

Follow-up questions for Scottish Government Police Recorded Crime Team
from a review of available evidence

Principle 1: Meeting User Needs

1. Can SG provide an extract of the ScotStat user list for the Crime and Justice group?
2. Do you have more detailed documentation on who your users are and what they use the data for?
3. When will the statistics plan for 2014-15 be published and will users be consulted on it?
4. Are there plans to produce the Police Recorded Crime publication more frequently in future? Is there user demand for this?
5. Can we have information about the most recent updates circulated to ScotStat members (and evidence) about any planned changes?
6. When you met with users at recent meetings, was anything about the content or presentation of the next release agreed, for example to present statistics by Local Authority? Was there any opposition to your proposals?
7. How long do SG plan to allow users to feed back when SG consult in April? What will SG do if many users are opposed to the proposals in the consultation?
8. Do SG receive queries about the statistics, is a log kept?

Principle 2: Impartiality and objectivity

9. How are changes in methodology or classifications announced to users?
10. For how long may police forces make amendments to crime records after they have been submitted to SG? Is the change flagged on the next set of data that SG receives from Police Scotland?

Principle 3: Integrity

11. Has there been any external critical questioning of the police recorded crime statistics, by the Scottish Parliament, media, academia or members of the public. How have SG statisticians responded to this?
12. Is there any documentation available to explain the roles and responsibilities of SG and Police Scotland in the production of the statistics?
13. Are you satisfied that all those involved in the production of the statistics are not subject to political pressures that might influence the production of the statistics?

Principle 4: Sound methods and assured quality

14. Who is responsible for defining policies, procedures and training requirements for crime recording? Is this the responsibility of SG Statisticians, Police Scotland or others?
15. SPA publish performance data in its report to the SPA board. The Audit Scotland report (November 2013) noted in paragraph 114 that "the Scottish Government is concerned that information in performance reports to the Boards may not be consistent with information published in its statistical bulletin. As a result, performance report to the SPA Board is now more selective and has less trend and comparative information than those presented previously to joint boards and police authorities". Can you tell us about the dialogue you have had with SPA and/or Police Scotland about these reports. What changes have been made to these reports compared with previous years? (we would be happy to review documents if they are to hand)
16. We understand that you are carrying out QA of the data with Police Scotland. Beyond this QA how do you satisfy yourselves with the quality of the data?
17. Do Police Scotland audit the underlying police recorded crime data? If so, do you have access to the audit reports as part of your quality assurance process?

18. Are Police Scotland responsible for recording all fraud crime or are there any other sources? Is Action Fraud operational in Scotland?
19. How have you noted comparability between crime statistics producers in England and Wales and Northern Ireland?
20. Will the Technical Report include information about the quality of the statistics, such as the strengths and limitations of the stats, the caveats related to the fact the data source is live etc?
21. Do SG plan to get Police Scotland's approval for the technical report? Will they incorporate Police Scotland comments into the Technical Report?
22. Can we see a draft contents list for the technical report

Principle 6: Proportionate burden

23. Have SG statisticians had input into the development of SCOMIS?
24. Have there been any difficulties in rolling out SCOMIS or in developing the central database to collate the data from the different sources?

Principle 7: Resources

25. Do you think that the police recorded crime statistics are sufficiently resourced in SG?

Principle 8: Frankness and accessibility

26. Do you have plans for publishing supporting tables in non proprietary formats (for example other than Excel)?

Protocols 1-3

27. When will SG confirm the June 2014 publication date to users? How likely is the risk of non-publication by June, based on the response for Police Scotland on the queries and therefore the outcome of the QA exercise?
28. Can we request a copy of your pre-release access list?
When do SG plan to update the Statement of Admin sources to reflect the change to the collection of Recorded Crime data?