

NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

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NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS

I thank HMICFRS for this report examining how effectively the police record crime. It is helpful to have an awareness of the improved position in terms of police recording of crime whilst understanding areas where further work is required.

In June 2025, as part of my scrutiny programme, I asked Northumbria police about the recording of incidents of these offences where they are identified through the ASB case review. This issue was already being addressed however, highlighting this on a national level will ensure continued focus and improvement. I am therefore pleased that a recommendation has been made in relation to improving the recording of conduct crimes such as harassment, stalking and controlling or coercive behaviour.

The number of ASB cases with crimes attached, that are not identified by forces, is concerning. The failure to identify these will prevent the most appropriate action being taken and reduce the opportunities to refer the victim to the most relevant support. The Northumbria PEEL 2022 Inspection identified missed crimes within ASB incidents as an area for improvement (AFI). Although we need to have a continued focus on this, our force has made good progress and this AFI and it will be proposed for closure if compliance is maintained. Be assured that I will continue to monitor this through my scrutiny programme and the ASB Case Review process.

In relation to reported incidents of rape (N100s), this was identified as an AFI for Northumbria during the previous PEEL inspection. As a result, the force now audits all relevant cases with any identified missed crimes/reported incidents (N100s) corrected through leading to improved compliance. The force continues to make progress against this and updates are reported to me through my scrutiny framework.

The force currently uses an outdated crime recording system which is due to be replaced in Spring 2026. The implementation of NicheRMS will provide a range of features and improved functionality which will support recording improvements. An example is that the current system only allows sex, ethnicity and age to be recorded. The new system will allow full protected characteristics to be captured. The enhancements provided by Niche will support improved working across the force and I look forward to receiving an update from the Chief Constable next year in relation the impact this has had.



Northumbria Police have updated me on their current position with regards to the recommendations made as follows:

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.*

Northumbria Police compliance in this area is generally high, and the latest audit check shows an increase in compliance when compared to the 2022 audit data. The most recent audit data of incidents opened with a violence crime code shows a compliance rate of 94%. A NCRS training package relating to the recording of course of conduct/behavioural crimes is currently live within force.

Recommendation 2 - *Forces should make sure they quickly and correctly record crimes related to domestic abuse.*

Latest data shows that Northumbria Police recorded 88% of crimes within 24 hours and a further 7% within 72 hours. There are quality assurance processes in place to ensure domestic abuse crimes are correctly recorded and corrective action is taken where needed.

The Force's current processes for crime recording at first point of contact ensures that most crimes are recorded within 24 hours; however, this can be impacted when officers/staff fail to identify the crime during the initial contact or delay crime recording for further information gathering/investigation. The latest audit data shows that 88% of crimes/reported incidents were recorded within 24 hours of disclosure with a further 7% crimes being recorded within 72 hours of disclosure.

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.*

Online training packages are available within Force to support staff and assist with appropriate crime recording. A crime recording decision tree has also been introduced within Communications Department in relation to the recording of sexual offences.

There are a number of activities in place to support the continued improvement in the Force's crime recording standards. These activities will respond to the latest recommendations made in this spotlight report. The activities are summarised below:

- Training products are available within Force to assist officers and staff to identify conduct crimes and to assist with appropriate crime recording. There are three training packages available to all staff via the Learn platform covering General Rules, Rape and NI100s and Course of Conduct offences.
- Quality assurance processes assist with the identification of correct crime types and application of crime flags and markers.
- Audit and QA processes mitigate some risk by ensuring that any identified corrective activity is undertaken or fed back to officers for further action.



- Changes to the incident closure process require a detailed rationale to be appended to crime-related incident logs when a crime is not being recorded.
- A risk-based audit plan is in place with audit activity planned to look at conduct crimes as well as DA (which often results in conduct crimes being made out). A vulnerable victim audit is to be scheduled.
- The crime recording decision tree is being configured to include all offence types and will be available to all Communications staff to assist with correct crime recording decision making.

Despite the progress that forces have made thus far, it is clear that there is still some way to go to ensure the accuracy of crime recording. The recommendations made should ensure a focus on the most significant issues. I will monitor progress where further action is required to ensure that NP are compliant with the recommendations through my regular Scrutiny process.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Dungworth

Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria