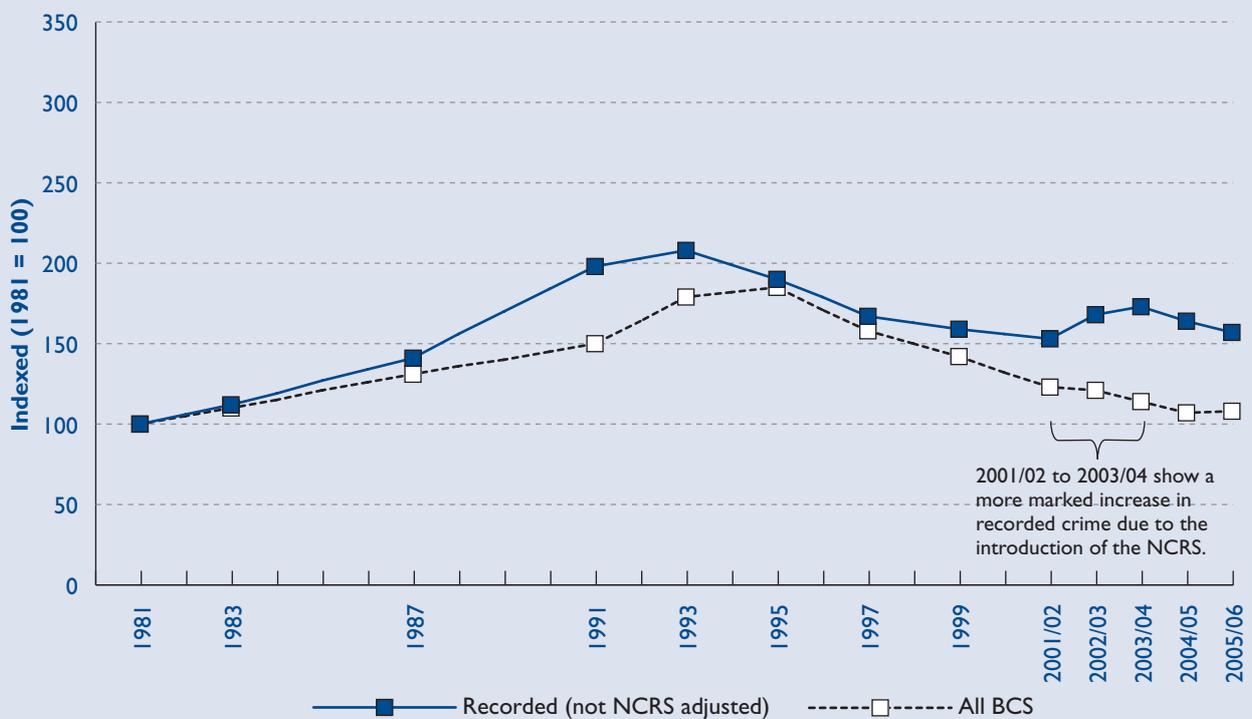
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1. See: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html)> (30 Oct 06).

2. The BCS is limited to measuring crimes against households and individuals. The Home Office has also used additional victim surveys to explore crime against industry and commerce.

- 1.6 Every Home Secretary since has also accepted that a major purpose of Home Office policy is to reduce crime and for the present government this has meant setting performance targets for crime reduction. As a result, crime statistics have become a key metric for judging the performance of the Home Office and therefore central to debates between government and opposition. This has meant that crime statistics have been subject to a quite new degree of scrutiny and their release and handling have become politically much more sensitive.
- 1.7 The trend in crime increased at a particularly steep rate between the 1970s and mid 1990s, but then began a long and steep decline.
- 1.8 Labour governments since 1997 have pinned their credibility to their performance targets and the crime statistics appeared to point to success in crime reduction. However, it was understandable that the early indications of falling crime would be greeted with some scepticism after such a long period of rising crime. Moreover, by the time the evidence became clear that the falls in crime were not simply short-term variations in the trend, the media climate had shifted from the honeymoon period that followed Labour's first election.
- 1.9 However, at just this point the effects of introducing the new National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS)<sup>3</sup> meant that police recorded crime was not showing the same trend as the BCS. While historically the BCS and the police recorded crime series had mainly shown similar trends, they showed sharply divergent trends from 2002 until around 2004. The BCS showed the fall in crime continuing, whereas police recorded crime showed crime going up again (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Indexed trends in police recorded and BCS crime, 1981 to 2005/06**



3. See: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/countrecstan06.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/countrecstan06.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

## Technical changes to the statistics have been confusing and a reduction in total crime has been greeted with disbelief

- I.10 When the present government came to power in 1997, the Home Office was publishing police recorded crime statistics annually and the British Crime Survey results separately bi-annually. The Home Office had also carried out a one-off survey of commercial and industrial victimisation<sup>4</sup>.
- I.11 In 1998, new counting rules for crime were introduced which extended the list of so-called 'notifiable offences' – that is, those offences that police forces must report to the Home Office for inclusion in the national crime statistics. The new rules were introduced because the Home Office wanted the crime statistics to reflect more directly the experience of victims and to ensure that police forces could not avoid reporting notifiable offences by downgrading them into the non-notifiable category. However, one of the consequences of the changes was to increase the number of crimes recorded in the national crime statistics.
- I.12 In order to be able to quantify the effect of these rule changes, for one year only the Home Office put in place a double counting procedure using both the old and the new rules. As a result, the effects of the change in the counting rules were clearly understood by commentators and key opinion formers and the step change in the crime series was accepted with little adverse criticism. However, some consequences of this change were later to generate problems as criticism of Home Office crime statistics grew.
- I.13 In 1999, the Home Office's Director of Research & Statistics set up a review of crime statistics. The report<sup>5</sup> was published in 2000 and the main thrust of its recommendations was (i) that the statistics should be more useful for problem solving and (ii) that the technical quality and validity of the information should be improved. There were two recommendations in particular that were to influence the events that led to the setting up of the present review.
- I.14 The first recommendation was that the BCS should be an annual rather than bi-annual survey and should be enlarged to enable some estimates of victimisation to be made at the police force level, rather than just the national level. In order to achieve this change, the sample size of the BCS was doubled to over 40,000.
- I.15 The second recommendation was that the BCS and police recorded crime statistics should be published together, with a single analysis of crime trends drawing on both sources in order to provide a more complete and consistent picture of crime. This meant that for the first time direct comparison of the two series would be available in a single report.
- I.16 At the same time as the review report was published, the Home Office also published two explorations of police crime recording practices. One was a research report on police recording<sup>6</sup> and the other a report on police practices by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)<sup>7</sup>. Both of these reports gave the same important message: the recording of crime by the police was not standardised even within forces let alone between forces.
- I.17 Two other factors gave this finding even more importance. First, crime prevention techniques had developed rapidly but crucially depended on more accurate and reliable data than was achievable if the nature and quality of local recording of crime were to continue to be so varied. Second, the government was moving towards more rigorous performance management of policing and this depended on reliable and standardised local crime data for comparative purposes.

4. See: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors146.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors146.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

5. *Review of Crime Statistics: A Discussion Document* (The Simmons Report), London: Home Office, 2000 available at: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/review.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/review.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

6. Burrows J., Tarling R., Mackie A., Lewis R. and Taylor G. (2000) *Review of police forces' crime recording practices*. Home Office Research Study 204, London: Home Office available at: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors204.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors204.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

7. Report by Her Majesty's Inspector Keith Povey (July 2000) '*On the Record: Thematic Inspection Report on Police Crime Recording, the Police National Computer and Phoenix Intelligence System Data Quality*', London: HMIC available at: <[www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect\\_reports/1/thematic-inspections/on-the-record2/otr001.pdf?view=Binary](http://www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect_reports/1/thematic-inspections/on-the-record2/otr001.pdf?view=Binary)> (30 Oct 06).

