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**NATIONAL STATISTICS  
CRIME AND JUSTICE THEME WORKING GROUP  
MINUTES OF MEETING 5th November 2003**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jon Simmons	HO	Michael Willis	NIO
Gordon Barclay	HO	Andy Maultby	LCD
Pat Dowdeswell	HO	Mark Edwardes	Court Service
Katy Barratt	Scottish Executive	Tricia Dodd	HO

**SECRETARIAT**

Darran Tucker      ONS

**CIRCULATION**

All participants and correspondence members

***Absent Members:***

Julian Blackwell	HO
Brian Barber	CS
Tony Mathewson	PSNI

***Others for information:***

Ann Roberts	NAW
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**Action:**

**1. Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising**

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without change.
2. The meeting was asked if the timing of the meeting was suitable. All agreed that an afternoon meeting was more suitable, as it made travelling easier
3. Apologies were received from Tony Mathewson and Julian Blackwell
4. The meeting was notified that Katy Barratt is replacing Sandy Stewart as the Scottish Executive member of the group.

**Secretary**

**2. Quality and Methodology**

1. The paper was presented by the secretary. It was initially presented at the Heads of Profession and TWG Chairs meeting held in July 2003. In addition to the paper the secretary explained that a proforma was soon to be issued by NSID asking the GSS to audit the work they have done which is quality related. NSID will then collate this to provide a full GSS stock take of quality related work.
2. There has been a delay implementing the recommendations from a number of completed reviews due to a lack of resources. This is impacting on the schedule for future reviews, and needs to be resolved prior to new reviews being started. It was confirmed that the TWG is currently up to date with the quality review schedule and that they have completed and published more reviews than other TWGs.
3. The implementation of the review of Administration of Justice is progressing but no completion date is available. The review of Civil Justice has been postponed
4. The Scottish Executive is carrying out a review of quality for the Crime Survey, but it is not badged as a Quality Review. This was an example of work that will be included on the pro forma to be issued
5. There is a need to improve departmental engagement in the quality review process. One way to do this would be to highlight the benefits a review may have to a department. It was thought that the current PSA targets should fall within the scope of National Statistics. The PSA targets could then be a way of prioritising the timetable for Quality Reviews and may be a way of engaging both departments and Ministers.
6. One suggestion was that NSID produce a paper showing what improvements have been made as a result of the completed quality reviews. The paper could also be used to improve the coverage of Quality Reviews in the National Statistics Annual Report.

**NSID**

### **3. User Consultation**

1. Following an e-mail sent by NSID the secretary asked what public consultation had been or is going to be carried out. The group explained that consultation would happen at a variety of levels, from the UK wide conference to user groups relating to particular series (e.g. British Crime Survey) or particular practitioner groups (National Crime Recording Steering Group for recorded crime in England and Wales). It was suggested that NSID map the various levels of consultation within this theme in order to identify any synergies or gaps in the existing structures, and the secretary will contact members for further information. The secretary would also inform the members of the group what consultation had been carried out by other TWGs
2. The meeting then discussed the annual Crime and Criminal Justice seminar, when and where it should held and the issues to cover. The Chair emphasised that he thought that this UK-wide conference should be integral to the work of this group. It was agreed that the next seminar should be held in March 2004, the specific date to be confirmed, with the preferred location being Belfast. If the event took place in Belfast, Michael Willis confirmed the assistance of NIO staff. Gordon and Michael to discuss the possibility of holding the event in Belfast

**Secretary**

**MW/GB**

It may be possible depending on the venue to increase the number of attendees to 150, as the number of people wishing to attend the last seminar exceeded the number of spaces. The Chair emphasised that sufficient numbers of places should be held for our key audience of users, with additional places open to other

would-be attendees. The secretary suggested that the NS web site be used to collect applications.

