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Dear Ed

Outcomes (formerly Detections) Statistics

In April 2013, the Government introduced a new “Outcomes” framework, providing enhanced transparency on the way police deal with and clear up crimes. From April 2014 the framework was finalised such that every single crime recorded by the police can now be attributed an outcome, whereas only around 30% of them would have been accounted for under the former detections framework that they have replaced.

We will shortly be publishing our first annual publication of Crime Outcomes in England and Wales. This represents a transitional year for the publication, albeit with only partial data from the new framework. The publication will be divided into three main sections:

1. Partial analysis on the limited amount of data available to date on the new framework
2. Analysis of the 2013/14 data, collected in the same categories as the former detections framework
3. Potential new and alternative analyses considering other ways of looking at the data and a consultation with users to shape the publication moving forward.

The new outcomes publication will reflect the increased transparency inherent in the new framework, and therefore see a large shift from the old detections one, which focused almost entirely on detection numbers and detection rates. As such this represents an opportunity for much broader and more comprehensive analyses of how police ‘resolve’ crimes rather than the previous narrow focus that could be mis-used to provide unhelpful target behaviours and did not fully appraise the wide range of ways crimes are dealt with.

I am also mindful of the issues raised in the UK Statistics Authority review of crime statistics (published in January 2014), particularly around the quality of recorded crime data, and the hard work that we, along with ONS, HMIC and police forces are engaged in to address these issues before a possible assessment next year. Crime and Outcome data are of course intrinsically linked.

As a result of both these facts, I believe it is appropriate for me to suggest you reconsider the designation of our forthcoming Outcomes bulletin, with a view to its publication as Official Statistics, rather than National Statistics. I would welcome your thoughts on this.

We plan to build on the results of the Outcomes consultation in further developing our output for July 2015 as we work towards the National Statistics standard prior to discussing potential dates for a future assessment of the Outcomes statistics. Perhaps this should be done in parallel to the next assessment of crime statistics.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Blunt', with a stylized flourish underneath.

David Blunt
Chief Statistician & Head of Profession for Statistics

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