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Report to: Audit Committee

Agenda: 12

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Subject: Crime recording – oversight report from BTPA lead

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For: Information

1. Purpose of paper

1.1 To provide the Members of the committee with a six monthly overview of any issues of note arising from the Authority Executive's regular independent review of BTP's internal auditing of crime and incident recording.

1.2 To invite Members to note the contents this report or raise any further questions or issues on which additional information is required.

2. Background

2.1 Members of the Audit Committee will remember that at its meeting on 28th June 2011 a revised approach to the Authority's oversight and scrutiny of crime and incident recording was approved. This updated approach involved;

- Nominating an Authority member lead to develop a closer working relationship with the Force Crime Registrar (FCR)
- The Authority Executive developing a series of reports for the nominated Member lead, and for this Committee, to improve the level of oversight and awareness of compliance with national standards for crime and incident data.

2.2 BTP has developed a new internal reporting process for crime audit activity and once these reports have been reviewed internally by the FCR and Strategic Command Team (SCT) they are forwarded to the Authority Executive on a monthly basis for independent scrutiny and comment. In the first six months of

activity in 2011-12, the Authority has received and reviewed the 15 reports set out at Appendix A[1].

2.3 The outputs of this independent Authority scrutiny are an overview report which is provided to the Member lead in order to inform regular discussions with the FCR (see a sample of this report at Appendix B). Also a report back on key issues to the Audit Committee, this is the first of these reports.

3. Issues arising June 2011-January 2012

3.1 Each of BTP's thematic crime audits typically involves a sample of 105 records from each of incident and crime logs being scrutinised by the FCR for compliance against the relevant national standards and Home Office Counting Rules. Assessment of compliance is graded against the Home Office Data Quality Audit Model (DQAM) as set out in the key at Appendix A. Since autumn 2011 BTP's audit reports also contain an assessment of the impact that incorrect data is likely to have had on BTP's reported performance for that crime category; that is whether the reported crime figures are likely to need adjustment as a result of the audit.

3.2 **NSIR:** As Members will note from the summary table at Appendix A, a recurring theme from these internal audit reports is the poor compliance with National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). The main recurring compliance issues from these reports are;

- There is insufficient information in incident records to determine whether a crime has occurred - this element of BTP's own audits has yielded variable results with non-compliance typically ranging from 10-30%

- There has been incorrect 'no-criming' of incident records[2] – again this element of BTP's own audits has yielded variable results with non-compliance ranging from 0-13%.

- Records incorrectly closed[3] - compliance was generally very poor in this respect and this has been identified as an ongoing issue for BTP

[1] A further two process reports on 'improvement plan' and 'no crime' have been received but are not included here
[2] A crime has been committed but not recorded
[3] Closing field does not properly capture reason for closure of the incident or the opening and closing codes have been changed without explanation

3.3 An initial action plan to improve NSIR compliance was developed by the FCR in late summer 2011 and we are monitoring subsequent reports for the impact of this improvement plan. Early indications are that;

- Rates of records having insufficient information to determine whether a crime has been committed have improved but are still significant at around 16-17% in the last batch of 5 reports received
- Rates of incorrect no-criming are generally much improved but will be monitored as there are clearly potential implications here for the accuracy of BTP's overall notifiable and non-notifiable recorded crime levels.
- The proportion of incident records incorrectly closed remains very high and further work is underway within BTP to seek improvements in this respect; including additional training and a proposal to increase the auditing capability within the force control rooms. We will monitor and report back on the impact of these initiatives in future reports to the Committee

3.4 It is worth noting that the issues raised above are broadly consistent with those identified in the recent HMIC thematic inspection on data integrity of forces throughout England and Wales.

3.5 **NCRS:** As the summary table at Appendix A indicates the results of compliance with National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) are consistently much more positive than that for NSIR. Some accuracy issues emerged for the recording of individual volume crime types (vehicle and drugs offences) and these will be reviewed again when the next set of audit reports for these crime types is received.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That Members note this report and its appendices.

4.2 That Members refer any further questions to the BTPA Member lead for Crime and Incident Recording or to the Force.

Appendix A: Summary of crime and incident audit reports received June 2011 - Jan 2012

Report received	NSIR compliance	NCRS compliance
Burglary	Fair	Excellent
Hate crime	Poor	Excellent
Robbery	Fair	Excellent
Theft	Poor	Excellent
Violent	Poor	Good
Vehicle	Poor	Good
Cycle Crime	Poor	Excellent
Public Order	Poor	Good
Drugs	N/A	Fair
Fraud	Poor	Good
Sexual Offences	Poor	Excellent
Less serious line of route	Poor	Good
Domestic Violence	Poor	Excellent
Serious Line of Route	Poor	Excellent
Damage	Poor	Excellent

Home Office DQAM Key:

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
79.9% and below of case files comply	Between 80% - 89.9% of case files comply	Between 90% - 94.9% of case files comply	95% and above of case files comply