

**Knife crime sentencing
quarterly brief
January to March 2009
England and Wales**

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

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Knife crime statistics January to March 2009

Introduction

In June 2008 the Tackling Knives Action Programme (TKAP) was launched focussing resources on rapid, intensive work in 10 areas of England and Wales to tackle knife crime. Information on this initiative can be found at:

www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/tackling_knives.htm

This bulletin contains key statistics describing the trends in cautioning and sentencing, probation supervision and prison population for possession of a knife or offensive weapon in England and Wales. It has been prepared from readily available management information to provide early indications of trends. It is planned that this is a temporary release to cover the life and impact of the scheme.

The information presented generally combines both offences of possession of an article with a blade or point and offences of possession of an offensive weapon (which could be a knife) – see explanatory notes for fuller explanation. A breakdown for the separate offences is given for disposals in Table 3 but is not available for probation and prison data. The sources of data used do not enable us separately to identify other offences involving a knife, such as wounding offences. Full details on data quality and definitions are given in the notes at the end of the text.

The key events that might be expected to affect the statistics were

Prime Minister's statement

- On 5 June 2008 the Prime Minister said:

“What I want to see is anybody who is using a knife goes to prison; anybody who is carrying a knife is subject to either prison or a strong community payback that forces them to give service to the community... There should be a presumption of either prison or a tough community payback. There's a presumption to prosecute. We are clear that punishment will be severe – either prison or a tough community payback”.

Sentencing

- On 21 May 2008, the Court of Appeal issued the judgment in *Povey* that said that, because of prevalence, magistrates should normally sentence those convicted of knife crime possession offences at the top end of the range.
- The Sentencing Guidelines Council issued an update to the magistrates' courts guidelines, with effect from 4 August, which set out the effect of the Court of Appeal judgment and made it clear that, for the time being, the

starting point for the lowest level of knife possession should be 12 weeks' custody. This applies to adults (aged 18 and over).

- This applies in cases where a first time offender pleads not guilty to possession of a knife in non-dangerous circumstances. A guilty plea would attract a discount in the normal way, as would any personal mitigation, and could take the sentence below the custody threshold.
- Since September all probation areas are able to provide intensive delivery of 300 hour Community Payback sentences for unemployed offenders convicted of knife crime offences, who are on the brink of custody. In January this offer of intensive delivery of a minimum of 18 hours per week over three days was extended to Community Payback sentences of any length imposed for an offence of knife crime, when an offender is unemployed.

All statistics quoted in this quarterly brief are provisional and subject to change.

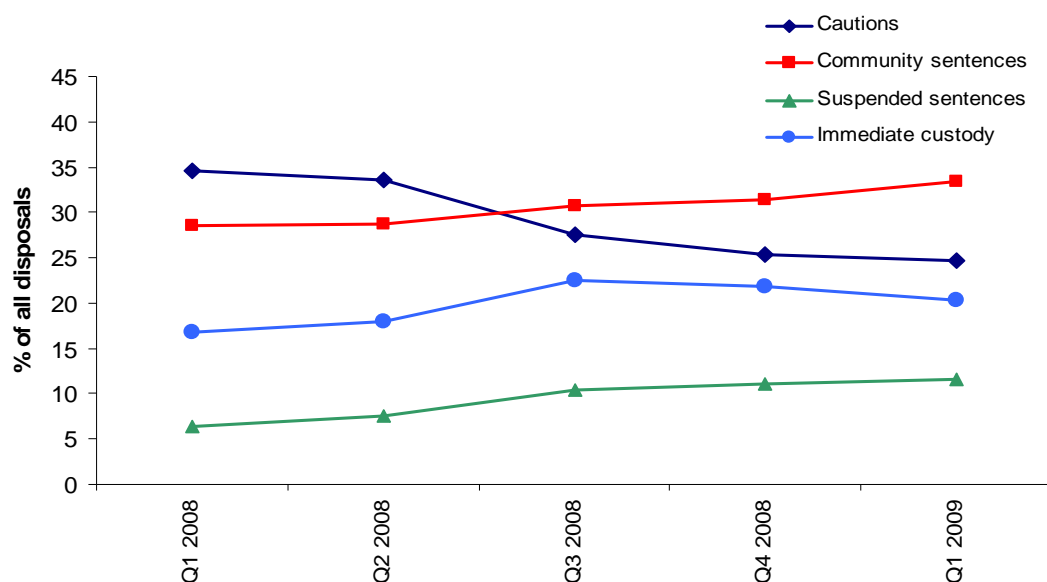
This publication has been prepared by Offender Management and Sentencing Analytical Services.

