



**Strategic Policing and Crime Board**

**Date of meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019**

**Police and Crime Plan Priority:** Building Trust and Confidence

**Title:** Crime Data Integrity

**Presented by:** Deputy Chief Constable Louisa Rolfe

### **Purpose of paper**

1. The purpose of the paper is to brief the board on the recent Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Crime Data Integrity (CDI) inspection, including the recommendations identified and West Midlands Police's (WMP's) response to these recommendations.

### **Background**

2. On 15 January 2019 HMICFRS published their report on WMP's CDI inspection which examined crime reports for the period 1 March 2018 to 31 May 2018.
3. HMICFRS found that WMP had:
  - designated the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) as the lead for the CDI improvement plan;
  - developed and begun to implement bespoke crime-recording improvement plans for all relevant departments;
  - improved its arrangements for the recording of modern slavery offences; and
  - continued to provide crime-recording training to officers and staff responsible for making crime-recording decisions.

4. The report concluded that: “*West Midlands Police has improved some elements of its crime-recording arrangements since our 2017 crime data integrity (CDI) inspection report. However, we found more still needs to be done.*”

### Key points

5. WMP received an ‘inadequate’ crime recording grading from HMICFRS, who observed that some of the crime recording issues were still present from the 2017 inspection period.

	2017	2018
<b>Grading</b>		
<b>Overall judgement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
How effective is the force at recording reported crime?	Inadequate	Inadequate
How efficiently do the systems and processes in the force support accurate crime recording?	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
How well does the force demonstrate the leadership and culture necessary to meet the national standards for crime recording?	Good	Requires Improvement

6. Unfortunately these assessments do not reflect the wealth of improvement activity undertaken throughout 2018 as the inspection examined crime reports retrospectively for the period between March and May 2018. Much activity was undertaken from July 2018 onwards when a Gold Group was established. Additionally the assessment is somewhat limited by the exclusion of the HMICFRS audit of *all other crime* data. During the inspection, HMICFRS identified errors in the audit data extracted which led them to exclude overall crime recording compliance. WMP challenged this exclusion as we did not feel it affected the accuracy of their assessment, merely resulted in additional audit activity, but the exclusion remains.

Results	2017		2018	
	% of reported crimes recorded	% of reported crimes recorded	Confidence interval	
<b>Overall</b>	83.8			Not reported
<b>Violent crimes</b>	77.9	78.2	75.3-81.07	No significant change
<b>Sexual offences</b>	91.4	89.2	86.5-91.9	No significant change

7. The *all other crime* accuracy in the excluded data was found to be 91.9%, comparable to forces achieving a Good HMICFRS CDI assessment. Had the *all crime* data not been excluded, the 2018 figure for the *overall* % of crimes recorded in 2018 would have been 90.4%, representing a statistically significant improvement in our crime recording accuracy.

#### **WMP CDI recommendations 2018**

8. HMICFRS provided WMP with four recommendations:
- **Recommendation 1** Within six months, West Midlands Police should take steps to identify and address gaps in its systems and processes to ensure that when officers have attended incidents all reported crimes are recorded. This should include satisfying itself as to the effectiveness of its arrangements for the recording of crimes by officers through the crime service team. The force also needs to implement a consistent and structured approach to call-handling quality assurance processes that includes checking compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards.
  - **Recommendation 2** Within three months, the force should review its operating arrangements to ensure that these arrangements secure the recording of all reported crimes at the first point at which sufficient information exists to make a crime-recording decision, and in any event within 24 hours of receipt of the report.
  - **Recommendation 3** Within three months, the force should develop and implement procedures for the effective supervision of crime-recording decisions throughout the whole force.
  - **Recommendation 4** Within six months, the force should put in place arrangements to ensure that:

- ~ at the point of report, particularly in domestic abuse cases, greater emphasis is placed on the initial account of the victims
  - ~ where more than one crime is disclosed within an incident record, or identified as part of other recorded crime investigations, these are recorded.
9. The following section details steps undertaken by WMP to address recommendations 1, 3 and 4.
  10. WMP advised HMICFRS in 2017 that an earlier iteration of recommendation 2 wasn't viable due to the technology available to achieve this at scale for 5,700 incidents per day. This recommendation is under review and will be revisited when WMP introduces its new command and control and crime recording systems later in 2019/20. In the meantime, the force has focused upon ensuring every crime is recorded at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Action Plan – Improvement activity**

11. Since the 2017 CDI inspection, WMP has undertaken an extensive review of crime recording, applying HMICFRS' 'field work' methodology in order to identify any barriers to crime recording and rectifying these issues as soon as possible.
12. WMP introduced a three tier improvement plan which covered three key strands: *Governance, Audit and Training*.

#### *Governance*

13. In 2018, the WMP CDI improvement plan was revisited, refreshed and updated. Each Core Department; Force Contact, Force Response, Public Protection Unit, Force CID and Initial Investigation Teams have developed individual CDI plans to drive improvements in their own area. These plans form the basis of the overarching force level CDI improvement plan and are reviewed at the monthly CDI Gold Meeting chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC).
14. The Gold meeting is attended by heads of departments and key representatives from the OPCC and HMICFRS to provide a collaborative approach to driving improvements in crime recording across the force.
15. The Force Crime Registrar (FCR) also meets regularly with representatives of the OPCC (the Crime Portfolio Lead and Performance Manager) to review progress against the WMP CDI improvement plan.

