



Joint Audit and Standards Committee - Force Crime and Incident Registrar (FCIR) Update

Author:	Andrew Shipman
Date:	26 February 2021
Version:	1
GPMS marking:	Official

Summary

This report provides an overview of the Force Crime Data Integrity and Assurance Audit Schedule and the governance process that monitors progress against the plan.

The findings and recommendation from recent audits that have been presented to the Warwickshire Assurance Board are also outlined.

Background

Each police force is expected to have a Force Crime and Incident Registrar (FCIR) that is accredited by the College of Policing. The FCIR is expected to perform certain tasks detailed within Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR).

Key tasks:

- To understand all the routes (or channels) through which crime is reported to a force, the volumes of crime involved and the specific crime recording attrition (failure) risks associated with each route.
- The development, implementation and monitoring of crime recording and outcome policies and subsequent audit programmes, in line with the Data Quality Audit Manual, to ensure high standards of data integrity and the achievement of a consistent and accurate response to crime recording.
- Oversight and authorisation as appropriate of decisions made to delay recording or to record crime without victim confirmation.
- Oversight in respect of the transfer and cancellation of recorded crimes (C1- C5 inclusive) and the responsibility to authorise all cancelled rape crimes.
- Oversight of training resources produced and used in force to support National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS)/HOCR.
- To ensure prompt and adequate circulation of changes in counting rules, policy etc.
- To chair or be involved in force crime recording user group meetings.
- To act as force representative and Home Office contact on the subject of crime recording.
- To have regular contact with other FCRs through regional and national structures with the remit to consistently maintain NCRS/HOCR standards between forces.

The FCIR has an audit team that includes a deputy, who is also the Force Records Manager, and 2 Audit Officers who conduct the audits.

In addition to the HOCR related tasks the FCIR has Force responsibility for data quality and records management.

Data quality relates to the accurate recording of information on force systems relating predominantly to nominals (people) and locations. It includes the identification of data errors and removal of duplicate records.

Record management relates to the retention and deletion of information held by the force in both digital and paper formats. For operational records this is governed by the Management of Police Information (MoPI) and for organisational data General Data Protection Regulations.

The Records Management function is supported by 1.5 Analyst posts and 1 Record Researcher. The function corrects the errors created by officers and staff and provides feedback to supervisors and managers to improve data quality.

Audit Schedule

At the beginning of the financial year the FCIR presents a draft audit schedule to the Warwickshire Assurance Board for approval. The audit schedule is comprised of three elements:

1. Audits based on the HO DQAM,
2. A risk assessment based on HMICRFS findings and
3. commissions by the Warks Assurance board

A copy of the 2020/21 audit schedule is attached at Appendix A.

The selection of audits and their methodology is based on the Home Office Data Quality Assurance Manual which provides comprehensive guidance on the design of audits together with the key questions to assess HOCR compliance. The schedule is also informed by an assessment of risk based on the findings from external HMICFRS crime data integrity audits and internal audits conducted during the year.

The main crime data integrity risk is ensuring that all victims who report crime to the force get their crime recorded. The predominant route of reporting is via telephone and that usually results in an incident being recorded on the force command and control system. Incident auditing forms the bulk of the audit schedule. Other routes of reporting are also being developed, the greatest volume being via Single Online Home and referrals to the Harm Assessment Unit.

The audit schedule also includes other areas of HOCR that are subject to scrutiny through external HMICFRS audits including the cancellation of crimes, use of out of court disposals and other Outcomes such as Outcome 16 where victims do not want or withdraw their support for further investigation.

There is scope within the audit schedule to undertake assurance audits commissioned via the Assurance Board when departments have identified potential risks that require the auditing of records to give a more complete understanding of the issue. During 2020/21 three Investigation audits were undertaken in support of the force work to improve the quality of investigations.

Governance

The findings from these audits are presented to the Assurance Board with a number of recommendations. If agreed, a senior manager is appointed to provide a management response detailing the proposed activity to be undertaken in response to the recommendation.

The FCIR maintains a tracker of recommendations and agreed management actions to record progress. The FCIR has a standing agenda item at the Assurance Board that enables progress against the recommendations to be reported and issues to be raised.

The FCIR also has a quarterly meeting with the Deputy Chief Constable to review crime data integrity in the force as highlighted through the audits and other monitoring activity.

Progress of Scheduled Audits:

All planned CDI audits have been completed or commenced in line with the schedule. There are 2 assurance audits that have been pended:

- Identity Access Management System audit has been paused due to COVID as the audit requires the physical checking of files in another office environment. The last audit found no errors and therefore low risk.
- The National ANPR Access Management audit has also been pended as the force has only recently started to use the system and the audit team are awaiting system access.

Through the audits of incidents the findings indicate that overall CDI compliance is similar to the HMICFRS 2019 Audit when the force was graded as 'Good'.

There are still risks that officers are not identifying all reported offences at initial recording particularly harassment, stalking which have to be recorded in addition to other reported offences. However, these are being identified by the Incident Management Unit staff in the Resolution Centre who then ensure these offences are recorded.

The audits have also identified further issues relating to timeliness finding that not all offences are being recorded within 24 hours as required by HOCR.

In response to these risks a number of communications have been made to the force through Force Orders and posters being placed in operational areas of the force. The FCIR has also been delivering a training input on Sergeant Development days addressing these areas of risk.