Key points – Q1 2009 compared to Q1 2008 (unless otherwise stated)

1. Cautioning and sentencing statistics (Tables 1 to 5)

- The total number of disposals (cautions and sentences) given for knife or offensive weapon possession has decreased by 7% between Q1 2008 and Q1 2009 (6,931 to 6,477). This drop was more marked for juvenile offenders where the decrease was 15% (1,591 to 1,359) and for those offences involving the possession of an offensive weapon (3,652 to 3,102) also a fall of 15%.

Figure 1: Disposals for knife and offensive weapon possession for England and Wales



- The number of cautions¹ given for knife or offensive weapon possession decreased while the number of immediate custodial sentences, suspended sentence orders and community sentences rose between Q1 2008 and Q1 2009 :
 - In Q1 2009 25 per cent (1,599) of all possession offences resulted in a caution in England and Wales. This compares with 35 per cent (2,394) in Q1 2008.
 - In Q1 2009 20 per cent (1,320) of all possession offences resulted in immediate custody compared to 17 per cent (1,167) in Q1 2008.

¹ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and final warnings.

- In Q1 2009 12 per cent (746) of all possession offences resulted in suspended sentence orders compared to 6 per cent (438) in Q1 2008.
- In Q1 2009 33 per cent (2,161) of all possession offences resulted in community sentences compared to 29 per cent (1,977) in Q1 2008.
- **Where immediate custodial sentences are given for these offences there has been an increase in the proportion of longer sentences:**
 - In Q1 2009 29 per cent (383) of sentences were recorded as being over six months compared to 14 per cent (169) in Q1 2008.
 - The average length of a custodial sentence was 185 days in Q1 2009. This had increased from 139 days in Q1 2008.
- **The proportion of juvenile offenders receiving reprimands and final warnings decreased** from 46 per cent (736) to 37 per cent (504). This was balanced by an increase in the proportion receiving community sentences (from 43 per cent (679) to 53 per cent (725)).
- **For adult offenders the proportion receiving cautions decreased** from 31 per cent (1,658) to 21 per cent (1,094). This was accompanied by an increase in the proportion of suspended sentence orders (8 per cent (437) to 15 per cent (744)), immediate custodial sentences (20 per cent (1,074) to 24 per cent (1,234)) and community sentences (24 per cent (1,298) to 28 per cent (1,436)) given.
- **In the 10² TKAP police force areas the changes between Q1 2008 and Q1 2009 were similar to other police force areas:**
 - In Q1 2009, 23 per cent (774) of all possession offences resulted in a caution in the 10 TKAP areas. This compares with 33 per cent (1,205) in Q1 2008.
 - In Q1 2009 22 per cent (747) of all possession offences resulted in immediate custody compared to 17 per cent (607) in Q1 2008.
 - In Q1 2009 12 per cent (393) of all possession offences resulted in suspended sentence orders compared to 7 per cent (260) in Q1 2008.
 - In Q1 2009 34 per cent (1,128) of all possession offences resulted in community sentences compared to 31 per cent (1,108) in Q1 2008.

