

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2001/2002

Fire and police

Comparing the performance of Scottish councils



Introduction

Each year, fire brigades, police forces and councils publish a range of information to show people how well they are providing their services and how they compare with other bodies.

This pamphlet contains information on seven indicators relating to the activities of Scotland's fire and police services in 2001/2002.

Fire

- the percentage of incidents to which brigades responded within target times
- number of casualties/dwelling fires per 10,000 population
- sickness absence levels for fire personnel.

Police

- crime clear-up rates
- sickness absence levels for police personnel
- complaints against police officers
- racist incidents.

Other pamphlets cover:

Benefits, Finance and Corporate issues
Community services
Education services
Environmental and regulatory services
Housing and social work services

Audit Scotland will also be providing on its website¹:

- a comprehensive compendium of the information for all the services for which there are performance indicators
- council profiles analysing indicators on a council-by-council basis.

Using the information

For each activity we have set out why some of the differences in performance may have arisen. We also highlight particular features of the information – for example, the range in performance achieved by different brigades and forces.

Several factors affect the way a brigade or force performs its activities. You need to be aware of these in order to understand why results may vary. Some of these factors are outwith the control of a brigade or force – for example, population size and density, geographical area, and the mix between urban and rural settlements. Others may be specific to a particular service or the groups of people it serves. These local factors may mean that a brigade or force with a performance which, at first sight, appears to be worse than that of another has, in fact, done better given the circumstances it faces.

In this pamphlet we have shown information for brigades and forces for 2001/2002 and, where appropriate, made comparison with previous years. However, for some indicators, brigades or forces have submitted data that their auditors have identified as unreliable because of doubts about the reliability of the arrangements for producing the information (see key below). In such cases we have shown the information separately and have not included it in the calculation of any overall Scottish figures, although such information was included in previous years.

Key

Auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission have reviewed authorities' arrangements for producing the performance information. In the tables shown in this pamphlet, an asterisk (*) against the data for a brigade or force indicates that the auditor expressed doubts about the reliability of its arrangements for producing the information.

¹www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/performance

Fire

Indicator 1

In 2001/2002, the number of fire calls to which the national targets applied rose to over 87,000, an increase of 6,000 over the last two years. Overall, brigades reported an improvement in the proportion of these calls for which they met the targets, attending over 92% of calls within the target times set.

Indicator 2

There were almost 1,600 fire casualties in 2001/2002. The number of casualties per 10,000 population varied from 1.4 in Fife to 4.4 in Strathclyde.

Brigades reported 6,692 accidental dwelling fires, a reduction of 441 (6%) compared with the previous year.

Indicator 3

Firefighter sickness absence varied widely with Fife (8.9%), Strathclyde (8.4%) and Tayside (9.3%) reporting the highest levels, and Highland & Islands (4.8%) reporting the lowest level.

The overall sickness absence for non-firefighters was 6.2%, which compares with 5.0% for a similar group of staff in the police service.

Police

Indicator 4

Police forces reported almost 340,000 recorded crimes in Scotland during 2001/2002 – an increase of over 5,000 crimes compared with the previous year. The number of recorded crimes per 1,000 population varied between force areas, ranging from 51 crimes in Northern to 90 crimes in Strathclyde.

Indicator 5

The proportion of time lost due to sickness absence for police officers was 5.0%. Sickness absence levels varied from 2.7% in Grampian to 6.4% in Tayside.

The proportion of civilian staff time lost to sickness absence was 5.0%, which compares with 6.2% for a similar group of staff in the fire service.

Indicator 6

There were 1,608 complaints against police officers in 2001/2002. The number of complaints varied between forces, ranging from slightly under ten complaints per 100 officers in Grampian, to over 28 complaints per 100 officers in Lothian & Borders.

Indicator 7

The number of racist incidents reported to forces in 2001/2002 was 3,115, an increase of 410 (15%) compared with the previous year.

FIRE

Eight fire brigades provide fire services in Scotland. Two of these cover the same areas as councils – Dumfries & Galloway and Fife. Six are responsible to joint boards of councils and cover more than one council area – Central Scotland, Lothian & Borders, Grampian, Highland & Islands, Strathclyde and Tayside.

Indicator 1: Response times to fire incidents

The percentage of responses to incidents within the target time, for areas in these five risk categories:

- high
- substantial
- moderate
- low
- rural.

The UK-wide system for categorising areas contains five risk categories; high, substantial, moderate, low and rural, reflecting different localities. For example, high-risk areas include those with a concentration of shopping and business centres, hotels, theatres, cinemas, clubs and halls. Only five brigades had areas classified as being in the high-risk category. Moderate-risk areas include suburban areas and the built-up areas of small towns. For the first four risk categories, there are nationally agreed targets for attendance. For rural areas, brigades set their own local targets.

The indicator provides information on the extent to which brigades respond to fire calls (including false alarms) in accordance with these national standards. Calls to which the standards do not apply and which, therefore, are not included in this indicator, are those where:

- a fire appliance is away from the fire station area when directed to attend an incident
- a vehicle on its way to a fire is redirected to another incident or back to the fire station.

Therefore, the indicator does not deal with all of the fire calls made by each brigade. Nevertheless, it provides a measure of the extent to which brigades are able to attend incidents within the appropriate time and with the appropriate number of fire appliances.

Points to bear in mind

Attendance times will be affected by a variety of factors, including:

- speed of dispatch of fire appliances
- traffic congestion and other road obstructions
- duration of calls at incidents
- weather conditions.

The use of part-time fire crews, normally found in smaller towns and lower-risk areas, may influence attendance times. Remote rural areas present problems of distance and accessibility.

Commentary

In the four risk categories for which there are national response times the number of incidents across Scotland, to which the targets applied, rose in 2001/2002 to slightly over 87,000 (Table 1a). Although this was about 7,000 lower than in 1997/1998 when comparable information was first available, it represents **an increase over the last two years of 6,000**.

Overall, brigades reported an improvement in the proportion of these calls for which they met the targets compared with the two previous years, attending over 92% of all calls within the target times set (Figure 1). Seven of the eight brigades increased the percentage of incidents attended within target time. Performance across the four risk categories ranged from almost 89% in Strathclyde to over 98% in Dumfries & Galloway and Grampian.

Across Scotland, brigades have improved attendances to incidents within the substantial, moderate and low risk areas, and reported a slight reduction in the high risk category.

The percentage of attendances that were within the target in each of the first four categories varied as follows.

- High: 63.5% (Central Scotland) to 96.6% (Grampian).
- Substantial: 69.3% (Fife) to 91% (Grampian).
- Moderate: 96.0% (Fife) to 99.3% (Grampian).
- Low: 92.3% (Highland & Islands) to 99.9% (Dumfries & Galloway).

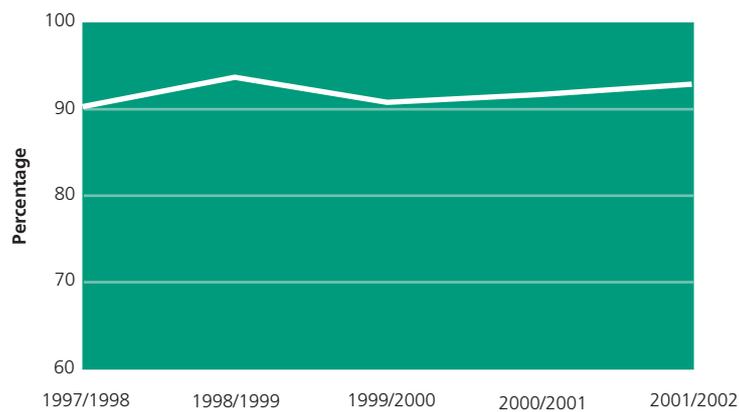
Table 1a: The percentage of attendances at incidents within target time (combined high, substantial, moderate and low risk)

BRIGADE	All risk categories				
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	93.8	93.6	91.3	92.3	92.2
Dumfries & Galloway	98.5	99.5	99.7	97.3	
Fife	94.1	92.8	92.0	91.4	92.4
Grampian	98.5	98.3	98.3	97.7	96.8
Highland & Islands	94.8	93.0	92.1	90.0	100.0
Lothian & Borders	93.9	93.7	*94.6	96.4	94.9
Strathclyde	88.8	88.1	86.9	92.2	85.5
Tayside	95.5	95.2	95.3	97.6	96.5
Scotland	92.3	91.7	90.8	93.7	90.3
Number of incidents	87,285	83,886	81,399	89,091	94,091

Dumfries & Galloway, Fife and Highland & Islands did not classify any areas in the high-risk category.