- I.18 The body representing Chief Constables, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), reacted to these reports by accepting that the police collectively had to standardise crime recording much more than had ever been done in the past. The internal police debate focused on how to standardise but also took the opportunity to try to ensure that crime recording was more responsive to victims. It concluded that the key to standardisation would be that an event would be recorded as a crime if the victim reported it as such, and the police had no evidence to disbelieve them – previously some officers only recorded a crime if the victim produced convincing evidence that it had occurred.
- I.19 As with the 1998 counting rules change, one consequence of the NCRS, was that more crime would be recorded. However, the NCRS had already been pioneered by some forces, with the result was that it was rolled out nationally in a piecemeal fashion between 1999 and 2004. Because of the extended implementation period and the fact that the NCRS necessitated a cultural change in the behaviour of recording officers and not just a simple rule change, it was not possible to arrange a double counting period in order to calculate precisely the effect on recorded crime, as had happened with the 1998 counting rules change.
- I.20 Initially the NCRS-affected crime data were produced together with an estimate of what the data would have been without the introduction of the new recording standard. However, a number of media commentators and key opinion formers were by now becoming more questioning of government performance data and the attempt to allow for the changes was greeted with considerable scepticism. This became worse as NCRS implementation dragged on over a number of years. The existence of two versions of police recorded crime, together with the BCS estimates, clearly caused considerable confusion for everyone trying to form a coherent picture of crime trends. It also allowed partisan commentators to pick and chose between alternative interpretations of the data. All this contributed further to undermining confidence in crime trend data.
- I.21 The argument advanced by Home Office statisticians was that the increase in police recorded crime was a consequence of introducing the NCRS and that the BCS crime trend was correct. However, the crime statistics themselves provided suitable ammunition to argue either case. Very little of the media reporting attempted to engage with the technical issues behind these divergent trends and much of it reflected a simple cynicism about statistics in general, with Disraeli’s “Lies, damned lies and statistics” being frequently quoted.
- I.22 To further complicate matters, the 1998 counting rules change had brought into the national crime statistics a number of lesser offences and had extended the definition of what counted as offences of violence. The NCRS focus on the credibility of victim reporting meant that the recording of these lesser offences – especially those deemed in the new definitions to involve violence – was inflated even further. This time the Home Office was left not only trying to explain the effect of the NCRS in inflating the recording of violent crime but also the counter-intuitive fact that – following the 1998 counting rule change – half of all recorded so-called violent crime involved no injury to the victim.
- I.23 Overall, the unintended consequences of introducing the counting rules change in 1998, together with the piecemeal introduction of the NCRS, meant that the evidence for the biggest change in the pattern of crime for a lifetime was greeted in many quarters with confusion and disbelief. Of course, there were other factors involved and the scepticism about the crime statistics also mirrored similar scepticism about other government statistics.<sup>8</sup>

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8. See: <[www.statistics.gov.uk/Statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=13967&ColRank=1&Rank=272](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/Statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=13967&ColRank=1&Rank=272)> (30 Oct 06).

- I.24 By the time of the 2005 general election, the political debate about crime seemed to focus more on disagreements about what the trends in crime were than on debates about alternative policies. When Charles Clarke became Home Secretary, he had determined to try to ensure that future debates about crime policy should take place on the basis of some cross-party agreement on the evidence about trends in crime. This led to his setting up the present review, with an invitation to the main opposition parties to join in its deliberations.
- I.25 Early in 2006, the then Home Secretary asked Professor Adrian Smith, FRSS, Principal of Queen Mary, University of London and a past President of the Royal Statistical Society, to chair the Review and to report in early autumn, 2006. The members of the Review Group are listed in Appendix I.

## **Our review seeks to remedy a situation where it is no longer possible to debate alternative policies on the basis of agreed facts**

- I.26 The main remit to the Review Group was as follows: “The Home Secretary is concerned that public trust in the crime statistics produced by the Home Office has declined to such an extent that it is no longer possible to have a debate about alternative criminal justice policies on the basis of agreed facts about the trends in crime. He wishes to be advised on what changes could be made to the production and release of crime statistics so that public trust is re-established.”
- I.27 In order to frame its detailed deliberations, the Review Group approached its remit by initially exploring two basic sets of questions. First, by trying to identify the elements that underlie public ‘trust’ in the context of government statistics in general and crime statistics in particular. Second, by trying to identify the taxonomy of ways in which the ‘public’ relates to crime statistics by asking why and how crime statistics are produced – for what purposes? for whom are they intended? who produces them? how should they be communicated, how often and by whom?
- I.28 The issues of ‘trust’ are complex and many faceted. Some of the issues relate to broad societal changes in the nature of public deference and the acceptance of statements of authority. Other issues relate to a general climate of cynicism about politics and politicians. Many of these issues go well beyond the remit of this review. However, we are clear that in the context of trust and confidence in crime statistics, issues such as perceived relevance, fit to personal experience and the experiences of family and neighbours, as well as accord with common sense, all play an important role – as does the formative influence of national and local media commentators and other key opinion formers.
- I.29 Issues of trust and the roles and purposes of crime statistics have together led us to the important conclusion that a clear distinction needs to be drawn between national and local perspectives on the uses and modes of communication of crime statistics.
- I.30 In Chapter 2, we consider the national perspective, detailing the various rationales for the provision of statistics at a national level. These include the constitutional need to hold the government and its agencies to account, to measure performance and to guide and evaluate policy. At this level, trust and confidence are closely related to reliability, accuracy, consistency between estimates and interpretability. We provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of current provision of national statistics and make a number of recommendations relating to coverage and communication aimed at improving and enhancing current provision.

- I.31 In Chapter 3, we consider the local perspective. Our strong and clear conclusion is that it is fundamentally important to shift the focus and emphasis of the crime statistics debate from the national to the local perspective. We are clear that more and better crime information has to be available at a sufficiently local level and communicated in a form that relates to the individual member of the public's day-to-day experience of living or working in an area. At this level, trust and confidence are closely related to perceived relevance, accord with experience and the local dialogue with law enforcement agencies, notably the police. We make a series of recommendations aimed at beginning the process of effecting a major shift from the national to the local perspective.
- I.32 In Chapter 4, we consider organisational and governance issues relating to crime statistics – many of which are more widely applicable throughout government statistics. Although such issues may be far removed from the immediate interest or experience of most members of the public, they are of great concern to relevant professional and regulatory bodies and key academics, media commentators and opinion formers. If the latter have major concerns about the governance and management arrangements for ensuring the actual and perceived independence and integrity of the production and presentation of national crime statistics, these concerns will be widely and regularly expressed through the media and will play a significant role in undermining public trust in these statistics. We make a series of recommendations that we believe to be key to enhancing the perceived independence and integrity of national crime statistics.
- I.33 While the review was in progress, there were two related developments. HM Treasury published a consultation document on the future governance framework for all of government statistics<sup>9</sup> and the Statistics Commission published its own report on crime statistics<sup>10</sup>.
- I.34 So far as the Commission's report is concerned, the Review Group was kept up to date with the Statistics Commission's findings. Their findings were arrived at quite independently of the present review but we do not think they conflict with our recommendations on any major matter except that they suggest moving the BCS to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). We believe it should remain in the Home Office because as well as being a source for the national crime statistics, it is one of the most important research tools and sources of information for the Home Office to manage the crime problem.
- I.35 So far as HM Treasury's consultation is concerned, we understand that the government intends to introduce a Bill in the autumn. However, at the time of finalising this report we have not had sight of any draft legislation. We have therefore framed our recommendations on what can be done to restore public trust in crime statistics in a manner that takes account of known responses to the HM Treasury discussion document<sup>11</sup> but without knowing how our recommendations will eventually fit within the new legislative framework.
- I.36 The Review Group has brought together members who differ widely in their ranges of expertise and interests relating to crime statistics and in their positioning on the political spectrum. After considerable debate, we present to the Home Secretary a series of practical recommendations that we have all agreed on as a basis for immediate and significant changes to, and enhancements of, our current production, communication and use of crime statistics that will do much to restore public trust and confidence.

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9. *Independence for statistics: A consultation document (2006)*. HM Treasury, London available at: <[www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1E1/25/bud06\\_ons\\_357.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1E1/25/bud06_ons_357.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

10. Statistics Commission Report No.30: *Crime Statistics: User Perspectives*. Statistics Commission, London available at: <[www.statscom.org.uk/uploads/files/reports/Crime\\_Statistics\\_Review-final.pdf](http://www.statscom.org.uk/uploads/files/reports/Crime_Statistics_Review-final.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

11. See: <[www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget\\_06/other\\_documents/bud\\_bud06\\_odstatistics\\_responses.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_06/other_documents/bud_bud06_odstatistics_responses.cfm)> (30 Oct 06).

## National crime statistics serve five main purposes

- 2.1 As we have indicated in Chapter 1, we believe that the almost exclusive focus of attention by both the Home Office and its critics on national crime data is itself part of the problem of restoring public trust and confidence in crime statistics and in Chapter 3 we shall be recommending a major shift of emphasis to local crime information.
- 2.2 That said, the Review Group is clear that there are a number of key reasons why we do also need crime statistics at national level:
- to provide reliable quantitative measurements of criminal activity and trends that enable parliament to fulfil its democratic function of holding the government of the day accountable for this aspect of the state of the nation;
  - to keep the public, media, academe and relevant special interest groups informed about the state of crime in the country and to provide (access to) data that inform wider debate and non-governmental research agendas;
  - to inform relevant aspects of short-term resource allocation, both within government and also for external related bodies – e.g. for policing and Victim Support;
  - to inform performance management and accountability at the national level of agencies such as the police;
  - to provide an evidence base for longer-term government strategic and policy developments.
- 2.3 We believe that the current national crime statistics are broadly relevant for all of these five purposes, but that there are a number of fundamental questions to be asked about the present arrangements:
- Is the coverage of the current statistics adequate?
  - Are there arrangements to ensure the integrity of the crime data?
  - What crime statistics should be published nationally and how often?
  - How can possibly conflicting statistics be properly reported?
  - Do the definitions used in the crime statistics accord with common sense?
  - How should technical changes in the crime statistics be handled?
- 2.4 We have also identified a range of issues relating to the governance and management of the production and release of national crime statistics. These important issues will be taken up separately in Chapter 4.