3. Possible topics to cover during the day were discussed, and all members were asked to write to Gordon with suggestions for topics and presenters
4. It was agreed that the event was very useful and worth while, not only as a tool for consulting with users and data providers, but also as a way of identifying unknown data users. **All**

#### **4. National Statistics Work Programme and Annual Report**

1. The secretary informed the meeting that the National Statistics Annual Report 2002/03 had been laid before Parliament and is currently available on the NS Web site. Hard copies of the report are being printed and will be circulated once available.  
[http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about\\_ns/downloads/NSAnnualReport\\_2002\\_2003.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAnnualReport_2002_2003.pdf)
2. It was acknowledged that the delays in producing both the Annual Report and Work Programme were unacceptable, and for production of both during 2004, the delays would be minimised or removed.
3. The secretary stated that National Statistics Policy Branch are investigating the possibility of carrying out the role of editor from the centre. However this would be dependant on the resources available and the secretariat would inform all editors once a decision is made.
4. The secretary stated that work will commence soon on the Work Programme and Annual Report for completion during 2004. The understanding of the editor was that no work would be required for the work programme during 2004. The secretary stated that there will be a need to update the current work programme to reflect the period 2004 to 2007. However the programme will be made public only via the web site, no hard copies will be produced.

#### **5. National Statistics and GSS**

1. The paper was presented by the secretary. It was initially presented at the Heads of Profession and TWG Chairs meeting held in July 2003. The aim was to ensure all group members were aware of the proposed change in National Statistics governance and to discuss whether there was scope to merge with another Theme Working Group.
2. The meeting thought the only direct link would be with the Social & Welfare Theme. A merger would not be suitable as it was thought the new group would be too large and varied.
3. It was agreed that at the next meeting the group will review and revise the current NS Terms of Reference. The secretary will circulate the current Terms of Reference with the minutes

**Secretary**

#### **6. IT Developments**

1. Home Office
  - Plans now emerging to provide a data warehouse of policing information for England and Wales (the Home Office National Management Information System) with a possible skeleton being available within two years. The aim is collate

record-level data, including geographic information.

- Crime statistics data at Local Authority level is available and it is proposed to make this available in a new website, pending final clearance.
- Use of a new sentencing model programme is being used in parallel to the current system
- Cynthia Tavares attended a conference on E-Justice, which highlighted some interesting developments. A note of the conference will be circulated

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## 2. LCD

- Review of the recommendations of Administration of Crime Justice Statistics suggested the use of management information from the Crown and Civil Courts
- Use of the LIBRA data warehousing system to use operational data from Magistrates Court.
- CPS have contracted to use the COMPAS system, with an update on implementation due.
- CJS model system is not yet meeting the specification.
- CJS exchange, which points to the data available in different agencies may be used as a source of management information. Waiting for confirmation that management information is available.

## 3. NIO

- It is hoped that the NIPS PRISM system will be able to provide statistical data on prisoners in an electronic format as opposed to 'paper based' by the end of 2004
- Northern Ireland reconviction rates will be published in early 2004 derived from a database constructed primarily from police and prison data sources
- The contract for the CAUSEWAY system has been given to Fujitsu, who are now moving to the implementation stage.

## 4. Scottish Executive

- The operational database for the Prison Service is currently being rewritten, which will provide a lot of previously unavailable data. However a cut back in the resources available has lead to no staff being available to work on any issues.

## 7. Data Release

1. The meeting discussed how the release of data within the confines of National Statistics was working across the departments concerned.
2. It was agreed that it seems that departmental policy units do not seem to have signed up to the NS Code of Practice and Protocols and are often pushing the statistical areas to release data early for briefing purposes. The availability of early management information complicates this issue, as the main headlines from the National Statistics are often already known from other sources
3. The Scottish Executive were recently able to use the principals behind the release practises protocol to justify a change in release dates and prove that there had been no undue influences.
4. The secretary asked if an e-mail could be sent to him outlining the circumstances of the issue, so it can be added to the protocol library

KB

## 8. Any other business and date of next meeting

1. The meeting discussed the issue of self identification of contributors in low level data and what steps can be taken not to breach the protocol on confidentiality. Current rules were designed for census or survey data, and did not always apply so well to administrative sources. The Home Office stated that the issue has been raised in relation to its new recorded crime website, and it had decided that

any data cell with less than 5 contributors the data would be set to 0. It was better to have an across the board rule than to try and apply individual rules to individual data sets.

2. The secretary confirmed that approximately 12 months after all the protocols are published, they will be reviewed and the users will then be able to comment on the positive and negative aspects of them.
3. The next meeting will be held Spring 2004