Dumfries & Galloway did not report the information in 1997/1998.

Figure 1: The overall percentage of attendances at fires within target time (all risk categories)



High risk

The target in high risk areas is for two appliances to attend within five minutes and a third appliance to attend within eight minutes. Five brigades had areas classified in the high risk category.

The number of incidents within this category had been reducing year-on-year since 1997/1998. However, in 2001/2002 brigades reported over 10,600 incidents, an increase of over 3,600 (52%) compared with the previous year. Only Grampian did not increase the number of incidents in this risk category. Strathclyde (almost 3,400) accounted for the majority of the increase.

Across the five brigades, the percentage of incidents attended within time in the high risk category shows a slight reduction compared with the previous year. Grampian, Lothian & Borders and Tayside each reported improvements to attendance within target, while Central Scotland and Strathclyde reported a reduction (Table 1b).

Table 1b: The percentage of attendances at incidents within target time (high risk)

BRIGADE	High risk				
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	63.5	71.0	53.3	60.0	71.2
Grampian	96.6	95.7	95.4	90.9	85.0
Lothian & Borders	88.6	87.7	*91.8	94.1	91.2
Strathclyde	84.7	86.2	87.4	87.0	75.0
Tayside	82.3	82.0	82.6	90.6	95.8
Scotland	85.9	86.9	88.5	89.1	80.3
Number of incidents	10,610	6,993	7,822	9,792	10,183

Dumfries & Galloway, Fife and Highland & Islands did not classify any areas in the high-risk category.

Substantial risk

The target attendance time for areas in the substantial risk category is for one appliance to attend within the five minutes and a second appliance to attend within eight minutes.

Overall, brigades attended 82% of incidents within the target time, an improvement on each of the two previous years. Six of the eight brigades reported improvements in this category compared with the previous year. Only Dumfries & Galloway and Lothian & Borders reported slight reductions (Table 1c).

Five of the eight brigades (one more than the previous year) attended more than eight out of every ten incidents within the target time. Highland & Islands has improved attendance times year-on-year since 1997/1998.

The number of incidents for this category increased slightly compared with the previous year. However, since 1997/1998, when brigades reported almost 27,000 incidents within this category, there has been a reduction of over 23%.

Table 1c: The percentage of attendances at incidents within target time (substantial risk)

BRIGADE	Substantial risk				
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	77.3	73.8	70.5	76.8	81.4
Dumfries & Galloway	86.0	87.5	100.0	86.5	84.4
Fife	69.3	63.5	58.1	*60.0	66.9
Grampian	91.0	90.3	94.7	90.9	90.0
Highland & Islands	82.5	78.6	77.5	72.4	46.2
Lothian & Borders	87.1	87.5	*88.1	94.0	90.5
Strathclyde	79.8	78.6	77.0	88.0	76.0
Tayside	88.1	87.1	88.9	94.3	94.6
Scotland	82.0	80.9	79.3	88.0	79.3
Number of incidents	20,373	19,717	21,125	24,898	26,607

Moderate risk

The target attendance time for incidents in the moderate risk category is for one appliance to attend within ten minutes.

The number of incidents in this category has remained consistent at between 42,000 and 47,000 over the last five years.

Consistent with previous years, all brigades reported very high response levels within the target time, ranging from 96.0% in Fife to just over 99.3% in Grampian (Table 1d). Seven of the eight brigades improved their response times, with only Dumfries & Galloway reporting slightly reduced response times (although the brigade reported 100% the previous year). Overall, there was a slight increase in the percentage of attendances at incidents within target time in this risk category (97.2%).

Table 1d: The percentage of attendances at incidents within target time (moderate risk)

BRIGADE	Moderate risk				
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	96.2	95.6	96.4	96.8	96.4
Dumfries & Galloway	96.1	100.0	98.6	95.0	98.3
Fife	96.0	95.2	94.4	*96.7	97.2
Grampian	99.3	99.2	98.7	98.6	98.4
Highland & Islands	96.6	96.3	96.2	96.1	94.5
Lothian & Borders	97.1	97.0	*97.8	97.7	97.2
Strathclyde	97.0	94.1	93.5	97.0	96.0
Tayside	98.7	98.6	98.5	99.4	97.3
Scotland	97.2	96.0	95.7	97.4	96.6
Number of incidents	46,058	46,271	42,422	43,688	47,127

Low risk

The target attendance for incidents in the low risk category areas is for one appliance to attend within 20 minutes.