## The concept of ‘total crime’ is dubious but there are serious and growing gaps in the national figures

- 2.5 At present the Home Office publishes the annual report on national crime statistics in July<sup>12</sup> and a quarterly summary of headline crime figures<sup>13</sup>. These publications draw on two main sources of crime data: police recorded crime and the BCS.

12. See for example: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0506.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0506.html)> (30 Oct 06).

13. See for example: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosbl606.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosbl606.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

## The British Crime Survey

The BCS is a nationally representative, household victimisation survey that has been conducted since 1982. The main purpose of the survey is to measure the extent and nature of criminal victimisation against adults, aged 16 or over, living in private households in England and Wales.

The survey was conducted at various intervals until 2001 when it became continuous. The 2005/06 BCS reports on 47,796 face-to-face interviews conducted between April 2005 and March 2006. BMRB Social Research carried out the fieldwork for the 2005/06 BCS. The response rate was 75 per cent.

Further information on the British Crime Survey and access to recent publications can be found at <<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>> (30 Oct 06).

### Police recorded crime

The police recorded crime statistics are a measure of the amount of crime which is reported to and recorded by the 43 Home Office forces and the British Transport Police.

The recorded crime statistics do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police or that the police decide not to record. Police recording practice is governed by Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime and the National Crime Recording Standard.

More detailed information is available at:

<<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/countrules.html>> (30 Oct 06).

- 2.6 Police recorded crime covers all crime reported to, or discovered by, the police and then recorded *which are required to be reported to the Home Office* – hence they are known as ‘notifiable offences’. These notifiable offences are generally what would commonly be regarded as the ‘more serious’ crimes but were recently extended to include some of the ‘less serious’ (see paragraph 1.22).
- 2.7 Police recorded crime has the advantage that it covers the full range of crimes and are the only data that can be used to look at crime at neighbourhood level. It has the disadvantage that it largely depends on the public reporting crimes to the police (about 60% is currently not reported<sup>14</sup>) and on the police recording all the crimes reported to them. It can also be open to the suggestion that recording may be influenced by the demands of performance management regimes.
- 2.8 The BCS interviews over 40,000 people each year about their experience of being a victim and then uses the survey findings to estimate national crime rates. The BCS is a well-designed survey and provides a reliable means of estimating aspects of household and personal crime. However, its coverage is restricted to ‘normal’ households and adults, and it does not capture crimes committed against other victims – including corporate victims, those under 16 years of age and individual adult victims residing outside ‘normal’ households.
- 2.9 The advantages of the BCS are that it overcomes the reporting and recording problems of police recorded crime (and so gives a better estimate for those crimes that it covers), it explores the experience of crime for victims and provides a very important means of carrying out research into crime and victimisation. The disadvantages of the BCS are that it only covers a limited range of crimes and victims and cannot be used to measure crime at local neighbourhood level.

14. See Allen J. and Ruparel C. in Walker A., Kershaw C. and Nicholas S. (eds) (2006) ‘*Crime in England and Wales 2005/06*’. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 12/06 available at: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0506.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0506.html)> (30 Oct 06).

- 2.10 Both the BCS and police recorded crime statistics contribute to building up the national picture of crime trends. The two approaches measure different things (victimisation on the one hand, reported and recorded crime on the other) and each has its strengths and weaknesses. Together they are currently the best sources to provide a picture of what is happening to trends in crime, but there remains a range of crimes not captured by current national statistics.
- 2.11 There are a number of crimes that are known to be inadequately reported to the police and therefore inadequately recorded. Some crime – often referred to as ‘victimless crime’ – is rarely reported. Indeed some crimes, for example drug possession, are only known about if the police proactively seek to identify them. Some crime is known about but not reported to the police or to the Home Office: in particular, some forms of fraud against financial institutions are not reported beyond the institution because the information is regarded as commercially sensitive. Similarly, crimes involving sex, race and crime within the family are often unreported. Some crime is known about by other government departments but is largely not reported to the police: e.g. benefit or VAT fraud. Some crime – such as shoplifting – is largely left to the private sector to deal with and so remains underreported to the police.
- 2.12 In addition, new forms of crime emerge all the time as offenders respond to new opportunities and new technologies. Recently, for example, there has been concern about e-crime, counterfeiting, theft of identity and people trafficking. Sometimes new legislation is required to bring new crimes clearly within police recorded crime (e.g. e-crime) but very often the extent of recording depends on how effectively the police can discover such crime or persuade people to report it to them. Credit card fraud, for example, is often not reported to the police because victims know that credit card companies will usually deal directly with any loss.
- 2.13 In the public perception, this clearly raises a concern that the national crime statistics do not properly cover all crime. *We share this concern. The Home Office clearly does need to know about all forms of crime in order to inform policy and resource allocation.*
- 2.14 However, we are also clear that there can never be a measure of ‘overall’ or ‘total’ crime. There will always be crimes not adequately captured in the statistics and a single total number would bring together a very wide range of acts and degrees of seriousness in a not very meaningful way. What matters – and is attainable – is to develop national crime statistics series that have clearly understood strengths and weaknesses and are consistent enough over time to provide trend data for whatever area of crime each measures.
- 2.15 We now turn to what we believe can and should be done to meet public concern by extending the range of the Home Office’s coverage of crime statistics.

## **The coverage of the British Crime Survey is partial**

- 2.16 The British Crime Survey is a high-quality survey that has contributed significantly to the Home Office’s and to public understanding of crime trends over the last 25 years. It is also a very important research tool and has led the development of new crime reduction programmes, services for victims and improved the quality of the criminal justice system. We believe that nothing should be done to undermine the quality and importance of the BCS. However, it is clear that the BCS has shortcomings that need addressing.
- 2.17 The BCS excludes those under 16 years old. At the time the survey was first designed, 25 years ago, there were concerns about getting parental permission to interview those under 16. However, it is now not uncommon to interview people under 16 about victimisation and the Home Office has done so in some of its other surveys. In our view the BCS should be extended to include those under 16. They are an important group whose victimisation needs to be part of policy considerations and service delivery.

- 2.18 We acknowledge that such an extension would need to draw on expert advice and the issue of parental consent will need careful handling. There will also need to be careful piloting so that the effect on the survey can be properly assessed before the extension is incorporated into the main BCS sample. The interviews should be extended as far below 16 as proves practical in a regular household-based survey. In interpreting the results from younger people, care will be needed over whether there are different conceptions of crime victimisation in different age groups.
- 2.19 The BCS sample frame also excludes those not living in 'normal' households. For example, those living in student halls of residence, nurses' residences or old people's homes. We think the Home Office should extend the BCS sampling frame to include such individuals. However, once again, the feasibility of such an extension would need careful development and some understanding of the victimisation rates of such groups.
- 2.20 The BCS also excludes various other groups of individuals not in households – for example, the homeless, those irregularly living in hostels and those in prisons. Criminological research suggests that these groups probably have very high victimisation rates. However, in these cases, we think that incorporating them into a household-based survey would be methodologically difficult. Therefore, we do not think the BCS sample should be extended to include these groups. Understanding the victimisation of these groups is important but that is probably best achieved by specific research.

***Recommendation 2.1. The British Crime Survey sample frame should be extended to include those under 16 and those living in group residences as soon as practical after taking the advice of those with relevant expertise and piloting the changes. In addition, research should be carried out on the victimisation of homeless and institutionalised populations.***

## **There should be regular (but less frequent) surveys of victims of crime excluded from an extended BCS**

- 2.21 The BCS measures victimisation of households and individuals. However, similar surveys could be used to measure victimisation against other groups. Indeed, the Home Office has already carried out two ad hoc surveys of commercial and industrial victimisation<sup>15</sup>.
- 2.22 A fuller picture of crime would be available if regular surveys were carried out of commercial and industrial victimisation. In doing so, particular attention could be paid to some more vulnerable sectors, such as the self-employed and small businesses, because they are more likely to rely on public resources for responding to crime. Such surveys are expensive to carry out but the sample size and costs could be contained if this were done every two years, which would be sufficient to provide useful trend data.

***Recommendation 2.2. We recommend that the Home Office should carry out a survey of commercial and industrial victimisation every two years.***

- 2.23 This leaves the question of whether anything can be done to further extend the coverage of other currently excluded crimes.
- 2.24 Many of the crimes not currently covered are inherently difficult to measure because often the victims do not want to report them or prefer to respond to the crime in a different way. It may be that regular statistical measures are not possible in many cases. However, research studies could provide an indication of the scale and nature of the problems involved and, if repeated, could also provide at least an indication of trends. Eventually, such research studies may lead to a regular addition to the crime statistics series, as happened when the BCS moved from being a research study to also being a regular part of the crime statistics series.

