

PCC and CC Force Inspection response record

Version Dec 2024

Force	Staffordshire
Police and Crime Commissioner	Ben Adams
Chief Constable	TCC Becky Riggs
Title of inspection	PEEL Spotlight: How effectively do the police record crime?
Published Date	28/08/2025
Inspectorate	 HMICFRS Making communities safer
Summary of inspection	Over the last decade, forces' awareness and understanding of how to prioritise and accurately record crimes has increased. The percentage of overall crime the police have recorded has risen from 80.5 percent in 2014 to 94.8 percent this year. Forces that are doing particularly well in this area have leaders who are committed to high recording standards. However, there is still considerable variation between forces in the way they record crime.
Grade	
Recommendations	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. Recommendation 2 Forces should make sure they quickly and correctly record crimes related to domestic abuse. 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.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's initial response

The Commissioner welcomes this spotlight report on how effectively police record crime which brings together findings from HMIC 2016–20 crime data integrity and 2021/22 and 2023–25 police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspection programmes. In Staffordshire there have been improvements in this area since the 2020/21 inspection and the Commissioner is encouraged by findings from the most recent PEEL inspection and local crime recording audits which provide areas for focus on continuous improvement and increase confidence in local datasets.

Ultimately accurate crime recording ensures victims of crime receive appropriate support, the public have accurate information about crime in their area and forces can effectively plan and use investigative resource to best effect. Ben Adams is committed to supporting the force in delivering all of these in order to keep residents of Staffordshire safe.

Domestic abuse continues to be Staffordshire's highest volume crime, with growing vulnerability and complexity seen across all crime types. The force has set three strategic priorities – to tackle domestic abuse, crimes involving children and serious and organised crime – in addition to its commitment to dealing with neighbourhood crime. In light of this, the Commissioner is particularly committed to ensuring Staffordshire Police remains confident in its accurate recording of domestic abuse and all violent crime, in particular conduct crimes such as harassment, stalking and controlling or coercive behaviour and less serious assaults.

Chief Constable's response

Staffordshire Police acknowledges the recommendations provided and welcomes the opportunity to outline its robust processes and unwavering commitment to accurate and timely crime recording. We believe our existing structures and practices demonstrate a strong alignment with the principles highlighted in the recommendations.

In response to 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.

Staffordshire Police's commitment to accurate crime recording is demonstrated through our specialist crime recording unit. The staff within this unit are comprehensively trained in all aspects of the application of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) and Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime (HOCR).

To ensure high standards are maintained, the Force Crime Registrar operates an ongoing audit programme to oversee the force's crime recording accuracy. This programme specifically and routinely includes the auditing of violent crimes, conduct crimes (including harassment and stalking), and less serious assaults. Successive audits have consistently shown good levels of recording accuracy for these offences, confirming the effectiveness of our current processes.

In response to Recommendation 2: Forces should make sure they quickly and correctly record crimes related to domestic abuse.

We recognise the critical importance of a swift and accurate response to domestic abuse. The force has significantly improved its response times to reports of domestic abuse, and our specialist crime recording unit prioritises these crimes to ensure we meet our timeliness obligations to victims under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

Furthermore, we are committed to continuous improvement in this area. Further enhancements to our crime recording timeliness will form a key part of an upcoming force-wide programme focused on our call handling function.

In response to 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.

Staffordshire Police has a multi-layered approach to training and oversight to ensure the integrity of our crime data:

- **Training:** In addition to the specialist training provided to our crime recording unit, the Force Crime Registrar delivers regular crime recording training to all frontline staff who receive initial reports of crime from victims or partner agencies. This ensures that the decision to record a crime is taken correctly and at the earliest possible opportunity.
- **Oversight and Scrutiny:** There is effective and high-level scrutiny of our crime-recording decisions. The Force Crime Registrar's ongoing audit programme provides a constant source of assurance. The findings from these audits are discussed directly with the Deputy Chief Constable and are a standing item for review at several strategic meetings, including the Performance Board, the Quality Investigations Board, and the Information Assurance and Governance Board. This ensures robust governance and accountability for crime data accuracy across the force.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's overall comments

The Commissioner welcomes the Force's focus on data quality and encourages the continued development of a learning culture where data integrity is understood as a shared responsibility, not a technical exercise. Transparency in performance reporting remains central to improving public confidence. The force has already made improvements in formalising regular internal audits and ensuring ownership of quality data through training and supervision. Data quality is a standing agenda item at the regular force Performance Board and the force is clearly committed to continuous improvement.

I will continue to monitor delivery through the established governance framework, ensuring that improvements in recording standards are both evidenced and sustained. In particular, I will seek assurance that learning from internal and national audits is translated into tangible improvements in victim experience and service consistency.