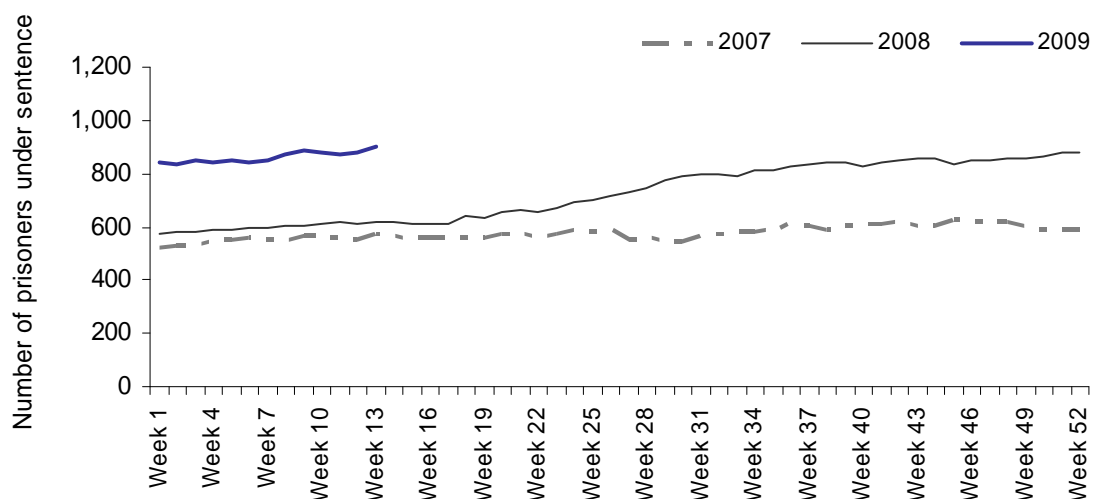
² Phase 1, Tier 1 police force areas. See explanatory notes for more information.

2. Probation supervision statistics (Tables 6, 7 and 8; these figures mainly cover offenders aged 18 or over)

- **In Q1 2009 there were 1,728 court order starts under probation supervision** for possession of an offensive weapon, this represents an increase of 25 per cent from Q1 2008. This was driven by the increase in SSOs, which rose from 342 to 551 (61 per cent increase) over the period, although community orders also rose by 140 (14 per cent).
- **For suspended sentence orders (SSOs)** the proportion of those given unpaid work as a percentage of all requirements started was 26 per cent in Q1 2009 up from 22 per cent in Q1 2008.
- **Where unpaid work requirements were started for these offences, there has been an increase in the proportion of longer requirements:**
 - For community orders, in Q1 2009, 20 per cent of unpaid work requirements were recorded as being 200 hours or longer compared to 8 per cent in Q1 2008. This was mirrored by shorter requirements (0-80 hours) decreasing to 35 per cent in Q1 2009 from 48 per cent in Q1 2008.
 - For suspended sentence orders, in Q1 2009 21 per cent of unpaid work requirements were recorded as being 200 hours or longer compared to 12 per cent in Q1 2008. Over the same period shorter requirements (0-80 hours) decreased to 23 per cent in Q1 2009 from 36 per cent in Q1 2008.

3. Prison population

Figure 2: Prison population under sentence for possession of an offensive weapon³ (excludes breaches and recalls)



³ Includes having an article with a blade or a point

- The population in prison serving a sentence for possession of an offensive weapon increased between 2008 and 2009. On average, there was a 44 per cent increase (about 260) in the number of prisoners serving a sentence for possession of an offensive weapon between Q1 2008 and Q1 2009.

Explanatory notes

Data quality and sources

All the data are drawn from administrative sources. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the detail is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system. While the figures shown have been checked as far as practicable, they should be regarded as approximate and not necessarily accurate to the last whole number shown in the tables. They are fit to be used for purposes of looking at trends and for comparing the relative magnitude of components.

Tables 1-5

The data presented in tables 1-5 in this brief are drawn from an extract of data held by the Ministry of Justice taken from the Police National Computer (PNC). These figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police. Police forces tend to record cautions more promptly on the PNC than court sentences, so that the cautions figures for the latest quarter shown in the tables will tend to be more complete than the sentencing figures. In addition, in some areas, the police may record a 'deferred sentence' which will be updated at a later date when the final outcome is known. 'Deferred sentences' appear in the tables as 'other disposals' and therefore lead to higher figures for the latest quarter. Figures for all quarters may be revised in later editions of this Bulletin.