15. See: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crime\\_commercial.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crime_commercial.html)> (30 Oct 06).

- 2.25 Not to try to measure such crimes will impoverish Home Office policy thinking and could send a misleading signal that the government does not care about such crimes just because they are difficult to measure. We think the Home Office should address this issue and needs to do so quickly.

**Recommendation 2.3.** We recommend that the Home Office should publish within 12 months an action plan for what it proposes to do to measure those crimes which are either not included in the present crime statistics or are poorly measured by them.

### Extending the Coverage of National Crime Statistics

Inadequate coverage	Recommendation
Under 16s in BCS	Extend sample below 16
Group residents in BCS	Extend sample to cover those in group residences
Those not in households in BCS	Explore victimisation through research
Survey measures of crime against commercial and industrial victims	Regular surveys of commercial and industrial victimisation carried out every two years
Other crimes not adequately covered in national crime statistics	Home Office to produce action plan within 12 months on proposals to address this problem

### The integrity of BCS data is good; the integrity of police recorded crime data is now amongst the best in the world

- 2.26 As already discussed, the two main sources of data currently used for the national crime statistics are the BCS and police recorded crime. For each of these the integrity of the data needs to be properly managed. To ensure public confidence and trust, there needs to be appropriate assurance that the data collected about crime are accurate and properly reflect whatever crime has been committed.
- 2.27 This question is easier to answer for the BCS. The BCS is a survey run by the Home Office, with the fieldwork interviews carried out by a market research company under contract to the Home Office. It is therefore fairly easy for the Home Office statisticians to monitor the integrity of the data from the design of the questionnaire, through the interviewing, data entry and then analysis. Furthermore, there are well-established methodologies for testing the integrity of survey data at various stages and checking and correcting bias introduced by non-response. In the past, the Home Office statisticians have, on occasion, sought independent advice about the conduct of the BCS<sup>16</sup> and have a BCS external user group. We have no criticism of current management of the BCS but think it would be good practice to have a standing independent panel of technical experts to advise the Home Office on all aspects of the use, design and analysis of crime surveys.

**Recommendation 2.4.** We recommend that the Home Office set up a standing panel of independent experts to provide regular review of and comment on methodological and analytic issues relating to the BCS and its other crime surveys.

- 2.28 Questions about the integrity of police recorded crime statistics have been regularly raised since they were introduced in 1857. A previous review of the crime statistics<sup>17</sup> recommended a number of changes to improve the integrity of these data. The most important of these was that there should be a front office/back office divide – that those recording statistics that will be used for the assessment of performance should be organisationally separate from those whose performance is assessed. This was

16. See: Lynn, P. and Elliot, D. (2000) *The British Crime Survey: A Review of Methodology*, London.

17. *Review of Crime Statistics: A Discussion Document* (The Simmons Report) London: Home Office, 2000 available at: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/review.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/review.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

achieved by appointing force data registrars who are responsible for supplying and quality assuring the data and report to an ACPO rank officer who is not in the chain of command for policing crime. The same ACPO officer then signs off the statistical return to the Home Office.

- 2.29 This recommendation has been followed and has generally served the purpose well. It has reinforced that critical front office/back office distinction which is essential to the integrity of the crime data. We believe that this system must be protected and HMIC should ensure that it is followed in all forces.
- 2.30 A further aspect of integrity is the means by which crime data are transferred from each police force to the Home Office. Currently this is done in a variety of ways because police forces have different data systems. This is not acceptable because it increases the risk of errors occurring and means that a lot of the Home Office statisticians' time is spent checking and formatting data, an inefficient use of a skilled professional resource. However, the Home Office has been developing a standard data warehouse (Home Office National Management Information System [NMIS] Data Hub) which is fed by force crime recording systems. Taking advantage of this, the Home Office plans to draw police recorded crime data direct from force systems. This should improve the integrity of the data and be more efficient both for forces and the Home Office. The Home Office needs to ensure that providing the statisticians with a central NMIS to hold these data is accorded a high priority.

**Recommendation 2.5. We recommend that the framework for data recording in police forces using the force crime registrars must be protected and HMIC should ensure this is strengthened. The framework for reporting data to the Home Office should also be protected and strengthened. The Home Office should produce a clear funded plan so that Home Office statisticians have access to NMIS data as soon as possible.**

- 2.31 It was criticism of the integrity of police recorded crime data<sup>18</sup> that led ACPO to introduce the new NCRS – see paragraph 1.9. As we have already noted, in the short term the introduction of the NCRS had the unintended consequence of contributing to the decline of trust in the crime statistics. However, in the longer run it has significantly increased the degree of standardisation in the recording of crime by the police. Furthermore, the Home Office's Police Standards Unit asked the Audit Commission to check whether all police forces were implementing the NCRS properly. These audits have now been carried out for three years. Initially the audits uncovered shortcomings in the implementation of the NCRS but this led to improvements which were confirmed earlier this year in an independent review by the Audit Commission<sup>19</sup>.

“There has been significant improvement in crime recording performance in the last three years, in terms of both data quality and the arrangements in place to support effective crime recording practices.”

*From summary of 'Crime Recording 2005: Improving the Quality of Crime Records in Police Authorities and Forces in England and Wales' Audit Commission and the Wales Audit Office (2006) London: Audit Commission.*

- 2.32 The audits have provided a new basis for confidence in the integrity of police recorded crime. We know of no other police recorded crime system that has had this degree of auditing. We think that the Home Office should make independent auditing of police crime recording a permanent feature of the system as it seeks to restore public confidence in crime statistics. After this period of intense auditing it may be that periodic and risk-based audits would suffice for the future, provided they were clearly seen to be a permanent feature of the system.

18. Report by Her Majesty's Inspector Keith Povey (July 2000) 'On the Record: Thematic Inspection Report on Police Crime Recording, the Police National Computer and Phoenix Intelligence System Data Quality', London: HMIC available at: <[www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect\\_reports/1/thematic-inspections/on-the-record2/otr001.pdf?view=Binary](http://www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect_reports/1/thematic-inspections/on-the-record2/otr001.pdf?view=Binary)> (30 Oct 06).

19. *Crime Recording 2005: Improving the Quality of Crime Records in Police Authorities and Forces in England and Wales*, London: Audit Commission available at: <[www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=ENGLISH%5e17%5eSUBJECT%5e681%5eREPORTS-AND-DATA%5eAC-REPORTS&ProdID=22146C54-901A-4aaf-A18C-33F096770F3F](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=ENGLISH%5e17%5eSUBJECT%5e681%5eREPORTS-AND-DATA%5eAC-REPORTS&ProdID=22146C54-901A-4aaf-A18C-33F096770F3F)> (30 Oct 06).

**Recommendation 2.6.** We recommend that the use of periodic independent audits of the police recording of crime should become a permanent feature.

## **Understanding trends in crime requires a range of sources, some of which, some of the time, will be contradictory**

- 2.33 Some commentators have argued recently that police recorded crime data should be published separately from the BCS since publishing the two together simply creates confusion if the two series are showing different trends.
- 2.34 We can understand this reaction but believe that the Home Office has a duty to try to report to the best of its ability what it believes to be the levels of and trends in criminal activity. There will always be multiple sources of – potentially conflicting – information on which to base such a report. If there are conflicting messages, we do not believe that simply publishing the different sources separately without acknowledging and addressing such conflicts in the data would be a helpful contribution to public understanding. However, we acknowledge that this does mean that such a report will sometimes depend on the professional judgements of the statisticians producing it – an issue we will return to later.

**Recommendation 2.7.** The Home Office should continue to publish police recorded crime data and the BCS together.

## **An annual assessment of trends in crime is appropriate but there should be more openness to monthly data**

- 2.35 The Home Office currently publishes brief headline national crime figures quarterly and in full detail annually. Internally, however, it has detailed crime figures available for management purposes on a monthly basis. This seems to us to raise two questions: (i) how often would it be sensible for the Home Office to publish crime statistics to fulfil the purposes outlined at the start of this chapter and (ii) how much of the data held by the Home Office should be made publicly available?
- 2.36 Crime statistics have quite a lot of short-term variation and, as a result, short-term changes can be misleading. For that reason, it seems sensible only to publish a national overview of crime once a year when trends and patterns are much more likely to be discernable and stable. From a parliamentary perspective, once a year would also seem to us to be a sound basis for a debate about the Home Secretary's stewardship of the crime problem.
- 2.37 The Simmons Report<sup>20</sup> recommended that the annual crime statistics should have a lengthy commentary that was essentially an annual report on the state of crime in England and Wales, drawing not only on police recorded crime statistics and the BCS but also on whatever other appropriate sources of information were available. We support this recommendation and for this reason we think that the BCS and the police recorded crime data, and any future crime data, need to remain under one statistical management.

