

Introduction

Background

This document contains the revised set of Rules for counting and classifying crime with effect from 1 April 2013.

The Counting Rules for Recorded Crime includes a full copy of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) at Annex A of the General Rules section. The NCRS was instigated by research from Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Home Office (Review of Police Forces' Crime Recording Practices, Burrows et al, HORS 204, 2000) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (On the Record, HMIC 2000) that revealed a lack of consistency in recording practices across police forces. This was particularly marked in the proportion of incidents that were recorded as crimes.

The NCRS was introduced nationally on 1 April 2002 with the aim of promoting greater consistency between police forces in the recording of crime and to take a more victim oriented approach to crime recording. Following the introduction of the NCRS, the National Crime Recording Steering Group (NCRSG) has met regularly to review the Counting Rules. The Steering Group includes members of the Home Office Statistics Unit, Force Crime Registrars and Statistics Officers, and representatives of ACPO and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). The Counting Rules are updated annually to reflect decisions taken by the NCRSG, changes in legislation and changes to improve clarity and ensure consistency in recording by police forces.

In 2012 the independent Crime Statistics Advisory committee (CSAC) was established following a recommendation from the National Statistician's Review of Crime Statistics. The Committee functions as a strategic, high level advisory body offering independent advice to the Home Secretary, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) on matters related to the measurement of crime and the collection and presentation of crime data for England and Wales.

This set of Rules can be found on the Gov.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counting-rules-for-recorded-crime>

Amendments to the Counting Rules

Printed amendments will continue to be issued on an annual basis. Any updates made to the Counting Rules during the year will be published online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counting-rules-for-recorded-crime>

Specific Counting Rule Enquiries

Counting rule enquiries should be directed to the FCR in the first instance. If necessary, the FCR will forward enquiries to the dedicated Counting Rules e-mail box: countingrules@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk Counting Rule enquiries will not be answered over the telephone.

Guide to using the Counting Rules

In addition to the revisions to the Counting Rules, the overall layout has been updated for ease of reference.

The General Rules have an overall application, however, there are exceptions for certain types of crime. These exceptions are stated on the counting rules page for that particular crime type.

For each crime type there are two main instruction pages: the classification page and the counting rules page. One major layout change relates to the positioning of these pages: the complete set of classification pages for a particular crime type has been presented first followed by the complete set of counting rules pages for that crime type. An example of the revised layout for these pages can be found on the entitled page Layout of Classification and Counting Rules Pages.

At the end of each crime group chapter, there is a maximum sentence table. This should be used, in conjunction with the principal crime look-up table at Annex F of the General Rules, to determine the principal crime when this general rule is applied (see General Rules Section F). For each Home Office sub-classification (eg 8/6), the maximum sentence for that crime type is tabulated. This provides guidance in determining the principal crime. The principal crime is not always determined by maximum sentence, and the look-up table illustrates these exceptions, particularly where violent crimes take precedence over property crimes.

Definition of terms used in the Counting Rules

The following terms as used in the Rules have the meaning assigned to them as shown:

The Accused	The person or persons charged with a crime.
Defendant	A person against whom court proceedings are brought.
Offender	One who has committed a crime.
Suspect	A person believed by the authorities to be responsible for a crime.
Recordable offences	Most criminal offences are recordable (ie recordable on the Police National Computer)
Recorded offences	Criminal offences which are notifiable to the Home Office (ie submitted by forces via monthly CrimSec3 returns)
FCR	Force Crime Registrar
(S)	State based offence (as indicated by an S in brackets)
(S/V)	State and victim based offence (as indicated by an S/V in brackets)
(V)	Victim based offence (as indicated by a V in brackets)
Indictable offences	All serious offences that must be tried at Crown Court
Triable-either-way offences	Offences that are triable either at Crown Court or at Magistrates Court