Tables 6-8 and figure 3

The probation data have been processed from data collected and held centrally by the Ministry of Justice. The data are drawn from the local probation administrative IT systems from each of the 42 probation areas in England and Wales. The figures showing the numbers starting court orders relate to the number of *offenders* starting probation supervision in a given period. The numbers drawn from the PNC data in tables 1-5 relate to the total number of *offences* committed by offenders given particular disposals, which will naturally be greater than the number of offenders. Also, the probation data only show offenders convicted of the more general offence of 'possession of an offensive weapon'. This will include possession of knives, as well the particular offence of 'possession of an article with a blade or point', but these cannot be separately distinguished in the probation data.

Prison population data presented in this brief are drawn from the prison administrative IT systems. The figures showing the numbers under sentence refer to the number of *offenders* serving a custodial sentence. Figures drawn from PNC data

refer to the number of *offences* committed by offenders given particular disposals. Prison establishments routinely provide records of the numbers of persons held in custody at the end of each month, broadly subdivided according to age, sex, custody type and sentence length. The records are collated and processed centrally. However, data recorded by prisons only show the numbers serving a sentence for the general offence of “possession of an offensive weapon”. This offence includes the possession of a knife but can also include possession of other dangerous weapons (excluding firearms).

Definitions

TKAP – The Tackling Knives Action Programme focuses resources on rapid, intensive work in specific areas of the country to tackle knife crime. TKAP Phase 1 started in June 2008 and 10 areas were selected (known as Tier 1). These areas are Essex, Lancashire, Manchester, Merseyside, Metropolitan Police, Nottinghamshire, South Wales, Thames Valley, West Midlands and West Yorkshire. These 10 areas are the focus of the monitoring programme and are therefore reported in this bulletin.

Offences included: The PNC data (tables 1-5) produced in this brief are the number of offences committed not number of offenders. The offences relate to possession offences rather than offences where a knife was used. The offence codes included in the dataset are as follows:

00811 – Possession of offensive weapons without lawful authority or reasonable excuse. Prevention of Crime Act 1953 Section 1.

00828 – Possession of offensive weapons without lawful authority or reasonable excuse on school premises. Criminal Justice Act 1988 Section 139 A (2) as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996 Section 4 (1).

00826 – Having an article with a blade or a point in a public place. Criminal Justice Act 1988 Section 139 (1) as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996 Section 3 (1).

00827 – Having an article with a blade or a point on school premises. Criminal Justice Act 1988 Section 139 (2) as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996 Section 4 (1).

Juvenile – A juvenile offender is aged between 10 and 17.

Adult – An adult offender is aged 18 and over.

Offensive weapon – there are three classes of offensive weapons. Those made for causing injury; those adapted for such a purpose; and those not so made or adapted, but carried with the intention of causing injury. These consist of all listed on the Criminal Justice Act 1988 (Offensive Weapons) Order 1988 as amended, some

examples include: a swordstick, that is, a hollow walking-stick or cane containing a blade which may be used as a sword; the weapon sometimes known as a "belt buckle knife", being a buckle which incorporates or conceals a knife.

Caution – given by, or on the instructions of, a senior police officer where there is sufficient evidence for a conviction and it is not considered to be in the public interest to institute criminal proceedings. For **adult** offenders, who must admit guilt and consent to a caution.

Reprimand and final warning – available for **juvenile** offenders. Reprimands can be given to first-time offenders for minor offences. Any further offending results in either a final warning or charge. The final warning triggers immediate referral to a local youth offending team. Reprimands and final warnings for juveniles are the equivalent of cautions for adults. Therefore in the tables reprimands and final warnings are counted under the 'cautions' disposal category.

