



HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

Improving Policing across Scotland

Wednesday, August 12, 2015

PRESS RELEASE

HMICS PUBLISH CRIME AUDIT 2015 OF BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE SCOTLAND DIVISION

Crime recording processes within British Transport Police are good with the correct use of recording standards and counting rules, an HMICS report published today (Wednesday, August 12) shows.

The Crime Audit 2015 British Transport Police undertaken by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland looked at significantly more records than previous such audits with two areas for improvement being identified.

BTP has a national role with its Scotland Division providing policing services on the railway network north of the border through 280 officers and staff.

The audit assessed the state, efficiency and effectiveness of the Division's crime recording and the extent to which its recording practices comply with the Scottish Crime Recording Standard and the Scottish Government's Counting Rules.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, Derek Penman, said: "The results of our audit provide clear evidence that BTP's Scotland Division crime recording processes are effective, ensuring the correct application of crime recording standards and counting rules.

"We are satisfied with the robustness of the Division's own audit checks and operational crime recording practices. We have identified two areas for improvement – one relating to closer scrutiny of violence related incidents and the other to the updating of incidents which are referred to Police Scotland for investigation."

The report found good work in recording of hate crime and the inspection team were impressed with the quality and thoroughness of investigations leading to incidents being recorded as no-crimes.

In total 912 incidents and 522 crime records relating to allegations of theft, violence, sexual crime, hate crime, none-crime related incidents and those deemed no-crime were examined. It was found that 98.8% had been closed correctly and 95.2% were counted and classified correctly.

Footnotes

1. The HMICS role in inspecting BTP in Scotland is outlined in the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003. This places a duty on HMICS to inspect BTP from 'time to time' and report following an inspection on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Division to the Secretary of State.
2. Records in six categories were audited – sexual offences, violent crime, housebreaking, hate crime, non-crime related incidents and no crimes.
3. No crimes are incidents that were originally thought to have been a crime but were later re-classified, following further additional investigation as not being a crime.
4. An incident is correctly closed when it is classified as non-crime related and the log contains enough information to dispel any inference of criminality or the incident indicated a crime had been committed and a crime record had been traced.
5. HMICS published its Crime Audit 2014 of Police Scotland in October last year.

Ends

Note to Newsdesks:

Key Findings and Improvement Actions from the Report are listed below.

REPORT KEY FINDINGS:

- British Transport Police is unique in policing terms due to its funding arrangements with rail service providers and the additional specialist skills required of officers to police the railway system.
- Of the crimes recorded by BTP that occur on Great Britain's rail network only around 3% are committed in Scotland, which equates to about 0.5% of crimes recorded in Scotland.
- Incident and crime recording decisions by BTP exceeded the 95% standard for closure with 98.8% of the incidents examined closed correctly¹ and 95.2% of crime counted and classified correctly.
- 100% of **sexual offence** related incidents were closed correctly and 95.5% were counted and classified correctly.

¹ Correct closure means either that (a) the incident was closed as non-crime related and contained sufficient information to dispel any inference of criminality; or (b) the incident indicated a crime had occurred and a crime record was traced.

- **Violent incidents** reported to the police are closed correctly in 98.6% of cases. There is room for improvement in the counting and classification of such crimes with 89.4% recorded correctly.
- The division is effective in its recording of **theft**. 99.7% of theft related incidents were closed correctly and 97.7% of resulting crimes were counted and classified correctly.
- The recording of **hate crime** was excellent with 100% compliance in recording, classification and counting.
- The division is effective in its scrutiny of **non-crime related incidents**. 98.7% of the incidents we examined were closed correctly.
- **No-criming** practice is excellent with 99.2% of decisions being made correctly.
- Day-to-day crime recording decisions are overseen by the crime management units supported by the national audit and scrutiny team.
- There is a good system of internal auditing of crime recording within BTP and the results of the internal audits are broadly similar to our own. Reports are subject to wider scrutiny at the force executive and BTP Authority level.

Improvement Actions

BTP should give closer scrutiny to violence related incidents to ensure that crimes are counted and classified correctly. This should form part of future crime audits of the division conducted by the Audit and Compliance team. (Paragraph 38)

BTP Scotland division should ensure that when reported crimes are transferred to Police Scotland the incident record should be updated with the appropriate crime reference number before closure. (Paragraph 47).

Endsnote

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