Overall, there was a reduction of slightly over 650 (6%) incidents compared with the previous year.

Across Scotland, brigades attended almost 98% of incidents within target time for this category – the highest percentage attendance within target since 1997/1998 (Table 1e). Performance varied between 92.3% in Highland & Islands to 99.9% in Dumfries & Galloway.

Highland & Islands has improved attendance times year-on-year since directly comparable figures were first available. In 1997/1998 the brigade attended only 67% of incidents within the local target time.

Table 1e: The percentage of attendances at incidents within target time (low risk)

BRIGADE	Low risk				
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	97.3	97.1	95.9	95.0	96.0
Dumfries & Galloway	99.9	100.0	100.0	99.3	99.2
Fife	98.1	97.9	97.5	*98.6	98.4
Grampian	99.5	99.6	99.6	99.8	99.0
Highland & Islands	92.3	87.8	85.6	79.2	67.2
Lothian & Borders	98.0	97.4	*97.7	98.0	98.3
Strathclyde	97.8	96.2	95.8	97.0	97.0
Tayside	97.8	96.6	97.2	97.9	96.0
Scotland	97.6	96.2	96.0	96.1	94.0
Number of incidents	10,244	10,905	10,030	10,713	10,174

Rural

For rural areas, brigades set their own local targets for attendance. Brigades attended slightly over 2,200 incidents in rural areas, a similar number to previous years. Grampian (51%), Dumfries & Galloway (22%) and Highlands & Islands (19%) accounted for 92% of these incidents.

The targets set by brigades for attending incidents range from 20 minutes to 35 minutes, and five of the six brigades that reported this information attended at least nine out of every ten incidents within their local target time (Table 1f). The average attendance times varied from 11 minutes in Grampian to 24 minutes in Central Scotland.

Table 1f: Attendances at incidents within rural areas

BRIGADE	Local target (mins)	Percentage attendances within target time	Average time (mins/secs)				
	2001/2002	2001/2002	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	35	86.7	24m 33s	21m 43s	23m 30s	29m 22s	28m 40s
Dumfries & Galloway	20	92.4					
Grampian	20	97.0	11m 13s	11m 24s	11m 26s		
Highland & Islands	30	92.3	16m 40s	16m 30s	15m 16s	17m 00s	19m 30s
Lothian & Borders			17m 5s	*27m 33s	*25m 0s	17m 50s	25m 00s
Strathclyde	30	90.1	16m 48s	18m 36s	21m 10s	20m 33s	29m 16s
Tayside	35	98.1	15m 37s	18m 30s		22m 12s	21m 10s

Dumfries & Galloway did not report its average time.

Fife did not classify any of its area in the rural risk category.

Lothian & Borders has not established a local target time.

Indicator 2: Number of fire casualties and accidental dwelling fires

- Average number of fire casualties per 10,000 population over the previous five-year period.
- Average number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population over the previous five-year period.

Fire brigades provide advice on fire prevention and safety in buildings and they also undertake education and promotional activities among the community. This indicator reflects the effectiveness of brigades' fire prevention and safety programmes. In order to smooth peaks and troughs that may occur in any one year, both parts of the indicator are based on figures calculated from the previous five years' data.

Fire casualties

The indicator reports all casualties arising as a direct result of fires attended by the brigade. However, those sent for a precautionary check-up for whom no further information is available to the brigade, are excluded. The number of casualties will not necessarily be the same as the number of incidents attended, as there will be both multiple injuries occurring at a single incident, and incidents without casualties.

Accidental dwelling fires

This indicator deals with accidental fires, ie, those that might have been avoided with better fire risk awareness and prevention measures.

Young children and elderly people are the significant 'at risk' groups for this indicator.

Points to bear in mind

The levels of both fire casualties and accidental fires tend to be higher:

- in areas with high levels of deprivation
- where a high proportion of properties are multi-occupied (eg, tenements).

Commentary

Fire casualties

Across Scotland, **fire casualties fell to less than 1,600 in 2001/2002**

– a reduction of almost 300 (16%) compared with 1999/2000.

