



Ministry
of Justice

Statistical Note and Consultation - changes to Criminal Justice Statistics

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Introduction

The [Criminal Justice Statistics quarterly](#) presents key statistics on activity in the Criminal Justice System for England and Wales, providing users with information about proven offending and its outcomes. This document sets out five proposed changes to the publication, which aim to improve the way in which information is made available to users.

Criminal Justice Statistics (CJS) was first published in 2011, bringing together data previously published within the Criminal Statistics (annual) and Sentencing Statistics (quarterly and annual) series. A consultation took place in November 2013 to make changes to the data produced alongside the bulletin. Subsequent to the consultation, changes were made to the structure of the quarterly and annual editions of CJS and several new interactive data tools were published in the 2014 CJS (see 'Changes to data presentation' section of the [Criminal Justice Statistics 2014 bulletin](#) for further details).

Aims of the consultation

This consultation reflects internal feedback which the producers of Criminal Justice Statistics have received and seeks to consider how:
the publication can better meet user needs,
the dissemination of information can be improved,

This consultation outlines five proposed changes to the publication and invites users' views on them before changes are confirmed. Changes would be implemented in the 2015 annual edition (scheduled for release on 19th May 2016) and, where relevant, future quarterly editions.

Notification of changes to Criminal Justice Statistics quarterly

In addition to the five items we are consulting on, we will also be making a range of smaller improvements to the commentary and presentation of this bulletin, to enhance clarity and user understanding of trends in criminal justice statistics. These will include:

- the introduction of international context;
- information on the most persistent offenders;
- statistics on the use of new offences introduced during 2015 (e.g. Modern Slavery offences);

Further, we have undertaken analytical work in recent months to establish the feasibility of amending the classification of offences in the Court Proceedings Database (CPD) – which underpins the CJS publication – to align better with the classification system used in the Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services' (HMCTS) Performance Database, the caseload data from which underpins the team's other National Statistics publication, Criminal court statistics quarterly (CCSQ). A report on that analytical work will be included in the annual publication of CJS in May 2016, along with any back revisions of statistics required to meet the recommendations of that report, with regard to reclassifications of offence types.

Background on this analytical work is contained in the *Guide to Criminal Justice Statistics* published alongside the CJS Quarterly Update to September 2015 publication, released on 18th February 2016 (see section Data Sources and Data Quality > Court Proceedings).

How to send us your comments

Comments are requested by **Thursday 31st March 2016**. A response template has been provided for ease of reference against the questions posed. If you prefer not to use the template, please include the question number if your comments relate to a specific question. In addition to the questions posed, any general comments and overall feedback is welcome.

Enquiries and responses in relation to this consultation should be directed to David Jagger at the address below. Please include "Consultation Response" in the subject of any emails.

Email: CJS_statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk

David Jagger, Head of Criminal Justice Statistics
Justice Statistics Analytical Services
Ministry of Justice 7th Floor
102 Petty France, London, SW1H 9AJ

What we will do with your comments

We will take all comments into consideration when producing the annual edition of CJS, scheduled for release on Thursday 19th May 2016. We will also provide a response to your comments, published both alongside the annual edition and on the consultation webpage.

Proposed changes for future editions of Criminal Justice Statistics

1. Changes to the content of CJS Overview Tables

Our aim is to ensure we are including the most helpful and relevant summary statistics in the Overview tables, with the bulk of the detail released on an annual basis in our data tools. In this context, we would welcome views on a proposal to stop producing the following Overview tables (all currently published in the CJS annual edition only):

Overview Table	Alternative source	Availability if no longer included in Overview Tables
A5.1 Persons sentenced to custody by age group	'CJS outcomes by offence data tool' or 'Sentencing data tool'	Yes - in data tools
A5.2 Average fine amounts imposed	'CJS outcomes by offence data tool'	Yes – in data tools
A5.3 Median fine amounts imposed	No	No
A5.4 Offenders ordered to pay compensation by type of court and offence	No	Yes – this would be added to one of the existing data tools
A5.5 Persons sentenced for firearms offences liable for mandatory minimum custodial sentence	'CJS outcomes by offence data tool' or 'Sentencing data tool'	Yes – in data tools
A5.6 Offenders ordered to pay confiscation orders for drug trafficking offences by amount.	No	No

Q1a: Are you content to use the alternative source instead of the Overview Table?
Q1b: Do you require any of the information which would no longer be available?

