



## **Norfolk's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) response to inspections published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) requires local policing bodies to respond and publish comments on all inspection reports pertaining to your force within 56 days of report publication.

### **Inspection Title:**

How effectively do the police record crime?

### **Published on:**

28 August 2025

### **Publication Types:**

Crime recording, Data, Data quality and Spotlight

### **Police Forces:**

All local forces in England and Wales

### **Link to Report:**

[How effectively do the police record crime? - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

### **Section 55 Response Deadline:**

23 October 2025

## **Key Findings**

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assesses how well police forces record the reports of crimes that they receive. They do this through the Crime Data Integrity (CDI) strand of their Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspections. From 2021 to 2025, HMICFRS graded each of the 43 police forces in England and Wales for crime recording. In this report, they refer to this as the 2021–25 audit period. The Inspectorate found that:

- 9 forces were outstanding (including Norfolk Constabulary).
- 16 forces were good.
- 11 forces were adequate.
- 6 forces required improvement.

HMICFRS initially found that four forces were inadequate, they then re-audited those forces and found that they had all made improvements. The Inspectorate re-graded three of those forces, and the grades from the second audits are included in the list of grades above. They also re-audited the fourth force after the conclusion of their 2023–25 PEEL inspection cycle, so didn't grade it and it hasn't been counted in the list.

HMICFRS assessed forces against the crime-recording rules. During their 2021–25 audit period, each force gave HMICFRS all its records of crime-related incidents for a three-month period before the date of their CDI audit. They also gave the Inspectorate records of domestic abuse incidents, whether crime-related or not. These came from calls or online reports of crime from the public. From the records provided by all 43 forces, HMICFRS then randomly selected a sample of 19,414 records for review. The Inspectorate listened to phone calls to the police, and examined other records, such as domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and honour-based violence forms associated with these reports. HMICFRS reviewed how well and how quickly forces recorded the crimes that they should have recorded.

For each force, HMICFRS used the results from their audit to calculate the estimated percentages of recorded crime, and how long the force took to record a crime from the earliest point at which it should have been recorded. The Inspectorate also used the results to calculate estimated percentages of recorded crime for the sub-categories of violent crime and sexual offences.

When HMICFRS inspect forces' crime-recording practices, the Inspectorate make sure police forces adhere to the national standards set by the Home Office. The focus of this work is to make sure:

- victims of crime receive appropriate support.
- the public has accurate information about crime in their area.
- forces can effectively plan and use their investigative resources to best effect.

Overall, HMICFRS have seen marked improvements in the way forces record crime. The Inspectorate is pleased with the way forces have taken action to implement their recommendations from previous inspections. The percentage of overall crime the police have recorded has risen from 80.5% in 2014 to 94.8% in 2025. This included recording 93.6% of violent crime and 95.9% of sexual offences. This represents an improvement of:

- 14.3 percentage points in the recording of all crime.
- 26.7 percentage points in the recording of violent crime.
- 21.7 percentage points in the recording of sexual offences.

HMICFRS was encouraged to see how well forces record sexual offences, in particular rape. Correctly recording these crimes means forces can quickly allocate cases and begin investigations promptly. Importantly, it also provides a better service to victims, who can then access the support they need without undue delay.

Since 2014, there have been changes to the crime-recording rules. These changes have contributed to the improvement in overall crime recording. National initiatives, such

as Operation Soteria, have also increased forces' awareness of how important it is to prioritise and accurately record sexual offences.

Although the standard of crime recording has improved, there is still more to do. There is still too much difference between forces in how well they record crime. Some forces have set and achieved high standards; others haven't made as much progress as the Inspectorate would have liked.

Violent crimes, such as minor assaults, harassment, stalking and controlling or coercive behaviour, still aren't being recorded well enough. These are violent crimes, and they disproportionately affect women and girls. The crimes that were most often unrecorded were less serious assaults. These accounted for more than half of unrecorded violent crime.