**Recommendation 2.8.** We recommend that national crime statistics should be published annually and include a full commentary on the state of crime, drawing on all appropriate data sources.

20. Review of Crime Statistics: A Discussion Document (The Simmons Report), London: Home Office, 2000 available at: <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/review.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/review.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

- 2.38 However, the Home Office will continue to have crime data available for management purposes on a monthly basis and our recommendations on local crime information will make access to local crime data easier (see Chapter 3). The Home Office should therefore make all its national monthly data available on its website, without commentary, while making clear that the data have not been audited by Home Office statisticians. We are aware that these data could be misused but there are those – for example, non-Home Office organisations and academic researchers – who need these data for their own purposes. Furthermore, we believe that a Home Office policy of openness regarding data will in itself significantly contribute to rebuilding public trust in crime statistics.

***Recommendation 2.9. We recommend that the Home Office should make available on its website the full monthly crime data it holds but make clear this is unaudited data and do so without commentary, except where this is necessary to clarify changes in the statistical process.***

## **Should national debate about trends focus on a stable basket of serious crime?**

- 2.39 Police recorded crime that is reported in the national crime statistics does not cover all crimes recorded by the police but only the so-called ‘notifiable offences’. These notifiable offences are generally what the public would regard as the ‘more serious’ ones and historically were indictable crimes. However, as the use of the indictable/non-indictable distinction has declined over the years, the Home Office has had to review what crimes it believes should be ‘notifiable’ and then lay down counting rules as to how they should be recorded. Since new legislation is a regular activity, these additions to the list of notifiable offences are an ongoing process.
- 2.40 However, periodically the Home Office has taken a more fundamental look at what is included in the notifiable offences list. The last time it did so was in 1998 when the list of notifiable offences was extended and it was additionally required that each individual victimisation experience was counted by the police as a crime (rather than the previous practice of sometimes counting a series of offences as one crime).
- 2.41 Part of the explanation for the different trends shown by police recorded crime and the BCS is due to the extension of notifiable offences. This has led to the suggestion that it would be better if the national crime statistics focused on a stable and representative basket of serious crimes. There are two arguments for doing so. First, the more serious crimes are those for which the Home Secretary and the national government should most clearly be held to account. Second, the more serious crimes are generally more likely to be reported and recorded by the police and so act as a proxy for the overall state of crime. This is what happens in the USA where the national Uniform Crime Reports only include the more serious violent and property crimes.
- 2.42 We recognise that this is a difficult issue. On the one hand, the public might appreciate a clear separation of the serious from the less serious but they may not all agree on which crimes are the more serious: after all each crime is deeply unpleasant and serious for the victim. On the other hand, not including a wide range of crimes in the national crime statistics could send an unfortunate signal that the government does not care about the less serious crimes that the public are known to be concerned about. It is clear that the public are concerned about minor crime as well as serious crime and expect politicians to respond (as the current government has done recently by focusing on anti-social behaviour).
- 2.43 If this report was only making recommendations about national crime statistics we might not have pursued this issue. However, as we believe strongly that much more importance in future needs to be given to local crime information and its local dissemination (see Chapter 3), we believe that this could provide reassurance to the public that the government and the police are ensuring that all crime is responded to and allow the national debate to focus on the more serious crimes.

- 2.44 The current inclusion of a much wider range of offences in the national crime statistics does mean that they are more difficult to interpret, have less stable trends, include a number of crimes which have variable reporting and recording rates – or are the product of pro-active policing which varies over time – and are particularly susceptible to changes in counting rules or recording practices. It is these issues that have been largely responsible for the recent difficulties in interpreting trends in police recorded crime. Focusing on the more serious crime would provide a clearer picture of the national crime trend but also runs the danger of sending an unintended signal that the government is no longer interested in the bulk of (less serious) crime.
- 2.45 That would still leave the question of what should be included in a list of more serious crimes. This must necessarily be a matter of judgement. The legal framework provides some guidance in that most types of crime have varying offences available reflecting increasing seriousness. For example, the charge of ‘causing grievous bodily harm’ reflects a greater degree of injury to the victim than ‘common assault’, and ‘robbery’ is a more serious charge than ‘theft from the person’ (because it involves the added element of violence). Such differences are the basis for deciding what crime an offender should be charged with and are clearly defined in law and in the Home Office counting rules by which the police decide how to record a crime.
- 2.46 Within the Review Group we have found it difficult to agree, in the time available to us, whether focusing the national police recorded crime statistics only on the more serious crimes is the right thing to do. Clearly, the Home Office needs to give further consideration to this issue.
- 2.47 For purposes of monitoring police performance, the Home Office is considering whether it should make use of the recently introduced National Standard for Incident Recording<sup>21</sup>. Since a significant amount of police time is spent on non-crime incidents this is sensible from a performance monitoring point of view. Such data may also be useful at the local level in order to provide information about specific local problems and the police response (see chapter 3). However, we believe that the Home Office should not include these incident data in the national crime statistics since this would further exacerbate the problem just discussed in relation to less serious crimes.

## **Crime statistics are not simple facts, they involve technical judgements**

- 2.48 The issue that seems to have most contributed to recent confusion about (and distrust of) crime statistics has been that of the police recorded crime data and the BCS showing different trends. Total recorded crime showed an upward trend, while the BCS was showing total crime as going down. It is not surprising that most commentators were confused and frustrated about what was actually happening to crime trends.
- 2.49 There are always going to be different sources of data about crime and it is always possible that the evidence will not unambiguously tell the same story. Those interpreting the data will therefore have to make judgements about what the data overall actually mean. This situation is not unique to crime and is equally the case for a great deal of other social and economic data. We recognise that the need to make judgements can never be entirely avoided in crime statistics: what matters, however, is that it is clear and open who makes those judgements, when and how they make them and how they are explained and justified.
- 2.50 National crime statistics are currently produced by a team of statisticians in the Home Office. Whether that is appropriate and how the production and publication of these statistics might be better managed and governed are issues we will return to in Chapter 4.

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21. See: <[www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/incident-recording](http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/incident-recording)> (30 Oct 06).

- 2.51 During the period when the police recorded crime data and the BCS were showing different trends, statisticians in the Home Office had to make judgements as to why the two trends were different. Essentially they argued that the recorded crime had been inflated by the introduction of the NCRS. They produced the evidence they felt supported this judgement and also initially modelled what they believed would have happened to recorded crime without the NCRS effect. Subsequent trends in the two data series suggest they were probably right in the judgement they made. However, this judgement was not fully accepted by many commentators, primarily because the way in which the NCRS was implemented meant that it was difficult to produce reliable estimates of the impact, but also because by the time the NCRS was introduced an erosion of trust had already occurred. Also, the judgement made about the NCRS effect was the one that appeared to be the most favourable to the government and this, probably inevitably, further encouraged a sceptical response.
- 2.52 We have already made (in Chapter 1) the comparison with what happened when changes were made in the counting rules for crime in 1998. In that case, the statisticians were able to get a sample of police forces to count under both the old and new rules and so produce fairly clear estimates of the effect of the changes that were readily accepted by the commentators. We recognise that an adverse political climate or a politically convenient judgement will make it difficult for statistical judgement to find acceptance. The best defence in these circumstances is when statistical judgements are clearly identified as such and the basis for them is given and referenced.

***Recommendation 2.10. We recommend that whenever Home Office statistical reports include interpretation or assumptions on the part of the authors these should be flagged frankly and openly on their first appearance in the report and the basis of those judgements should be referenced and made available.***

- 2.53 Any such judgements must be open to challenge and debate by other experts. The Home Office – and its potential critics – will have more confidence in the judgements of its own statisticians if these are open to external peer review. We believe that all Home Office statistical series ought to be accompanied by a full and frank statement about their strengths and weaknesses in order to help external experts and commentators engage constructively and critically with Home Office publications.

***Recommendation 2.11. We recommend that the Home Office should attach to each of its statistical series a statement clearly identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the particular series and the aspects about which professional judgements may need to be made.***

## **Statistical judgements and political judgements should be clearly separate**

- 2.54 Trust in such statistical judgements also depends on whether the Home Office handles the reporting of possibly conflicting statistics in a carefully balanced way. Currently, the Home Office releases the crime statistics together with a press notice, which usually includes a ministerial response and often also provides ministerial interviews. We believe that there is a serious problem with this arrangement. It does not clearly separate statistical comments and judgements from political comments and judgements and therefore contributes significantly to undermining trust in the independence of the statistics. This has been compounded by the fact that the Home Office has been criticised by the Statistics Commission for Ministers referring to statistics before publication<sup>22</sup>. Furthermore, non-statistical Home Office press releases have sometimes referred to the BCS as providing the ‘best measure’ of overall crime. This is not correct and has further undermined trust and led to critical attacks on the BCS itself.<sup>23</sup> We shall return to this issue in Chapter 4.