2. Publication of information on defendants failing to appear at magistrates' court

In the past, figures for Failure to Appear (FTA) warrants have been published quarterly in this bulletin using data collected under the Home Office Annual Data Requirement. These statistics have been omitted from the two most recent bulletins due to insufficient data availability. The data underpinning the tables is no longer part of the Annual Data Requirement and thus no longer centrally collected from police forces. Initial feedback from users is that this information was not widely of interest. If there is sufficient demand, however, data held by MoJ from the courts could be provided as an alternative source for information on defendants failing to appear at magistrates' court, as illustrated by the example tables in the Annex.

Q2a: Do you have a need for information on defendants failing to appear at magistrates' court; and if so, for what purpose?
Q2b: If you do need this information, would the example tables meet your needs?

3. Publishing more detailed information on remand decision statistics

There has been a high level of interest in statistics on remand decisions in the past year. With this in mind, we propose to include (i) more detailed offence-level information and (ii) sentence length information for defendants given a custodial sentence after being held on remand in the next [Remand data tool](#).

Q3a: Would you find this additional information on remand decisions helpful?

Q3b: Is there other information on remand that you would like included, if available?

4. Rationalising the interactive data tools

We currently produce ten data tools:

- Out of court disposals data tool
- Prosecutions, convictions and remands data tool
- Sentencing data tool
- Criminal justice statistics outcomes by offence data tool
- Magistrates' court data tool
- Crown Court data tool
- Motoring data tool: with criminal justice area
- Motoring data tool: without criminal justice area
- First time entrants data tool
- Offence-level drug information data tool

We have considered the body of information presented across these data tools and are proposing the following changes to the available tools:

(i) Motoring data tools: The same information is available in the two motoring data tools; with an additional criminal justice area breakdown available in one. We intend to continue to publish the Motoring data tool showing criminal justice area, but to discontinue the version without.

(ii) Drug data tool: We propose to replace the drug information tool with new content presenting 2015 data for each Home Office offence code, not just for drug offences – see section 5 below.

Further, ahead of May's release, we are also considering ways to **rationalise the number of data tools whilst retaining all the existing information within**. There is some overlap between the following tools:

- Criminal justice statistics outcomes by offence data tool
- Prosecutions, convictions and remands data tool
- Sentencing data tool
- Magistrates' court data tool
- Crown Court data tool

As part of assessing how a rationalisation might work best, it would be helpful to receive feedback on the tools which users find particularly useful and for what purpose.

Q4a: Would you be content with our proposed changes to the motoring and drug data tools?

Q4b: Which of our existing data tools do you find useful, and for what purpose?

5. Publishing outcome by offence information at the Home Office offence code level

The data tools currently published in CJS show offence information in less detail than Home Office offence code level, except for the experimental drug offence information tool published last year.

This additional content would allow users view prosecutions, convictions and sentencing information for 2015 by Home Office offence code. Any publication of this data would replace the drug offence tool previously supplied, but would not include a time series.

Q5a: Would you find this additional content useful?

Q5b: If so, what outcome fields (e.g. specific sentencing information) would you want to view?

Contact Details

We would welcome views on the proposed changes detailed above and any further comments on the accessibility, content or structure of the Criminal Justice Statistics publications at www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-justice-statistics-quarterly to ensure we meet user needs in an efficient and effective way.

Please provide comments to **David Jagger** at:

CJS_statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Justice Statistics Analytical Services

Ministry of Justice 7th Floor
102 Petty France, London
SW1H 9AJ

Annex – example FTA tables

Table 1- Defendants who failed to appear⁽¹⁾ by police force area and category of offence⁽²⁾

England and Wales						Defendants				
Police Force area	Year									
	2013					2014				
	Category of offence					Category of offence				
	Indictable only	Triable either way	Summary non-motoring	Summary motoring	All offences	Indictable only	Triable either way	Summary non-motoring	Summary motoring	All offences
Metropolitan Police	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cumbria	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lancashire	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
.....
England & Wales	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

(1) ...

(2) ...

Table 2 - Proportion of defendants who failed to appear⁽¹⁾ by police force area and category of offence⁽²⁾

England and Wales						Percentages				
Police Force area	Year									
	2013					2014				
	Category of offence					Category of offence				
	Indictable only	Triable either way	Summary non-motoring	Summary motoring	All offences	Indictable only	Triable either way	Summary non-motoring	Summary motoring	All offences
Metropolitan Police	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cumbria	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Lancashire	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
...
England & Wales	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

(1) ...

(2) ...