Community sentence – for **adults** the main community sentence, which is supervised by the Probation Service, is the community order introduced by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 for offences committed on or after 4 April 2005. The court must add at least one (but could potentially add all 12) of the following requirements: supervision, unpaid work, specified activities, prohibited activities, accredited programmes, curfew, exclusion, residence, mental health treatment, drug rehabilitation, alcohol treatment and attendance centre requirement for under 25s. For **juveniles** the main community sentences used are the referral order, for first-time offenders who plead guilty on their first court appearance and do not merit a discharge or custodial sentence, and the supervision order (up to 3 years, may have additional requirements) although curfew orders, reparation orders, action plan orders and attendance centre orders are also available. Youth Offending Teams supervise orders for juveniles.

Suspended Sentence – available for **adults** only. It is a sentence of custody of under 12 months, suspended for a period ranging from six months to two years. During the suspension period the court sets a number of requirements, from the same options as are available for the community order, and these are supervised by the Probation Service.

Immediate custody – **adults** aged 21 or over may receive sentences of unsuspended imprisonment and those aged 18 to 20 may be sentenced to detention in a young offender institution. The maximum sentence available is 4 years for possession of a bladed article in a public place or an offensive weapon. **Juveniles** aged 12-17 may receive a detention and training order of 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 18 or 24 months. The order is served partly in custody (in local authority children's homes, secure training centres or prison service young offender institutions) and partly in the community under the supervision of a probation officer, social worker or member of a youth offending team.

Contact points for further information

Current and previous editions of this publication are available for download at www.justice.gov.uk/publications/knife-crime-sentencing.htm

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General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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Knife crime statistics quarterly brief, January to March 2009, England and Wales

Table 1: Offences involving the possession of a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence, England and Wales, TKAP and other police forces

Disposal Category	Number of offences and percentages					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
number of offences						
England and Wales	6,931	6,914	7,154	6,778	6,477	-7
Caution ¹	2,394	2,324	1,970	1,717	1,599	-33
Absolute/Conditional discharge	453	420	259	217	232	-49
Fine	315	261	237	288	243	-23
Community sentence	1,977	1,989	2,198	2,124	2,161	9
Suspended sentence	438	527	746	753	746	70
Immediate custody	1,167	1,237	1,604	1,475	1,320	13
Other disposal	187	156	140	204	176	-6
percentage of total offences						
Caution ¹	35	34	28	25	25	
Community sentence	29	29	31	31	33	
Suspended sentence	6	8	10	11	12	
Immediate custody	17	18	22	22	20	
number of offences						
TKAP²	3,628	3,682	3,805	3,464	3,354	-8
Caution ¹	1,205	1,184	1,007	800	774	-36
Absolute/Conditional discharge	188	196	140	116	117	-38
Fine	178	154	125	147	119	-33
Community sentence	1,108	1,127	1,191	1,118	1,128	2
Suspended sentence	260	312	418	393	393	51
Immediate custody	607	631	868	794	747	23
Other disposal	82	78	56	96	76	-7
percentage of total offences						
Caution ¹	33	32	26	23	23	
Community sentence	31	31	31	32	34	
Suspended sentence	7	8	11	11	12	
Immediate custody	17	17	23	23	22	
number of offences						
Other police forces	3,303	3,232	3,349	3,314	3,123	-5
Caution ¹	1,189	1,140	963	917	825	-31
Absolute/Conditional discharge	265	224	119	101	115	-57
Fine	137	107	112	141	124	-9
Community sentence	869	862	1,007	1,006	1,033	19
Suspended sentence	178	215	328	360	353	98
Immediate custody	560	606	736	681	573	2
Other disposal	105	78	84	108	100	-5
percentage of total offences						
Caution ¹	36	35	29	28	26	
Community sentence	26	27	30	30	33	
Suspended sentence	5	7	10	11	11	
Immediate custody	17	19	22	21	18	

1. Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and final warnings

2. The Tackling Knives Action Programme police forces (Phase 1, Tier 1) are: Essex, Lancashire, Manchester, Merseyside, Metropolitan Police, Nottinghamshire, South Wales, Thames Valley, West Midlands and West Yorkshire - see explanatory notes for more details

Data Source and Quality

These figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Knife crime statistics quarterly brief, January to March 2009, England and Wales

Table 2: Offences involving the possession of a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence by age group