22. See: <[www.statscom.org.uk/uploads/files/correspondence/Letter0273.pdf](http://www.statscom.org.uk/uploads/files/correspondence/Letter0273.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

23. See: <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4702821.stm>> (30 Oct 06).

**Recommendation 2.12:** *In order to build trust, the Home Office should ensure that the release and statistical commentary on national crime statistics are quite clearly separated from political judgements or ministerial comments and should ensure the accuracy of any statements made about the statistics, whether in press releases or ministerial comments.*

## **Commonsense definitions would help confidence in the statistics**

- 2.55 The changes made to the crime counting rules in 1998 brought into the notifiable offences list some lesser offences. In the case of violent crime it meant the inclusion, for the first time, of common assault. This significantly increased the number of violent crimes reported in the crime statistics.
- 2.56 It also caused some confusion because most common assault involves no injury to the victim. In one sense, this was dealt with in 2002 when the counting rules were clarified so that common assault now never involves any injury to the victim. However, this still left the slightly odd situation that about half of all violent crime included in the crime statistics involves no physical injury including, for example, such crimes as bigamy. This seems to fly in the face of common sense and does little to create public confidence in the crime figures.
- 2.57 Some crimes that involve no actual injury can nevertheless be serious offences of violence: for example, a threat to kill with a gun that is not carried out is likely nevertheless to create genuine and considerable fear in the victim. However, this is not true for most of those violent crimes that involve no physical injury.
- 2.58 This situation has been compounded because both the Home Office statisticians and the media have adopted the habit of referring to all ‘offences against the person’ as violence, when in fact some of them cannot be properly so described<sup>24</sup>.
- 2.59 This situation is nonsensical and in danger of actually misleading the public about what is happening to violent crime. We believe that crime statistics should only use the category ‘violent crime’ to refer to those crimes which actually cause physical injury or where the threat to inflict such injury is judged by the police recording the crime as likely to frighten a reasonable person.

**Recommendation 2.13.** *We recommend that the Home Office redefine violent crime in crime statistics to only include those crimes which actually cause physical injury or where the threat to inflict such injury is likely to frighten a reasonable person.*

## **Changes to statistical series should be better managed**

- 2.60 Part of the recent problem with the credibility of the crime statistics has been a consequence of introducing significant changes first in the counting rules and then in the methodology of police recording practices (the NCRS). The consequences were unintended and, certainly at the time, there were good reasons for making both these changes. Regular change, particularly in police recorded crime, is to some extent inevitable. New legislation necessarily means adding to the counting rules and such changes are ongoing. However, when significant changes are made, a period of relative stability should be planned while they are absorbed. The problem is not change as such but whether required changes are well managed.

24. See: Table 2.04 of ‘Crime in England and Wales 2005/06 (2006) Home Office Statistical Bulletin 12/06. London: Home Office; for offences comprising police-recorded violent crime: available at <[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb1206chap2.xls](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb1206chap2.xls)> (30 Oct 06).

2.61 We believe that any future changes in crime statistics should happen in a planned and controlled way. Plans should include a method of measuring the effects of the changes on crime trends and a communications strategy to explain the changes and their likely impact. The latter aspect is crucial and must be included as part of the original planning rather than as an afterthought when the changes are already happening in order to handle press reaction. We are clear that the handling of statistical changes and interpretation requires a long-term communications strategy designed to engender public trust and confidence in government statistics.

***Recommendation 2.14. We recommend that the Home Office needs to have a long-term communications strategy for crime statistics designed to help create public trust. The Home Office should approach the introduction of any future changes in the crime recording system in such a way that (a) the changes are planned with a controlled timetable, (b) a method for measuring the effects of the changes on crime trends is implemented and (c) explanation of the changes is an integral part of the planning.***

### National data exaggerate the risk of crime in many areas

- 3.1 The recent debate about trust in crime statistics has focused on the national crime statistics produced by the Home Office. However, the credibility of crime statistics for many individual members of the public will necessarily be called into question if the message the statistics appear to convey is significantly at odds with the individual's own experience.
- 3.2 National data will always present a problem in this regard. Indeed, national crime data are misleading for most local areas because crime is very skewed in its geographical distribution. One consequence of this is that for most local neighbourhoods the national average will present a picture of crime risk that is higher than that which is experienced in the local neighbourhood. Another is that it is possible for national crime rate trends to go either up or down but without this change in trend being reflected in most individual neighbourhoods.
- 3.3 It therefore seems to us fundamentally important to make more and better crime information available at a sufficiently local level and communicated in a form that relates to the individual member of the public's day-to-day experience of living or working in an area. Currently such data are not available for most people.

***Recommendation 3.1. The Home Office should make the provision of local crime information a central part of its crime communication strategy and not just rely on publishing national crime statistics.***

### Sharing local crime data between the police and the public is important to crime control and to managing personal and family risk

- 3.4 The ability of the police to respond to crime depends on having accurate information and most of that information comes initially from the public. There is an important sense therefore in which crime data should be regarded as belonging to the public rather than to the police. In any case, the most effective way for the police to assure themselves of the reliability of their information is by sharing it with the public as a means of testing its validity. Sharing crime information is an important part of the partnership between police and the public on which effective crime control depends, especially at the neighbourhood level. The public, in turn, needs this information in order to manage personal and family crime risks. A great deal of crime prevention advice is available but the information required to decide what preventative action to take is less readily available.
- 3.5 In considering what information about crime should be available locally, different considerations apply from considerations appropriate at the national level. Holding to account those responsible for responding to crime is still an important issue, but locally it is the police – and other local service providers who need to work in partnership with the police, such as local authorities – who are directly being held to account.

- 3.6 Currently, all police forces make some information about crime in their area available to the public. Many forces have websites that include information about crime but the data are presented in different formats. Some forces simply release local crime data via a press release. In many areas it is not possible to get information about crime at a neighbourhood level or, if it is available, it is badly out of date or at too aggregate a level. While there are examples of good practice<sup>25</sup>, overall the situation in terms of a coherent local communications strategy and efficient exploitation of available technology is not satisfactory.
- 3.7 Locally the police collect much more crime data than they send to the Home Office for inclusion in the national crime statistics – they also have more details about each crime. In addition, they have data on all calls for service to the police whether or not the calls resulted in a recorded crime – usually referred to as incident data. They also hold information about known offenders. All of these data are used by the forces themselves as an operational tool to understand and respond to local crime. Many do so by mapping crime onto geographical information systems and then using this mapped data operationally. This operational use of crime data is clearly one of their most important uses but does not fall within the remit of this review.
- 3.8 At local level we believe that we should no longer be thinking about crime statistics in the traditional static sense of tables of numbers and graphs published as a record, but rather as a dynamic exchange of potentially useful information between the police and the public. For that reason, considerations about the level and form of information and its mode of communication are quite different from those applied to national crime statistics.
- 3.9 The government has accepted the need to respond to local crime and disorder, which still accounts for the bulk of crime, and has announced plans to introduce neighbourhood policing teams across the country in order to operate more effectively at the local level<sup>26</sup>. It has also said that it wants these neighbourhood policing teams to be responsive at the neighbourhood level. This presents a timely opportunity to achieve the shift of emphasis of the focus on crime statistics from national to local level. We are clear that the question of what information about crime should be available locally should be directly linked to this newly emerging structure of local policing.

***Recommendation 3.2. The Home Office should ensure that investment in strategies and technology for the provision of appropriate local crime information be an integral part of the development of neighbourhood policing teams and a key means by which they are held accountable to their neighbourhoods.***

## **Crime data must be intelligible at the local level**

- 3.10 This shift of emphasis from the national to the local level would be a fundamental change to the way crime data are made available and also to the way in which political debate about crime and accountability is conducted. In making this shift the Home Office would also need to think more carefully about what and how it is communicating.
- 3.11 The current model for presenting traditional national crime statistics in the form of a published report with standard forms of tables and graphs is clearly not the appropriate model for making information available at a local level in a form that will be relevant. Not only are current national crime statistics publications difficult to understand, they do not immediately answer the questions we believe most people want to ask about crime: in particular, how much crime is there in my neighbourhood, how well are the local police tackling crime and what are the risks to me?

25. See, for example <<http://www.beatcrime.info>> (30 Oct 06).

26. See <[www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk/](http://www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk/)> (30 Oct 06).

- 3.12 In short, the Home Office needs to develop a radical new local information strategy about crime that is popularly intelligible and uses the communication means of the 21st century. The emphasis needs to be on providing useful and locally usable information.