Grampian, Lothian & Borders and Tayside each reported significant reductions of more than 25% in the number of fire casualties since 1999/2000 (Table 2a).

Overall, across all brigade areas there were 3.4 fire casualties per 10,000 population based on a five-year average. **These varied between brigades from 1.4 (Fife) to 4.4 (Strathclyde).** Lothian & Borders, Strathclyde and Tayside reported the highest incidence of casualties per 10,000 population.

Table 2a: The number of fire casualties and the average number per 10,000 population

BRIGADE	The average number of fire casualties per 10,000 pop.	Number of fire casualties		
	2001/2002	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	1.9	64	46	61
Dumfries & Galloway	2.1	26	24	20
Fife	1.4	57	25	63
Grampian	2.7	129	132	172
Highland & Islands	1.6	48	37	41
Lothian & Borders	3.3	249	320	338
Strathclyde	4.4	897	1,023	1,022
Tayside	3.0	99	101	143
Scotland	3.4	1,569	1,708	1,860

Accidental dwelling fires

Brigades reported 6,692 accidental dwelling fires, a reduction of 441 (6%) compared with the previous year. Six of the eight brigades reported reductions in accidental dwelling fires compared with the previous year. Central Scotland and Strathclyde have reported reduced numbers of accidental fires for the past three years.

Across Scotland, the average number of accidental fires was 13.9 per 10,000 population. Among brigades this varied from 9.4 in Highland & Islands to 16.1 in Strathclyde. Seven of the eight brigades reported a reduction in the annual average number of accidental fires per 10,000 population compared with the previous year (Table 2b). Grampian's figure remained at 12.2.

Table 2b: The number of accidental dwelling fires and the average number per 10,000 population

BRIGADE	The average number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 pop.	Number of accidental dwelling fires		
	2001/2002	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	10.6	269	282	298
Dumfries & Galloway	9.7	140	154	139
Fife	10.1	372	340	304
Grampian	12.2	655	695	503
Highland & Islands	9.4	210	268	262
Lothian & Borders	13.5	1,188	1,191	1,153
Strathclyde	16.1	3,240	3,603	3,770
Tayside	15.7	618	600	623
Scotland	13.9	6,692	7,133	7,052

Indicator 3: Sickness absence levels for firefighters

The percentage of firefighter shifts lost to:

- sickness absence
- light duties.

The percentage of days lost to sickness absence for other fire staff.

This indicator reports the percentage of shifts lost through absence due to sickness and injury in fire brigades. The proportion of lost time is for firefighters who are absent from work and also those who are assigned to light duties for medical reasons.

Sickness absence for all fire brigade personnel includes self-certificated, absence supported by a doctor's certificate, long-term sickness absence, and work-related injury. It does not include compassionate leave, career leave and special leave/unpaid leave, nor maternity or paternity leave.

The indicator excludes retained and auxiliary firefighters.

Points to bear in mind

Sickness absence levels for firefighters are generally high in comparison with the public sector average, partly as a result of the hazardous nature of the work, and the special needs in respect of fitness.

Long-term sickness absence by a small number of staff can significantly affect performance at smaller brigades.

Brigades often accommodate firefighters returning to duty following sickness absence, with a period of light duties. The type of sickness absence and the availability of appropriate work will determine whether light duties can be allocated. There is no direct relationship between the amount of light duties and the overall level of sickness absence within a brigade.

Commentary

Firefighters

Overall, for those brigades that reported reliable information, the proportion of shifts lost to sickness absence and light duties was 8%, a slight improvement compared with the Scottish average for the previous year. The level of **absence varied significantly with Fife (8.9%), Strathclyde (8.4%) and Tayside (9.3%) reporting the**

highest levels, and Highland & Islands (4.8%) reporting the lowest sickness absence (Table 3a). Grampian and Highland & Islands have reduced sickness absence year-on-year since the indicator was introduced in 1999/2000. Tayside has reported a worsening situation over the same period.

In 2001/2002 the levels of light duties ranged from 0.2% (Highland & Islands) to 1.4% (Fife).