If forces don't record crimes, victims are less likely to receive the support and service they need. The Inspectorate checked certain high-risk crime types to assess whether forces take suitable follow-up actions, even when they don't record crimes. These actions include safeguarding the victim and carrying out a proper investigation. HMICFRS found that sometimes, although the force hadn't recorded a crime, it had completed a safeguarding referral. As a result, the victim received the right support. However, in too many cases, the force's failure to record the crime led to missed opportunities to give the victim appropriate safeguarding and support. When forces didn't record a crime, it was also less likely that a proper investigation took place.

Too often, forces don't record reports of crime at the earliest opportunity. The Home Office expects forces to record crimes on their systems without delay, and to allocate a crime number within 24 hours, apart from in exceptional circumstances. In HMICFRS' 2021–25 audit period, they found that on average, forces recorded and classified 78.1% of all crimes within 24 hours. The Inspectorate also measured how long it took forces to record rape crimes. Between 2021 and 2025, forces recorded 79.7% of rape crimes within 24 hours.

Forces don't record victims' protected characteristics well enough. HMICFRS found that in nearly all recorded reports of crime, forces recorded victims' age and sex well. They nearly always recorded victims' race, but they rarely recorded victims' sexual orientation or any disability.

Most forces need to improve the way they record domestic abuse crimes. In HMICFRS' 2021–25 audit period, they found that 22.8% of all crimes related to domestic abuse incidents. They included crimes such as controlling or coercive behaviour, assault, stalking and criminal damage. Of these crimes, 89.9% were recorded.

Forces need to improve the way they record crime that involves vulnerable victims. Using a dip sample approach, the Inspectorate considered how well forces record crimes involving vulnerable adults and child protection. HMICFRS found that overall, forces recorded 89.5% of these crimes, but there was considerable variation between forces.

Forces haven't sufficiently improved the way they record crime that involves antisocial behaviour. The Inspectorate found that forces recorded only 51.9% of the crimes that they had closed as antisocial behaviour personal. Of the unrecorded crimes, half were harassment. HMICFRS also found that some forces didn't understand when to correctly apply an antisocial behaviour personal closing code.

Forces that get it right have leaders who are committed to high crime-recording standards. HMICFRS found that forces that get crime recording right have leaders who make sure officers and staff recognise and understand the need to correctly record crime. In these forces, the force crime registrar attends force governance boards, and they make sure officers and staff understand how they should record crime.

### **Recommendations**

Three recommendations are made within the report, all of which are directed at Chief Constables nationally:

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Forces need to improve their recording of all violent crime, in particular conduct crimes such as harassment, stalking and controlling or coercive behaviour, and less serious assaults.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

Forces should make sure they quickly and correctly record crimes related to domestic abuse.

#### **Recommendation 3:**

Forces need to make sure all officers and staff involved in crime recording are appropriately trained and understand their role in recording crime. They should also make sure there is effective oversight and scrutiny of crime-recording decisions and accuracy.

### **Areas For Improvement**

There were no areas for improvement.

## **Chief Constable response to report and any Recommendations/Areas For Improvement**

I acknowledge this report and its findings which underlines the importance of the accurate and timely recording of crime by police forces. The findings are based on an audit of nearly 20,000 crimes across the 43 police forces in England and Wales, conducted as part of the Crime Data Integrity (CDI) element of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection programme between 2021 to 2025.

Norfolk Constabulary's most recent CDI inspection took place in 2024, following which we were awarded an 'Outstanding' grading. HMICFRS estimated that we correctly recorded 98.0% of all reported crime (excluding fraud), with a confidence interval of  $\pm 1.6\%$ .

We were one of only seven police forces in the 2023 – 2025 PEEL inspection cycle to receive an 'Outstanding' grading.

I am extremely proud of our crime recording standards and remain committed to maintaining this high level of performance. The three recommendations issued by HMICFRS to all police forces in England and Wales will support us in doing so.

We have reviewed our position against each recommendation and, where necessary, will develop plans to meet the required standards within the specified timeframes. Our initial response to each recommendation is outlined below.