**Recommendation 3.3. The Home Office needs to develop a strategy for providing useful local crime information that makes use of modern communications.**

### Local data should be based on neighbourhood policing units

- 3.13 Crime is often a localised phenomenon. Crime rates can and do vary between neighbourhoods and sometimes even from street to street. This means that the larger the geographic unit on which information is provided the less relevant it is likely to be for the person who wants to understand their own personal or family risks. The ideal, therefore, is information that is as localised as possible. However, there are considerations about data protection and confidentiality that will properly limit how localised data can and should be for different crimes.
- 3.14 As neighbourhood policing teams are rolled out across the country, all police forces will have to decide what are the neighbourhood geographies on which they will be based. We understand that, currently, the scale of these 'neighbourhoods' could vary considerably. Whatever scales are chosen, we believe that for neighbourhood policing to work effectively there will need to be a partnership between the policing team and those living and working in the area. It will be important therefore for forces to make crime information available to the public on the appropriate geographic boundary basis that will enhance this partnership and facilitate holding the policing teams accountable to the neighbourhood they police. Such availability of information should do a great deal to reassure the local community that their police understand their concerns and are responding to them<sup>27</sup>.

**Recommendation 3.4. We recommend that local crime information should be made available on the same geographic basis as the neighbourhood policing teams.**

### Allow local flexibility about data within national quality standards

- 3.15 Nationally only limited information about 'notifiable' offences is available and this is also the case for the more localised information published by the Home Office. However, the push towards neighbourhood policing teams was, in part, a response to public demand that the police deal more effectively not just with the kind of crime included in the national crime statistics but with all crime, including the lesser offences of anti-social behaviour – as well as those acts of anti-social behaviour that are not necessarily categorised as crime.
- 3.16 The implication is that the neighbourhood policing teams will need information on all these issues for the area they are responsible for. In technical terms, this means they will need all crime data and all incident (calls for service) data for the area. Indeed, the line manager of the team will want to use that data to judge how effectively a team is responding to problems and public requests for service in the area. If this is the information needed to deliver neighbourhood policing then it is also the information by which the police can forge a partnership with the local community and against which a community can hold the police to account for the service they provide. Because neighbourhood policing is only currently being put in place this cannot happen immediately but we think it important to lay down a clear timetable and milestones.

27. See: *Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour: making places safer through improved local working* (2006). Audit Commission available at: <[www.audit-commission.gov.uk/Products/NATIONAL-REPORT/A51CB5E1-B7F8-46a1-AF8D-12EDFA3DED8F/neighbourhoodCrime.pdf](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/Products/NATIONAL-REPORT/A51CB5E1-B7F8-46a1-AF8D-12EDFA3DED8F/neighbourhoodCrime.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

**Recommendation 3.5. We recommend that crime information made available locally should include all crime data (not just notifiable offences) and all incident data and be available in all areas within three years.**

3.17 We think it is important that forces have the flexibility to determine the geography of crime information, linked to neighbourhood policing teams, and the flexibility to provide whatever information is necessary to respond to local problems. None of this can be sensibly dealt with by national requirements. However, we do think it is important that the Home Office requirements in relation to the counting rules (currently for crime recording but probably soon also for incident recording) are followed in the provision of more local information to provide standardisation in the way in which information is defined. One important reason for doing this is so that the public can see at the neighbourhood level the crimes reported in the national statistics and used for targets.

## **Make mapped data the focus**

3.18 The vision for neighbourhood policing is only going to be effective if the police are able to share information easily with the local community. Of course, having neighbourhood policing teams regularly patrolling a neighbourhood is itself designed to be a mechanism for information exchange. However, modern technology provides a myriad of other ways of passing and exchanging information and effective communication will depend on using a number of these.

3.19 In terms of the format of information, traditional crime statistics are the least useful. Statistical tables and analysis were developed to aid precision but that precision depends on both the presenter and receiver of the information sharing the same technical skills. Such skills are not widely distributed in local communities and statistical presentation can actually result in lack of information or even misinformation for the layman. There is a need to develop better methods of sharing crime information in a way that is not only intelligible but enables people to engage with the information in problem-solving ways.

3.20 There is surprisingly little good experimental evidence about how best to share statistical information. We suggest that the Home Office might consider working with bodies such as the ONS and the Royal Statistical Society to undertake empirical research on this issue. In the meantime, what limited evidence there is suggests that an effective form of communication is achieved by the use of mapped crime data<sup>28</sup>. Most people understand maps and find them an easy way to relate information to their neighbourhood. Mapped data also seems to be a good way of engaging a community in discussing crime problems with the police. In fact, and for related reasons, it is the method that all forces are now adopting to carry out analysis of crime. It seems to us that the police should build on this existing development and use mapped data as a means of engaging the public.

3.21 Not all forces are currently in a position to do so, mainly because their geo-coding of data is not yet good enough for such purposes<sup>29</sup>, but all are moving in this direction. We believe that this positive development should be given greater impetus to provide the analytical and management basis for neighbourhood policing and should at the same time be developed as the basis for sharing information with the public. Again, we think it important to set out a timetable and milestones.

**Recommendation 3.6. We recommend that police forces should have geo-coded crime and incident data as part of the roll out of neighbourhood policing teams. They should put in place the requirements to use this mapped data as a key means of sharing information with the public, including on a force website, within three years.**

28. Some American police forces, such as Chicago, have been using this means for a decade and it seems to have been successful. Some UK forces have also begun to do so.

29. The problems are largely about lack of point geo-coding (as opposed to geo-coding only on post codes) so as to provide a flexible geography for analysis and display and lack of developing geo-coding software so that it encourages accurate recording.

- 3.22 Police forces should encourage other local service providers who also have some responsibility for crime, anti-social behaviour and lifestyle events to join them in providing information in mapped form on the same website. Such other providers would typically include local authorities, health authorities, education departments, Youth Offending Teams, probation services and local courts. This recommendation should not, however, prevent forces experimenting with other means of presenting and sharing information. For example, in America local newspapers sometimes reproduce neighbourhood crime and incident reports<sup>30</sup> and many UK forces publish neighbourhood policing bulletins.

***Recommendation 3.7. We recommend that police forces should work with their partner local service providers to produce relevant information in mapped form on the same websites***

### **Make the data available frequently and quickly**

- 3.23 If local information is going to play the role in neighbourhood policing envisaged here, the police should have a duty to provide up-to-date information. Old information is of limited value in allowing policing teams and communities to work together. We suggest that, as a start, the minimum availability should be every month but that as soon as possible this should become more frequent. In some situations – for example, if a serial criminal is active in an area – real time information might even be considered appropriate. We recognise that the more recent the information the more its details may not yet be completely certain, but at neighbourhood level this is precisely the kind of issue that the police ought to be discussing with local communities.

***Recommendation 3.8. We recommend that the police should have a duty to provide local crime information as soon as possible or as necessary to respond to events.***

### **Local surveys are best focused on attitudes and expectations**

- 3.24 Given the utility of the BCS in understanding crime trends, there is a case for arguing that similar surveys should be conducted at the local level. The current size of the BCS sample means that it can only be sensibly used to track changes at the police force level – and even then only for total household and personal crime, or for questions which every respondent can answer – such as perception of anti-social behaviour. The Home Office has examined the feasibility of increasing the size of the BCS sample in a way that would provide useful data at neighbourhood level but found it to be prohibitively expensive relative to the information gain.
- 3.25 Some individual forces carry out surveys in their own areas and adopt cheaper methodologies than used by the BCS. The main use of such local surveys at present is not to measure crime trends – for which they are mainly inadequate – but to examine public attitudes, beliefs and expectations of policing. For this purpose they can be extremely useful and should be encouraged.

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30. See, for example <<http://12.17.79.6/ctznicam/ctznicam.asp>> (30 Oct 06).



## Chapter 4: Governance, Management and Communication proposals to help restore Trust and Confidence in Crime Statistics

### Governance and management proposals

#### The arrangements for governance of official statistics affects the trust they elicit

- 4.1 There have long been concerns on the part of key professionals, media commentators and opinion formers about the most appropriate organisational and governance arrangements to ensure the independence and perceived independence of government statistics as a prerequisite for establishing public trust and confidence. We note that such concerns continue to be expressed by leading professional societies and agencies such as the Royal Statistical Society and the Statistics Commission. The critical views of key opinion formers will continue to fuel public scepticism unless these important concerns are addressed.
- 4.2 The government clearly recognises these concerns. In March 2006, HM Treasury launched a consultation document which contained proposals aimed at strengthening public confidence in the quality and integrity of government statistics. This consultation document does not specifically focus on crime statistics or the Home Office, but the general issues raised are very close to the core issues in the terms of reference of this review. Many of the Review Group's recommendations in this chapter with regard to integrity and trust in the context of the Home Office and crime statistics can therefore also be viewed as a response to HM Treasury consultation, although we shall address our recommendations specifically to the Home Office.
- 4.3 The HM Treasury consultation document makes clear that "the production and presentation of official statistics needs to be free from political interference, and to be seen as such, so that the objectivity and impartiality of statistics is assured"<sup>31</sup>. The specific recommendations that follow in this chapter are aimed at achieving that assurance in the context of the Home Office and crime statistics.