Through ongoing review and monitoring the Force has seen a marked improvement in the use of Out of Court Disposals which was an area for improvement from the last HMICFRS audit.

The regular auditing of investigations has also indicated an improvement in compliance with the Victim's Code and the documentation of ongoing contact with victims during the life of investigations.

The below audits have recently been undertaken, their findings and recommendations, have been accepted by Warwickshire Assurance Board.

Recently Completed Audits

1. Recording of Reported Incidents of Sexual Offences
2. Recording of Offences Reported via Single Online Home
3. Recording of Offences Reported to Harm Assessment Unit

Recording of Reported Incidents of Sexual Offences

This audit reviewed 150 incident logs, in which 174 notifiable crimes were disclosed. At the time of the audit 160 crimes had been recorded, and this equates to a compliance of 92%, reinforcing the HMICFRS rating of 'Good'.

The key recommendations from the audit were:

- Correct and timely recording of notifiable crimes. Officers to ensure reported notifiable crimes are recorded correctly and in compliance with HOCR at point of first recording.
- Immediate recording of crimes and reported incidents of rape. The Operational Communication Centre to ensure all incidents involving alleged crimes and reported incidents of rape to be immediately notified to the Resolution Centre for recording in compliance with HOCR.

Recording of Offences Reported via Single Online Home

Single Online Home (SOH) was adopted by Warwickshire Police in September 2019 as a way of enabling the public to report incidents, including crimes, directly and digitally to the police.

This audit found that incident logs were promptly created by Digital Desk (DD) officers for most crime-related incidents reported to Warwickshire Police via SOH, and the majority of crimes disclosed were recorded.

Overall the audit identified 61 crimes that were reported but at the time of audit only 47 had been recorded. This indicates that there are currently some risks around the process.

The key recommendations from the audit were:

- Creation and maintenance of auditable records for all reports of crimes and crime-related reports received via the Single Online Home. The Digital Desk to ensure adherence to working practices regarding the recording of a STORM log in respect of all reports of crime and crime-related incidents received via the Single Online Home.
- Compliance with HOCR by Digital Desk staff, and documentation of Crime Recording Decision Making Process (CRDMP) where crimes not immediately recorded.
- Compliance with NCRS and HOCR by Digital Desk staff. Ensuring where it is not clear whether a notifiable crime is being disclosed to seek clarification and document the response from the informant.
- Digital Desk officers to ensure Victims of Crime are kept updated in compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and that all updates are correctly and transparently documented on Athena investigation records.

Recording of Offences Reported to the Harm Assessment Unit (HAU)

The audit consisted of an initial sample of 50 consecutive emails from each of the two referral routes into the department;

- PVP referrals - when children are allocated to a social worker and they are telling us new information or requesting checks.
- PAM tasks - sent to the HAU from Children's Services when the child is not allocated and may require an assessment based on level of risk.

The audit found diligence by HAU staff in recording crime and working with partners to safeguard victims. However, some gaps in applying Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) remain, particularly regarding the recording of rape incidents and rape offences. Also there are timeliness issues with difficulties in adhering to the 24 hour limit for recording reported offences.

The key recommendations from the audit were:

- HAU staff to further improve consistency in recording reported notifiable crimes and rape incidents correctly and in compliance with HOCR at point of first recording.
- HAU to review internal systems giving consideration to how numbers of reported notifiable offences recorded within 24 hours can be improved.
- To ensure there is an audit trail for all referrals and emails into the HAU.

Planned Future Audits

The following audits are planned to be completed during the next 3 months:

- Quality of Investigations – a further audit to assess progress in the management and supervision of investigations conducted by patrol officers and telephone investigators.
- Outcome 16 – This outcome is applied at the end of an investigation where there is a named suspect but the victim does not support or withdraws support. The purpose of the audit is to examine the reasons for the withdrawal of support and whether safeguarding has been undertaken.
- Incident to Crime Other Offences. This is audit covers the reports of offences of burglary, robbery, theft and criminal damage.

Official

Joint Audit and Standards Committee - Force Crime and Incident Registrar (FCIR) Update

Appendix A – Audit Schedule

Warwickshire Audit & Assurance schedule for 2020 - 21												
Scheduled audits	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
	Planned		In Progress		Complete		Paused					
	Assurance		CDI									
Dedicated Decision Maker (DDM) Out of Court Disposals Referrals												
Requests to review												
Incident to Crime - Violence. (CDI)												
Incident to Crime - Rape and Other Sexual Offences (CDI)												
Incident to Crime - Other Offences (CDI)												
Cancelled Crime (CDI)												
Out of Court Disposals - Community Resolution (CDI)												
Out of Court Disposals - Cautions (CDI)												
Out of Court Disposals - Cannabis/Khat Warnings (CDI) (incorporated into DDM OOC referrals above)												
Classification - Harassment, Malicious Communications, Breach of Orders - Audit recorded offences												
Classification - Modern Slavery - Audit recorded offences, intelligence logs. (CDI)												
Outcome 16 (CDI)												
Supervision of Investigation Audit												
Assurance - Identity Access Management System												
Recording of Ethnicity - Audit												
Assurance - National ANPR access management												
Assurance - Other commissioned audit												