### **Recommendation 1:**

"Forces need to improve their recording of all violent crime, in particular conduct crimes such as harassment, stalking and controlling or coercive behaviour, and less serious assaults."

Norfolk Constabulary has a CDI Compliance Board, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing. This board oversees the recording of all crime types, including violent offences.

Our Crime Data Integrity Quality Assurance Team (CDIQAT) audits a sample of incident records closed as violent crime to ensure compliance. This is complimented by the Force Crime Registrar's independent audit programme, which examines compliance in areas of risk.

During our 2024 PEEL inspection process, HMICFRS estimated that we recorded 96.1% of violent offences, with a confidence interval of  $\pm 3.7\%$ . This high compliance rate contributed to our 'Outstanding' grading.

In February 2025, we conducted an internal crime recording audit, which assessed our compliance with Home Office Crime Recording Standards for violent crimes at 98%. A further audit is planned for later this year, and regular audits will continue to ensure our high standards are upheld.

**Recommendation 2:**

“Forces should make sure they quickly and correctly record crimes related to domestic abuse.”

We have already taken significant steps to ensure all crime types, including those relating to domestic abuse, are recorded both promptly and correctly. This activity is overseen by the CDI Compliance Board and supported by CDIQAT audit activity.

An audit of domestic abuse incidents conducted by CDIQAT in April 2025 showed a strong compliance rate of 95%. Further audits are planned to maintain and improve these standards.

Our front-end crime recording processes are well established and supported by the Investigations Management Unit (IMU), which helps to ensure prompt allocation of recorded crimes for investigation.

Over the past 18 months, we have invested in Domestic Abuse Matters training to enhance our response to domestic abuse incidents. This training helps staff identify instances of domestic abuse, particularly controlling and coercive behaviours. This is reinforced through initial and ongoing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) domestic abuse training for officers and staff in relevant roles.

We are also exploring technology and process improvements within our Contact and Control Room (CCR) which will enhance the efficiency and speed of crime recording.

Additionally, we have successfully piloted Rapid Video Response (RVR), which allows us to respond to non-emergency domestic abuse calls via scheduled video consultations. This innovative approach offers a more flexible and accessible experience for victims and support prompt identification and recording of domestic abuse-related crimes.

Domestic abuse incidents meeting specific criteria undergo secondary safeguarding checks within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), providing an additional layer of assurance for accurate crime recording and victim protection.

This recommendation will be reviewed by our internal Domestic Abuse Delivery Group and Crime Data Integrity Board at their next meetings to identify further opportunities for improvement.

**Recommendation 3:**

“Forces need to make sure all officers and staff involved in crime recording are appropriately trained and understand their role in recording crime. They should also make sure there is effective oversight and scrutiny of crime-recording decisions and accuracy.”

All police officers and staff in relevant roles receive training in Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) upon joining the Constabulary. Refresher training and guidance are available via our Learning Management System, with additional training and guidance for specific areas provided as needed.

As outlined above, oversight of crime recording decisions and accuracy of crime recording is delivered through the work of the IMU, CDIQAT and the Crime Quality Assurance Team, which conducts audits on behalf of the Force Crime Registrar.

These teams are represented at the Crime Date Integrity Board, where audit findings and emerging themes are reviewed and actions are set to drive continuous improvement, including the provision of additional training where required.

## **PCC response to report and any Recommendations/Areas For Improvement**

The HMICFRS report titled “How effectively do the police record crime?” provides a useful insight to the methods and quality of crime reporting across all forces.

In the most recent HMICFRS Peel Inspection, Norfolk Constabulary was found to be ‘Outstanding’ at crime recording. This is commendable, as is the ongoing professional curiosity and commitment to ensuring further improvements through the adoption of the recommendations.

I welcome the approach that is being taken within Norfolk Constabulary to maintaining their current position and will monitor progress against the current HMICFRS recommendations going forward.

### **For Office Use Only:**

- Response forwarded to the Chief Constable.
- Response forwarded to the Norfolk Police and Crime Panel.
- Response submitted to the HMICFRS monitoring portal.
- Response published on the OPCON website.