Table 3a: Working time lost to sickness absence – firefighters

BRIGADE	2001/2002		2000/2001		1999/2000	
	Central Scotland	6.6	(0.9)	8.0	(1.9)	7.3
Fife	8.9	(1.4)	7.7	(0.8)	9.3	(1.9)
Grampian	5.8	(0.7)	6.1	(1.5)	7.6	(0.9)
Highland & Islands	4.8	(0.2)	5.1	(0.3)	6.0	(0.7)
Lothian & Borders	7.2	(1.0)	6.7	(0.6)	7.3	(0.5)
Strathclyde	8.4	(0.4)	9.2	(0.5)	8.1	(0.2)
Tayside	9.3	(0.6)	8.9	(0.3)	6.6	(0.4)
Scotland	8.0	(0.6)	8.2	(0.7)	7.7	(0.4)
UNRELIABLE DATA						
Dumfries & Galloway	*5.1	(*0.7)	4.5	(0.7)	5.3	(0.8)

Figures in brackets show the percentage of shifts that were allocated to light duties.

Dumfries & Galloway's unreliable data is excluded from the Scotland figures for 2001/2002.

Other fire staff

The overall level of sickness absence among brigades reporting reliable information was 6.2% for other fire staff. This is the same as the previous year, and ranged from 3.7% in Highland & Islands to 7.2% in Fife (Table 3b). The overall sickness percentage may be compared with 5.0% for a similar group of staff in the police service.

Five brigades reported lower sickness absence levels compared with the previous year. However, Lothian & Borders (6.2%) and Tayside (5.7%) both reported increases.

Table 3b: Working time lost to sickness absence – other fire staff

BRIGADE	Percentage sickness absence – other fire staff	
	2001/2002	2000/2001
Central Scotland	4.8	5.5
Fife	7.2	7.3
Grampian	5.3	5.8
Highland & Islands	3.7	3.9
Lothian & Borders	6.2	4.6
Strathclyde	7.1	7.4
Tayside	5.7	4.6
Scotland	6.2	6.2
UNRELIABLE DATA		
Dumfries & Galloway	*5.4	11.4

Dumfries & Galloway's unreliable data is excluded from the Scotland figures for 2001/2002.

POLICE

Police services are provided by eight forces. Six of these, responsible to joint boards, cover more than one council area – Central Scotland, Lothian & Borders, Grampian, Northern, Strathclyde and Tayside. Two, Dumfries & Galloway and Fife, cover the same areas as councils.

Indicator 4: Crimes cleared up

The percentage of all recorded crimes cleared up.

The effectiveness of police crime detection can be measured by the proportion of crimes and offences which are cleared up. A crime is regarded as 'cleared up' if there is sufficient evidence to justify a report being submitted to the procurator fiscal. 'Cleared up' does not necessarily mean that in every case someone was arrested and charged.

Points to bear in mind

In rural areas the population is more static, local people are more likely to know each other and, therefore, they may identify offenders more readily and be able to give descriptions of them to the police.

The number of crimes recorded by the police is less than the actual number committed because people do not always report them.

Crimes should be recorded to a common standard and in a consistent way across Scotland. Crime recording is a complex process with slightly over 426,000 offences recorded in 2001/2002. To achieve some consistency, the Scottish Executive has issued comprehensive guidance on crime recording – *The Criminal Statistics Handbook*, 1996. A problem of differing interpretations of this guidance, resulting in inconsistent recording practices across forces, has been recognised by all parties to the process and has been commented on in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMIC) reports.

The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) Crime Standing Committee Focus Group on crime recording is driving forward the adoption by all Scottish Forces of a more victim-based style of recording where all incidents reported as crimes are recorded. The Committee aims to have a common standard of crime reporting in place throughout Scotland by October 2003.

HMIC will continue to assist by monitoring progress. In addition, during the first half of 2003, HMIC will undertake a comprehensive thematic inspection of all crime management processes, including recording across all eight Scottish Forces. It is anticipated that the findings of the inspection will be published by June 2003.

Commentary

The total number of **recorded crimes in 2001/2002 for those forces that reported reliable information was almost 340,000**. In Dumfries & Galloway and Lothian & Borders the numbers reported were considered to be unreliable.

Five of the six forces that reported reliable information had an increase in the number of recorded crimes compared with the previous year.

Recorded crimes per 1,000 population varied significantly between force areas, ranging from 51 crimes in Northern to 90 crimes in Strathclyde (Table 4).

