Changes to the police recorded crime classifications from April 2012; methodological note on impact on the statistics

Background

In 2011 the Home Office conducted a public consultation over proposed rationalisation to the number of classifications used to collect recorded crime data from the police. The proposed changes and responses to the consultation were considered by the independent Crime Statistics Advisory Committee (CSAC) and the advice from the CSAC and the subsequent acceptance of this advice by the Home Secretary can be found on the [CSAC’s webpage](#).

These changes came into force in April 2012 although will not feed through to the published statistics until the publication in October 2012. In line with good practice, this note is published in advance of the publication of the statistics so that users can be aware of the possible impact.

Impact of changes

The changes to the classifications will have no impact on the total number of crimes recorded by the police but will reduce the number of categories in which crime is sub-divided. There will be six principal changes to the current collection which taken together will reduce the overall number of offence classifications within the Home Office Counting Rules from 148 to 126. The impact of these changes is described below within main offence category with the number of offences recorded in 2010/11 given to provide context.

‘Other’ offences

A total of eleven existing offence classifications currently presented within the ‘other offences’ group will be collapsed into a single offence code for data collection purposes as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOCR code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Offences recorded in 2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Libel</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Betting, gaming and lotteries</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Immigration offences</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Customs and Revenue offences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Trade descriptions, etc.</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Health and Safety offences</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Protection from eviction</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>Adulteration of food</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Public health offences</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Planning laws</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other indictable or triable-either-way offences | 1,561
NEW Other Offences | 2,987

**Violent disorder and other offences against the State or public order**

A new offence classification of 'Violent Disorder' has been created which comprises the existing four offence classifications covering a range of serious offences against the state:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOCR code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Offences recorded in 2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Treason</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Treason Felony</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Riot</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Violent disorder</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Violent disorder</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining offences (36,583 in 2010/11) against the State or public order will remain in a separate category.

**Racially and religiously aggravated criminal damage**

The four existing racially/religiously aggravated criminal damage classifications (which currently provide a split by type of damage) will be merged into a single classification as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle offence</th>
<th>Racially or religiously aggravated offence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOCR code</strong></td>
<td><strong>HOCR code</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offences recorded in 2010/11</td>
<td>Offences recorded in 2010/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal damage to a dwelling</td>
<td>58A 58E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>172,922</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling</td>
<td>58B 58F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,686</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal damage to a vehicle</td>
<td>58C 58G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>289,048</td>
<td>866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other criminal damage</td>
<td>58D 58H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125,743</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two existing offences involving cruelty to children will be merged into a single classification as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOCR code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Offences recorded in 2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cruelty to and neglect of children</td>
<td>6,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Abandoning a child under the age of two years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Cruelty to children</td>
<td>6,090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The existing offences of ABH and GBH without intent will be merged into a new ‘assault with injury’ category. This change will also affect the offences of racially or religiously aggravated assault with injury:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOCR code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Offences recorded in 2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8F</td>
<td>Inflicting grievous bodily harm (GBH) without intent</td>
<td>15,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8G</td>
<td>Actual bodily harm (ABH) and other injury</td>
<td>328,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8K</td>
<td>Poisoning or female genital mutilation</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Assault with injury</td>
<td>343,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8H</td>
<td>Racially or religiously aggravated inflicting GBH without intent</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8J</td>
<td>Racially or religiously aggravated ABH or other injury</td>
<td>2,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Racially or religiously aggravated assault with Injury</td>
<td>3,170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The existing offence classification of ‘Wounding or carrying out an act endangering life (inflicting GBH with intent)’ will be split to allow Wounding to be collected as a separate item, and for the endangering life element of this classification to be grouped with other similar offences to create a new ‘Endangering life’ classification as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOCR code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Offences recorded in 2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5A</strong></td>
<td>Wounding or carrying out an act endangering life (inflicting GBH with intent)</td>
<td>19,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
<td>Assault with intent to cause serious harm (i.e. 5A excluding endangering life offences)</td>
<td>&lt;19,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5B</strong></td>
<td>Use of substance or object to endanger life</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5C</strong></td>
<td>Possession of items to endanger life</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Endangering railway passengers</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Endangering life at sea</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
<td>Other act endangering life (formerly part of 5A)</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
<td>Endangering life</td>
<td>&gt;961</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Next steps**

The changes described above to the collection system will need to be reflected in future publication classifications and arrangements will need to be put in place to deal with time series and cater for the transition between the old and new classifications.

More generally, the future presentation of police recorded crime categories in National Statistics outputs is actively being considered by ONS in line with the findings of the National Statistician’s review. There will be discussions with users as plans develop and the advice from the Crime Statistics Advisory Committee will be sought before any changes are introduced.