Disposal Category	Number of offences and percentages					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
number of offences						
Aged 10 to 17	1,591	1,670	1,715	1,496	1,359	-15
Reprimands & final warnings	736	745	631	505	504	-32
Absolute/conditional discharge	37	47	24	29	17	*
Fine	15	15	8	11	8	*
Community sentence	679	735	890	796	725	7
Immediate custody	93	108	131	131	86	-8
Other disposal	30	20	31	24	19	*
percentage of total offences						
Reprimands & final warnings	46	45	37	34	37	
Community sentence	43	44	52	53	53	
Immediate custody	6	6	8	9	6	
number of offences						
Aged 18 and over	5,340	5,243	5,439	5,277	5,115	-4
Caution	1,658	1,578	1,339	1,209	1,094	-34
Absolute/Conditional discharge	416	373	235	188	215	-48
Fine	300	246	229	277	235	-22
Community sentence	1,298	1,254	1,308	1,328	1,436	11
Suspended sentence	437	527	746	751	744	70
Immediate custody	1,074	1,129	1,473	1,344	1,234	15
Other disposal	157	136	109	180	157	0
percentage of total offences						
Caution	31	30	25	23	21	
Community sentence	24	24	24	25	28	
Suspended sentence	8	10	14	14	15	
Immediate custody	20	22	27	25	24	

*Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Data Source and Quality

These figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Table 3: Offences involving the possession of a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence by type of offence

Number of offences and percentages						
Disposal Category	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
Possession of an article with a blade or point	number of offences					
	3,279	3,392	3,575	3,382	3,375	3
Caution ¹	871	798	607	528	491	-44
Absolute/Conditional discharge	253	256	163	138	148	-42
Fine	153	151	129	157	130	-15
Community sentence	1,015	1,110	1,216	1,139	1,279	26
Suspended sentence	231	278	433	437	464	101
Immediate custody	651	719	953	883	765	18
Other disposal	105	80	74	100	98	-7
	percentage of total offences					
Caution ¹	27	24	17	16	15	
Community sentence	31	33	34	34	38	
Suspended sentence	7	8	12	13	14	
Immediate custody	20	21	27	26	23	
Possession of an offensive weapon	number of offences					
	3,652	3,522	3,579	3,396	3,102	-15
Caution ¹	1,523	1,526	1,363	1,189	1,108	-27
Absolute/Conditional discharge	200	164	96	79	84	-58
Fine	162	110	108	131	113	-30
Community sentence	962	879	982	985	882	-8
Suspended sentence	207	249	313	316	282	36
Immediate custody	516	518	651	592	555	8
Other disposal	82	76	66	104	78	-5
	percentage of total offences					
Caution ¹	42	43	38	35	36	
Community sentence	26	25	27	29	28	
Suspended sentence	6	7	9	9	9	
Immediate custody	14	15	18	17	18	

1. Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and final warnings

Data Source and Quality

These figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Table 4: Custodial sentences for knife and offensive weapon possession offences, by sentence length

Sentence length	Number of offences and percentages					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
	number of offences					
England and Wales¹	1,167	1,237	1,604	1,475	1,320	13
Up to and including 3 months	591	584	676	618	528	-11
Over 3 months and up to and including 6 months	399	459	557	435	407	2
Over 6 months	169	192	363	415	383	127
	percentage of total offences					
Up to and including 3 months	51	47	42	42	40	
Over 3 months and up to and including 6 months	34	37	35	29	31	
Over 6 months	14	16	23	28	29	

1. Total figures include offences where sentence length was not recorded by the police

Data Source and Quality

These figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

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Table 5: Average sentence length of immediate custodial sentences for knife and offensive weapon possession offences

	Average sentence length					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
	Average sentence length (days)					
England and Wales	139	138	173	181	185	33
TKAP Police Forces ¹	145	144	165	172	186	29
Other Police Forces	133	132	182	191	183	37

1. The Tackling Knives Action Programme police forces (Phase 1, Tier 1) are: Essex, Lancashire, Manchester, Merseyside, Metropolitan Police, Nottinghamshire, South Wales, Thames Valley, West Midlands and West Yorkshire - see explanatory notes for more details

Data Source and Quality

These figures have been drawn from the police's administrative IT system which, as with any large scale recording system, is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The figures are provisional and subject to change as more information is recorded by the police.