For those forces reporting reliable data, the percentage of recorded crime cleared up, 44.1%, reflects a slight reduction in performance compared with the previous year. However, compared with earlier years, forces continue to show improvement (Figure 4).

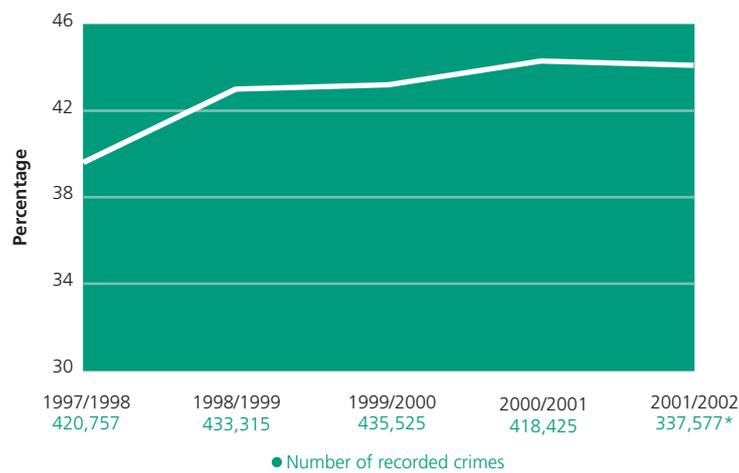
There is wide variation between forces in their clear-up rates ranging from just over 36% in Tayside to 65% in Northern. Central Scotland reported their highest clear-up rate since directly comparable data was first available in 1996/1997, while Fife reported their lowest clear-up rate over the same period.

Table 4: The number and percentage of all recorded crimes cleared up

	2001/2002	2001/2002	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
	Total recorded crimes	Crimes per 1,000 population	Percentage cleared up				
Central Scotland	17,192	61.8	63.9	57.9	54.8	57.1	56.1
Fife	27,403	78.2	42.3	46.5	44.0	50.3	46.8
Grampian	43,681	83.2	37.2	33.0	36.3	37.9	40.8
Northern	14,235	51.3	65.0	58.4	55.9	62.4	66.6
Strathclyde	203,921	90.1	43.9	44.1	43.4	43.2	36.7
Tayside	31,145	80.8	36.5	40.2	41.6	38.0	37.0
Scotland	337,577	66.0	44.1	44.3	43.2	43.0	39.6
UNRELIABLE DATA							
Dumfries & Galloway	*8,128	*55.3	*50.1	50.7	56.0	58.8	61.7
Lothian & Borders	*79,726	*89.5	*45.7	46.4	41.5	37.4	35.4

Forces providing unreliable data have been excluded from the Scotland figures for 2001/2002.

Figure 4: The overall percentage and number of recorded crimes cleared up



* Number of recorded crimes in 2001/2002 excludes forces providing unreliable data.

Indicator 5: Sickness absence levels for police personnel

Proportion of working time lost due to sickness absence for:

- police officers
- civilian staff.

This indicator reports the amount of time lost through sickness and injury absence in police forces.

Sickness absence includes self certification, absence supported by a doctor's certificate, long-term sickness absence, absence due to assaults on police, and work related injury. It does not include compassionate leave, career leave and special leave/unpaid leave, nor maternity or paternity leave.

Points to bear in mind

This indicator covers all staff directly employed by the police force, which includes full-time, part-time and temporary staff.

Working patterns vary for police officers and civilian staff both between and within forces. For the purposes of this indicator, each period of work eg, day shift or night shift, counts as a working day.

Commentary

Police officers

Six of the eight police forces in Scotland reported reliable data for this indicator. Dumfries & Galloway and Strathclyde reported unreliable data. The number of days' sickness absence for the six forces was slightly over 78,000 which equates, on average, to 11 days' sickness absence per officer – a similar level to the previous year.

Across the six forces **the proportion of time lost due to sickness absence was 5.0%. Sickness absence levels varied from 2.7% (six days per officer) in Grampian to 6.4% (almost 13 days) in Tayside** (Table 5a).

