

Improving crime recording standards

Incident Management team has been created to improve compliance with National Crime Recording Standards by reviewing incidents to ensure all crimes are recorded in accordance with Home Office Counting Rules.

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Key details

Does it work?	Promising
Focus	Prevention
Topic	Anti-social behaviour Ethics and values Intelligence and investigation Neighbourhood crime Operational policing Violence against women and girls Violence (other)
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Region	North East
Partners	Police
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.

Key details

Start date	June 2019
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Offenders Victims Workforce

Aim

The aims of the initiative are to improve:

- victim satisfaction
- South Yorkshire Polices' overall compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS)
- officers' understanding of Home Officer Counting Rules (HOCR) and NCRS

Intended outcome

- Prior to the implementation of the Incident management team (IMT), South Yorkshire Police's compliance with the HOCR and NCRS was 68%. IMT intend to improve compliance with NCRS by identifying incidents attended by Officers which have not had crimes correctly recorded within them and rectifying.
- IMT intend to improve officer understanding of HOCR & NCRS by providing training inputs to officers who evidence that they may lack full understanding.

Description

NCRS was originally proposed after a highly critical review of 8 forces' crime recording procedures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary that found a recording rate that varied between 55 and 82% across the forces. NCRS has twin aims of being victim focused and maintaining consistency of recording across all forces. It is based on applying legal definitions of crime to victim's reports. HOCR stipulate what type and how many offences in any incident should be recorded by police and notified to the Home Office.

An Incident Management Team (IMT), consisting of five police constables (PCs) was initially formed, this is now a Police Sergeant (PS) and six PCs. The team is funded via the Force Control Room budget. The team report to the Force Control Room Chief Inspector who subsequently represents the FCR at force wide tactical meetings around NCRS and Crime and Disorder Act (CDA).

The team was formed in response to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS's) findings that recording rates were 68% in South Yorkshire Police. The team are based within the Force Control Room. This team has oversight of crime, ASB, public safety, domestic and hate incidents.

The incident management system can generate a daily record of incidents in these categories which were opened in the Force Control Room under the type 'crime' due to the initial information provided, but subsequently closed by attending officers under the type 'non-crime'. The IMT review each incident, utilising incident logs, body-worn video footage and, if relevant, by re-contacting the member of the public reporting. These lines of enquiry allow the officers within the IMT to ensure that the attending officers have recorded all necessary crime investigations according to the NCRS.

All reviewed incidents are compiled in extensive data logs, officers who are identified as having failed to record 3 crime investigations in a calendar month, or 12 within a calendar year are invited for a mandatory 1-2-1 training input on HOCR and NCRS, delivered by the IMT. When a reviewed incident is deemed to have failed to comply with NCRS, the officer who has provided the closing report to that incident is assigned the 'fail' and logged on a worksheet, if the above criteria is then met by an officer, it is flagged to the attention of staff in IMT. A monthly email is then distributed to the officers advising that their attendance for training is required.

The officers attend at the Force Control Room and a member of the IMT team presents a PowerPoint designed by the team on HOCR and NCRS. This with the intention of refreshing officer awareness or filling any potential knowledge gaps. Following the presentation, the officers are then presented with their 'failed' incidents and the trainer explains why the incident did not meet NCRS and how the officer can avoid this in the future.

The line managers and command teams of these officers are made aware of their staff who require training and support IMT in ensuring their attendance.

The team are required to give regular updates to the senior leadership team via the Daily Management Meeting to monitor compliance. A monthly update is also provided to the Crime Data Accuracy Tactical Board to provide the latest IMT figures and show how the team is contributing to the force effort to improve in these areas.

An annual performance summary is then generated by the Police Sergeant for the IMT which compares performance with previous years. This aids in identifying trends and areas requiring improvement.

Overall impact

An internal review was conducted by South Yorkshire revealed:

- at point of implementation in 2019 force CDA compliance was 68% compared to 85% in December 2023
- in 2022, 25 officers failed to record crimes correctly on 12 or more occasions, all officers were required to attend for training. For 2023 this reduced to one officer.
- in 2022, there were 4884 instances of officers failing to record investigations correctly, compared to 3285 in 2023
- in 2022, IMT were required to create 6143 investigations because of these failings compared to 4733 in 2023
- a sample of 10 PCs showed that in the months prior to attending the IMT training input, 71 crimes were missed. In the same period of time following their attendance, this number dropped to 15 – a decrease of 79%
- NCRS compliance rates have increased, providing a better service to our victims and our workforce are being upskilled through this practice due to the inputs provided by the team
- officers have an increased understanding of NCRS and HOGR, this ensures that more crimes are being recorded and investigated – this in turn should increase victim satisfaction
- the success of this training has led to the development of a ‘cascade’ training initiative where local policing teams volunteer a member of staff to attend with IMT and receive a training input, to then cascade the input to their colleagues – this has allowed the IMT to reach a wider audience
- the assistant chief constable has supported this training and has declared that it is mandatory for staff to attend if required by IMT

Learning

There have been occasions where numerous officers have attended an incident and it has been unclear to dispatchers who was the officer in command. There were instances of dispatchers randomly selecting a collar number from those officers that had attended and attributing the incident closure to them. Officers have subsequently attended IMT training and explained that they had little to no dealing with the incident. As a result of this, IMT have implemented procedure, where an officer is identified as requiring training input, the relevant incidents are reviewed by IMT to ensure accuracy before the officer is invited to attend. This reducing officer frustration at being wrongly selected for remedial training and increasing consistency.

The raw data gathered by the IMT allows for trends to be identified regards where there is a lack of compliance. This can provide understanding around officer demographics as well as certain districts. This can then be fed back to relevant Supervisors/Command Teams.

Best available evidence

HMICFRS identified practice:

<https://assets-hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/uploads/peel-spotlight-report-police-performance.pdf>

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Tags

Force control rooms