## *Audit*

16. The Audit and Compliance Team, headed by the FCR, are responsible for auditing areas of risk according to the HMICFRS crime categories of Violence, Sexual and All other. The audits focus on incident logs, professional third party referrals and crime reports, which includes call-listening.
17. Each of the core departments complete monthly internal crime recording audits to assess compliance against HOCR. These audits are then quality assured by the Audit and Compliance team and any learning is shared with the department for feedback to individual staff.
18. The Crime Services Team (CST) supervisors also support the audit process and complete specific monthly audits for all non-crime (N100, Child Abuse & Domestic Abuse).
19. During 2018, the Audit and Compliance team completed 'reality testing', co-locating with teams and applying HMICFRS field testing methodology which involved working alongside 40 different teams across the force area. The overall findings were shared with departments and used to build their individual CDI plans for each department. The audit team also developed bespoke training products and tools. This approach enabled a much deeper understanding of issues affecting crime recording and a more focused approach to improvement.
20. The Audit and Compliance Team will be undertaking a second phase of reality testing imminently to understand what has changed since 2018, identify good practice and highlighting any barriers which may remain.
21. The audit process has resulted in crime recording improvements in a number of areas including Domestic Abuse and Child Abuse. Force Response has also seen a significant improvement in crime recording compliance.
22. As well as the audit process, the Audit and Compliance Team also provide a telephone service to all WMP employees to provide professional advice regarding all matters linked to crime recording.

## *Training & Supervision*

23. The force continues to drive completion of the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) NCALT training package, particularly for the five core crime recording departments and this is actively monitored via the CDI Gold meeting. This sustained and co-ordinated

effort has seen completion rates increase significantly during the past 6 months to an average of 85% for the core departments.

24. In addition to the NCALT package, the Audit and Compliance Team has produced additional HOCR training to enhance learning for staff. This is currently being delivered through face-to-face training for various teams within the five core departments.
25. The supervision of crime recording is a priority for the force and supervisors are now more involved than ever before in actively monitoring CDI compliance. Activity includes:
  - Active engagement of supervision with the internal incident log audits. The audit results are quality assured, then fed back to supervisors to provide individual feedback to officers / staff.
  - The Crimes Services Team (CST) supervision now actively manages all N100 reported incidents of Rape and reviews all non-crime records (Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, and Vulnerable Adult). The results are then fed back to the relevant department and individual feedback is given to the officer and supervisor concerned to enhance organisational learning.
  - CST supervisors have developed a bespoke training package for the accurate recording of rape and N100 reported incidents of rape and are delivering this training directly to Force Contact staff. This is supported by an aide memoir card for staff to refer to.
26. The force also plans to deliver the College of Policing's recommended 'DA Matters' training programme to Response and Neighbourhood officers throughout 2019/20. DA Matters is academically evaluated and has been shown to increase both empathy with victims and understanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse. This in turn is assessed to assist in the accurate recording of such crimes.
27. Close working between departments and the audit team has proved so successful that key departments (including PPU and Initial Investigations) have developed sufficient expertise to record crime themselves, thereby alleviating pressures in the CST.

### **Communications Plan**

28. The Corporate Communications department has revised and refreshed the forcewide communications plan for crime recording. This includes a CDI newsletter from the FCR, an internal Newsbeat Question and Answer for crime recording issues and Splash Screens on desktop computers with key crime recording messages.

29. This will form part of an ongoing CDI communications plan throughout 2019.

### **Forthcoming opportunities**

30. The implementation of new IT infrastructure as part of the WMP 2020 transformation programme will provide further opportunities to improve crime recording across the force.

31. The replacement of existing command and control and crimes systems will provide a number of benefits including:

- Embedding of the initial 'telephone call' within incident logs, allowing officers to listen to the original call and have a clear understanding of what the victim is reporting.
- Provision of a rationale box for completion by officers when a crime isn't recorded. This issue has recently been supported by Steve Bond (Home Office National Crime Registrar) who has provided guidance on the appropriate practice for the 'negation of crime'.
- The ability to record and submit crime from the scene using mobility devices, which increases the timeliness of crime recording. In the future, the IT infrastructure will guide officers in making the correct crime recording decision. The mobility crime recording concept is now being adapted for desk top use for the Initial Investigation Team and Birmingham MASH, with further opportunities for the PPU Central Referral Unit and the Modern Slavery Team.
- The ability to provide supervision analysis for incident logs.

32. The force is also reviewing the 'on-line' reporting methodology, with consideration being given to increasing the offence types the public can report.

### **Forcewide challenges**

33. As stated previously, whilst WMP are currently unable to fully implement recommendation 2, this continues to be reviewed. However, the force is now recording more crime at point of call (currently around 38%) and looking to expand this further. This number will improve further with the ongoing roll out of mobility devices to front line officers and desk-top crime recording for specialist functions.

34. Due to the scale and breadth of crime across the force area, crime recording remains a challenging area. However, the force has made significant improvements during the past 12 months and is committed to the continual improvement of crime recording processes.

**Next Steps**

35. The board is asked to note the findings of this report and continue to support the CDI improvement plan process.

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