#### There is a natural tension between relevance and independence in statistical work

- 4.4 The Review Group acknowledges that there is a very real tension at the heart of the debate about the independence of government statistics and the work of government statisticians. It is the tension between being 'relevant' and being perceived to be 'independent'. The former requires statisticians to work closely in government departments with policy makers and other subject matter professionals to ensure that statistical inputs are properly integrated into departmental management and policy developments. However, the latter would seem to require some kind of clear distance from the political influence and pronouncements that are central to the work of government departments.
- 4.5 We are clear that the resolution of this tension depends, at least in part, on having in place an appropriate line management and professional accountability framework within which those involved at a senior statistical level in the production and presentation of official statistics work.

31. Office for National Statistics (1998a) 'Statistics A Matter of Trust: A Consultation Document', cited in *Independence for statistics: A consultation document* (2006). HM Treasury, London available at: <[www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1E1/25/bud06\\_ons\\_357.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1E1/25/bud06_ons_357.pdf)> (30 Oct 06).

- 4.6 The tension would to some extent disappear if there were completely separate groups of professional statisticians involved on the one hand with detailed departmental management and policy activity and on the other hand with the presentation and publication of statistics for public consumption. However, this is not the case and we do not believe it to be either desirable or practical to have such a separation. The current system whereby, in addition to the ONS, individual departments have their own statisticians and collect statistics from surveys and from administrative sources has the clear merit of ensuring that statistics remain at the heart of policy making. The tension – and the perceived lack of independence that flows from it – must therefore be addressed in other ways.
- 4.7 One clear separation that must be achieved is between those who are responsible for the production and presentation of statistics and those whose performance is to be judged by those statistics. There is a useful analogy with the finance industry where there is regulatory insistence on a separation between those who record and account for transactions (the Back Office) and those who actually do the deals and are judged by the outcomes (the Front Office). This motivates the following.

***Recommendation 4.1. We recommend that the Home Secretary should put in place a regulatory environment which ensures that there is an actual and perceived separation between those who produce statistical data and commentary on crime (a ‘Back Office’ function) and those who are responsible for policy advice and will be judged on the basis of the data (the ‘Front Office’) be they in a police force, the Home Office or elsewhere.***

## **The professional independence of Home Office statisticians needs to be strengthened**

- 4.8 The Review Group has examined various options for ensuring that the actual and perceived integrity of professional statisticians working in the Home Office – often with the dual roles of both contributing to internal policy developments and debates and also being involved in producing statistics for official publication – is enhanced and protected.
- 4.9 On balance, therefore, we believe that the following stronger recommendation – variants of which could apply across the whole range of government statistical activity – would lead to a clearer public perception and understanding of the ultimate independence of senior government statisticians from actual or perceived departmental or ministerial pressures.

***Recommendation 4.2. We recommend that professional statisticians at Grade 6 or above working in the Home Office should be members of the Government Statistical Service, employed by the National Statistician and seconded by her to the Home Office. The National Statistician should be responsible for their career development and, in consultation with the Home Secretary, for the length of their secondment to the Home Office.***

- 4.10 So far as day-to-day line management of such seconded statisticians in the Home Office is concerned, we have recognised (see 4.6 above) that statistical teams in the Home Office not only contribute to the production of National Statistics but also spend much of their time engaged in using statistics for policy and management functions, including performance management. For perceived independence, therefore, in addition to the recommendation above it is important that *for those functions where statisticians in the Home Office are engaged in the production of National Statistics* their local line management is not through the policy and management functions of the department.

**Recommendation 4.3.** *We recommend that the line management of statistical teams in the Home Office for all aspects of their work relating to the production of National Statistics be through someone such as the Director of Research and Statistics who has no policy or operational responsibility in the department relating to crimes, acting on behalf of the National Statistician.*

- 4.11 So far as the governance structure for government statistics is concerned, the HM Treasury consultation document proposes that a new Statistics Board be established to oversee the working of the ONS and the wider government statistical system.

## **National crime statistics should conform to government-wide standards**

- 4.12 In relation to National Statistics – a term used for statistical series that are deemed to be essential to produce at a high level of accuracy and reliability and to publish officially – the consultation document assumes that Ministers would propose series for inclusion as National Statistics and that the Statistics Board would have an audit function to sign off on quality and fitness for purpose. In the specific context of the Home Office, we recommend the following.

**Recommendation 4.4.** *We recommend that the appropriate standards of conduct and quality for the production and publication of those crime statistical series accredited as National Statistics should be the government-wide standards for National Statistics established by the Statistics Board under the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals. The Board should audit Home Office performance against those standards, preferably as part of a wider responsibility on behalf of Parliament.*

- 4.13 The HM Treasury consultation document leaves it open to Parliament to decide how best to ensure accountability of the proposed Statistics Board. Whilst respecting the right of Parliament to organise itself, we believe it to be important that national crime statistics should come under the direct scrutiny of a senior committee of Parliament.

**Recommendation 4.5.** *We recommend that in relation to national crime statistics the Accounting Officer for the Home Office should report, through the new Statistics Board, to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the House of Commons, or to a specifically constituted sub-committee of the PAC operating under the same conventions as the parent committee.*

## **The proposed Statistics Board and its relationship to Parliament can be important**

- 4.14 The HM Treasury consultation document envisages that Ministers would make direct proposals on membership of the Statistics Board. We believe that this would do nothing to enhance public trust and confidence – quite the reverse.

**Recommendation 4.6.** *We recommend that the Home Office presses for the proposed Statistics Board to comprise predominantly non-executives appointed independently of Ministers or their departments, by procedures to be determined by the PAC and following Nolan conventions<sup>32</sup>.*

- 4.15 Who should be responsible for deciding what crime statistics series should form part of National Statistics?

32. See: <<http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/parlment/nolan/nolan.htm>> (30 Oct 06).

**Recommendation 4.7.** *We recommend that the Home Secretary should propose which statistics are to be regarded as of sufficient national importance to be considered for accreditation as National Statistics. We agree with the HM Treasury consultation document that the Statistics Board should have the power to decide whether any statistics so proposed are of sufficient quality to be National Statistics. In addition, we recommend that the Statistics Board has the power to draw to the attention of Parliament any crime statistics series that it believes should form part of National Statistics but have not been proposed as such by the Home Secretary.*

## Publication and communication proposals

- 4.16 The Review Group believes that in relation to publication of National Statistics, and their presentation to the public and media, it is vitally important that there be a clear distancing from the relevant government department.

**Recommendation 4.8.** *We recommend that the Home Office's current annual report on crime, including the results of the British Crime Survey and a commentary on police recorded crime and any other relevant information, should, under the future arrangements proposed in the HM Treasury consultation document, be published under the auspices of the Statistics Board with its own statistical press release, and that any political commentary should be kept separate from the event of this publication and statistical press release.*

- 4.17 There has been considerable concern expressed over the years about the perceived manipulation of release dates of key statistics in order to advantage Ministers in their relations with the public, media and opposition parties. This has contributed significantly to undermining public confidence and trust. We believe, therefore, that – whether or not the publication of national crime statistics ultimately becomes the responsibility of the Statistics Board – the Home Office should immediately put in place a clear release policy that removes once and for all the rationale for this kind of criticism.

**Recommendation 4.9.** *We recommend that there should be fixed release dates published at least six months in advance for all national crime statistics, which should then be released at the same time, 24 hours in advance, to Ministers, front bench spokespersons and key media and commentators.*

## There needs to be wider and easier access to data on equal terms

- 4.18 Over and above the official publications that we would wish to see issued under the auspices of the Statistics Board, we believe it to be essential that the Home Office adopts and publicises a policy of the greatest possible openness and transparency in relation to the statistical data it holds.

**Recommendation 4.10.** *We recommend that all Home Office crime statistical databases should be open to public access, subject to safeguarding the privacy of individuals and individual organisations.*

- 4.19 In addition to openness in relation to Home Office data, we believe that the Home Office should be more active in seeking to engage in communication and debate with interested parties in relation to its main statistical series and should seek to develop mutually beneficial relationships with identified key opinion formers. The latter might include members of the national and local media, academics and special interest groups.

**Recommendation 4.11.** *We recommend that each Home Office crime statistical series should have a responsible statistical owner of appropriate seniority within the department who should have a duty to engage with commentators and researchers about the reliability and meaning of the statistical series for which they are responsible.*

## Chair

Professor Adrian Smith – Principal, Queen Mary, University of London

## Members

Ian Beesley – Statistics Commissioner

Dame Helen Reeves – formerly Chief Executive, Victim Support

Ian Johnston – Chief Constable British Transport Police and ACPO lead on crime

Kate Flannery – Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

Paul Evans – Head of Police Standards Unit, Home Office

Sir Robert Phillis – Chief Executive, Guardian Media Group

Professor Tim Newburn – President, British Society of Criminology

David Green – Director of Civitas, nominated by the Conservative Party

Stephen Boley – Price Waterhouse Cooper, nominated by the Liberal Democrats

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**Carried out for the  
Secretary of State  
for the Home Department**

**November 2006**