Table 6: Probation supervision Court order starts for possession of an offensive weapon¹

Court Order starts	Number of starts and percentages					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
	number of starts					
Total	1,381	1,332	1,612	1,562	1,728	25
Community order	992	959	1,043	1,003	1,132	14
SSO	342	316	509	500	551	61
Pre CJA orders	47	57	60	59	45	*
	percentage of total starts					
Community order	72	72	65	64	66	
SSO	25	24	32	32	32	
Pre CJA orders	3	4	4	4	3	

1. Includes having an article with a blade or a point

*Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Data Sources and Quality

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. All 2008 data is provisional.

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Table 7: Requirement starts for possession of offensive weapon¹

	Number of requirements and percentages					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
number of requirements						
Community Order	1,579	1,512	1,622	1,569	1,836	16
Unpaid Work	589	582	605	549	646	10
Supervision	531	501	531	538	612	15
Accredited Program	141	140	143	144	151	7
Curfew	125	115	138	124	168	34
Drug treatment	55	47	71	63	67	22
Specified Activity	73	64	63	65	93	27
Alcohol treatment	24	35	36	45	47	*
Mental Health	19	10	10	19	27	*
Exclusion	4	2	5	6	4	*
Residential	5	8	3	5	5	*
Attendance Centre	7	5	10	6	10	*
Prohibited Activity	6	3	7	5	6	*
percentage of all requirements						
Unpaid work	37	38	37	35	35	
Supervision	34	33	33	34	33	
Other requirements	29	28	30	31	31	
number of requirements						
Suspended Sentence Order	635	566	865	900	972	53
Supervision	255	225	346	357	374	47
Unpaid Work	142	151	236	232	256	80
Accredited Program	100	72	114	124	125	25
Curfew	54	52	76	72	90	67
Drug treatment	28	18	23	25	31	*
Alcohol treatment	21	17	25	26	34	*
Specified Activity	17	17	27	34	33	*
Prohibited Activity	3	4	7	12	9	*
Exclusion	2	2	7	8	6	*
Mental Health	2	2	2	7	4	*
Residential	10	4	2	2	6	*
Attendance Centre	1	2	0	1	4	*
percentage of all requirements						
Unpaid work	22	27	27	26	26	
Supervision	40	40	40	40	38	
Other requirements	37	34	33	35	35	

1. Includes having an article with a blade or a point

*Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Data Sources and Quality

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. All 2008 data is provisional.

Table 8: Unpaid work requirements started by length of requirement given for possession of offensive weapon¹

	Number of requirements and percentages					Percentage change Q1 2008 to Q1 2009
	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	
number of requirements						
Community Order	622	576	668	598	679	9
0-80 hours	300	253	248	219	241	-20
81-150 hours	246	226	274	239	257	4
151-199 hours	24	35	30	33	47	*
200-250 hours	51	58	108	96	113	122
251-300 hours	1	4	8	11	21	*
percentage of total requirements						
0-80 hours	48	44	37	37	35	
81-150 hours	40	39	41	40	38	
151-199 hours	4	6	4	6	7	
200-250 hours	8	10	16	16	17	
251-300 hours	0	1	1	2	3	
number of requirements						
Suspended sentence order	139	159	246	228	254	83
0-80 hours	50	49	65	62	59	18
81-150 hours	61	80	124	111	124	103
151-199 hours	12	6	13	14	17	*
200-250 hours	14	22	41	40	47	*
251-300 hours	2	2	3	1	7	*
percentage of total requirements						
0-80 hours	36	31	26	27	23	
81-150 hours	44	50	50	49	49	
151-199 hours	9	4	5	6	7	
200-250 hours	10	14	17	18	19	
251-300 hours	1	1	1	0	3	

1. Includes having an article with a blade or a point

*Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Data Sources and Quality

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. All 2008 data is provisional.