Table 5a: Percentage of time lost due to sickness absence for police officers

	Percentage of time lost		
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	5.5	5.9	5.8
Fife	4.9	4.2	4.7
Grampian	2.7	2.5	2.8
Lothian & Borders	5.8	6.1	
Northern	4.0	3.6	4.2
Tayside	6.4	6.8	6.3
Scotland	5.0	4.9	5.1
UNRELIABLE DATA			
Dumfries & Galloway	*2.8	3.5	3.3
Strathclyde	*5.0	4.7	5.5

Forces providing unreliable data have been excluded from the Scotland figure for 2001/2002.

Lothian & Borders did not report this information in 1999/2000.

Civilian staff

Six of the eight police forces in Scotland reported reliable data for this indicator. Dumfries & Galloway and Strathclyde reported unreliable data.

The proportion of civilian staff time lost to sickness absence for the six forces was 5.0%. This compares with 6.2% for a similar group of employees in the fire service.

The level of sickness absence varied across forces from 3.4% (Grampian) to 6.9% (Tayside) (Table 5b).

Table 5b: Percentage of time lost due to sickness absence for civilian staff

	Percentage of time lost		
	2001/2002	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	4.7	4.5	6.8
Fife	4.3	4.6	4.2
Grampian	3.4	2.5	3.4
Lothian & Borders	5.5	6.2	
Northern	3.6	3.9	3.2
Tayside	6.9	6.8	6.1
Scotland	5.0	5.4	5.7
UNRELIABLE DATA			
Dumfries & Galloway	*3.9	2.8	3.5
Strathclyde	*6.3	6.4	7.1

Forces providing unreliable data have been excluded from the Scotland figure for 2001/2002.

Lothian & Borders did not report the information in 1999/2000.

Indicator 6: The number of complaints per 100 police officers

This indicator provides information on the number of complaints received from any person against on-duty police officers where there is an inference that professional or criminal misconduct has occurred.

This indicator does not include complaints against police support staff.

In April 2001 all forces adopted an HMIC recommendation that all complaints, including those of a minor or trivial nature, should be recorded. Therefore, the figures are not directly comparable with the previous year.

Commentary

There were **1,608 complaints against police officers in 2001/2002 for the seven forces that reported reliable data for this indicator** – slightly fewer than 21 complaints per 100 police officers. However, **the number of complaints varied between forces from slightly under ten complaints per 100 officers in Grampian to over 28 in Lothian & Borders** (Table 6). Strathclyde reported unreliable data for this indicator.

Table 6: The number of complaints per 100 police officers – 2001/2002

	Complaints per 100 police officers	Number of complaints
Central Scotland	20.6	148
Dumfries & Galloway	10.8	51
Fife	26.2	229
Grampian	9.9	123
Lothian & Borders	28.1	726
Northern	14.8	100
Tayside	19.7	231
Scotland	20.8	1,608
UNRELIABLE DATA		
Strathclyde	*16.0	*1,173

Strathclyde's unreliable information has been excluded from the Scotland figures.

Indicator 7: The number of racist incidents

Recommendations within the report by Sir William Macpherson into the death of Stephen Lawrence² are aimed at increasing reporting levels of racist incidents in order that the full scale of racist activity can be reliably assessed.

As a result of these recommendations, Scottish police forces are actively encouraging the reporting of racist incidents, and it is expected that over the coming years the number of reported incidents will increase.

Points to bear in mind

A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Commentary

The total number of racist incidents reported to forces in 2001/2002 was 3,115, an increase of 410 (15%) compared with the previous year. With the exception of Tayside, all forces reported increased numbers of racist incidents. Dumfries & Galloway, Fife and Grampian reported increases of more than 25% (Table 7).

The number of reported racist incidents per 10,000 population ranged from almost three incidents in Northern to almost seven in Central Scotland.

Table 7: The number of racist incidents per 10,000 population

	Incidents per 10,000 population	Number of racist incidents	
	2001/2002	2001/2002	2000/2001
Central Scotland	6.8	190	153
Dumfries & Galloway	3.7	54	30
Fife	6.0	211	166
Grampian	4.5	236	180
Lothian & Borders	6.7	594	551
Northern	2.9	81	76
Strathclyde	6.6	1,495	1,241
Tayside	6.6	254	308
Scotland	6.1	3,115	2,705

² Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, February 1999

Contacts

If you have any specific queries about the performance information, you may wish to contact your force or brigade. The addresses and telephone numbers are given below. If you have general queries about this pamphlet, you may wish to contact Alec Taylor or Jim Lakie at Audit Scotland (see back cover).

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