

Collation and publication of quarterly crime data Project scoping note

Purpose

To publish police recorded crime data on a quarterly basis which would contribute to achieving the vision of the Justice Data and Information Needs Programme that justice data and information required for policy development, operational delivery and measurement of progress will be accessible, cost effective, all of high quality and focussed on supporting the delivery of National Outcomes to achieve the Scottish Government's purpose.

The existing annual provision of data and analysis on police recorded crime is not currently meeting user needs, and 'provisional' data (of lower quality) is frequently used as an alternative, undermining public trust in the Official Statistics. The purpose of the project is to provide more timely data on recorded crime on a quarterly basis, for the purposes of:

- the improved monitoring of trends in crime;
- understanding the seasonality of different type of crime;
- as an input into various predictive and forecasting models of the volume of 'business' likely to be experienced by downstream elements of the justice system such as courts, prisons, criminal justice social work, etc.

The successful delivery of this project will contribute primarily to policy development and the measurement of progress under supporting outcomes A and B, by improving understanding of the nature of crime reported to the police in Scotland, and by allowing more detailed evaluations of the impact of various policy changes.

The successful delivery of this project would allow data users to access statistics on recorded crime in a more timely manner to identify emerging trends (contributing to supporting outcomes A&B).

It will provide the following specific benefits to data users:

- **Accessible**

More frequent publication of recorded crime data will meet an identified user need. Project will directly increase the range of available analysis for evaluative work

- **Cost effective**

Quarterly data is already collected on a cumulative basis as part of the annual publication process, so little additional effort will be required.

- **High Quality**

More frequent monitoring of recorded crime data will allow earlier identification of emergent trends or changes in recording practice, improving the quality of the overall data series.

- **Outcome focussed**

Improved understanding of crime trends and seasonality has the potential to improve both “enforcement of the law” and “public understanding of risk”. More frequent data on recorded crime is an indirect measure of “low levels of crime” (supporting outcome A).

Background

The Scottish Government (SG) publishes statistics on police recorded crime on an annual basis. The publication presents statistics on crimes and offences recorded and cleared up by the eight Scottish police forces, disaggregated by crime/offence group, police force area and council area. Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police provide a measure of the volume of crime with which the police are faced.

Police forces already provide recorded crime data to the Scottish Government on a cumulative quarterly basis. However the data validation work is undertaken once all four quarters are received, in advance of publication of the annual publication.

Success Criteria

To be successful, the project should:

- (a) Publish a summary police recorded crime on a quarterly basis;
- (b) Identify the main uses which are made of these statistics and where the key policy priorities are likely to lie in the future;
- (c) Recommend to the JDIN board a process by which the content of the publication can be reviewed and by which areas can be identified where the content needs to be revised in light of any changes to the crime classification system;
- (d) Take account of the legislation relating to the new Sexual Offences (S) Act, when preparing the content.

Inputs to the project

- Cumulative quarterly police recorded crime data returns from forces;
- The current chargesort spreadsheet (maintained by the Police & Community Safety analytical team);
- List of issues raised at the ISCJIS Charge Code & Crime Code Mapping workshop;
- The process map arising from the ISCJIS Charge Code & Crime Code Mapping workshop;
- On-going developments relating to the classification system for crimes and offences;
- Actions arising from the introduction of legislation relating to the new Sexual Offences (S) Act;
- Known examples of inconsistencies in recording;
- Other issues known to have been raised by customers in relation to the statistics currently produced.

Issues or challenges

- Ensuring that agreement is reached with police forces, via the ACPOS PMBA secretariat, to submit data returns and respond to data validation queries with agreed timescales
- Potential issues arising given that ACPOS are planning to publish the ACPOS report on a quarterly basis giving rise to comparisons between these figures and those in the recorded crime quarterly report
- Any changes to staffing resource levels which may impact on JAS's ability to meet publication deadlines
- Any amendments to the existing SG crime classification likely to have implications for reporting on trends over time

Timescales

Scottish Government statistics are currently reported on a financial year basis. It would therefore be desirable for any move to publish statistics on a quarterly basis to begin at the start of a new financial year, although this is not essential.

Project governance

The Project Board will consist of:

Project Delivery:

- SG Crime and Victimization Statistician ([REDACTED]);
- SG Crime and Victimization B2 Statistician ([REDACTED]);
- SG Statistical Support Officer ([REDACTED]);

Policy/analytical colleagues:

- SG Community Safety ([REDACTED]);
- SG Management of Offenders ([REDACTED]);
- Others? (tbc)

Data suppliers from police forces:

- ACPOS PMBA Secretariat (Chief Inspector [REDACTED])

The project has been defined as a JDIN project and will report to the JDIN Programme Board. The ISCJIS board also have an interest in ensuring common data standards.

Project dependencies

This is a stand alone project but there are links with the following projects:

- Sexual Offences (S) Act Implementation Steering Group
- Classification System for crimes and offences (JDIN project)

Key contacts

- JDIN programme manager & Crime & Victimisation Team leader ([REDACTED]);
- JDIN programme manager ([REDACTED]);
- SG Management of Offenders Team leader ([REDACTED]);
- SG Community Safety ([REDACTED]);
- Statistical support team leader ([REDACTED]);
- ACPOS PMBA Secretariat (Chief Inspector [REDACTED]);
- Crime Registrars ([REDACTED]);

Project communication

The key contacts defined above will be kept up to date with progress via regular highlight reports.

Key outputs

1. A web only quarterly statistical publication providing summary recorded crime figures (see draft mock up for details).

Project resources

This project will be delivered in house, using existing resources.

Draft timescale:

Details still to be provided

Activities	Who	Date	Revised dates	Comments
1. Resources identified and in place	JAS team leaders	Start June		This dates is critical for delivery of proposals for consideration at Dec Programme Board
2. Prepare and submit request to ACPOS PMBA Secretariat re seeking agreement for forces to				

supply and QA data according to specified timescales.				
3. Develop the format and content of the new publication – consult with SG policy colleagues re their needs.				
4. Develop the format and content of the new publication – consult with relevant SG analysts.				
5. Draft proposals for Programme Board				
6. Circulate proposals at operational level for comment	Stakeholders			
7. Take on comments	All			
8. Implementation	All			

Risk assessment (to be developed)

Critical factors for the project

	Critical factor	Issues	Implication	Owner	Mitigation
	What is it	What does it mean for the project	What will happen if this occurs Low / medium / High risk pr PRINCE 2 categories	Who owns the risk	What can be done in the project planning to mitigate against it
1.	Timescale within which a decision is taken by the ACPOS PMBA re our request.	Possible delay to the commencement of publication of quarterly publications.			
2.	ACPOS PMBA not agreeing to our request.				