Annual Report on Police Data Quality 2023

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INTRODUCTION

High quality data is critical to providing the policing services New Zealanders expect and deserve. Data is an asset that not only helps Police provide a service to victims and the wider public, but also to better understand and respond to demand.   Patterns in data allow Police to identify opportunities to prevent and reduce harm.

Police recognises that consistent, accurate, timely and reliable data can only be achieved if it is actively monitored and managed. The Data Quality and Integrity Team (DQIT) was established in 2015 to lead that work.

The DQIT's work focuses predominantly on the accuracy of Offence and Incident data. The team uses a defined *Assurance Operating Model* (see next page) to systematically examine and respond to issues identified within an end-to-end systems and processes model.

The DQIT has three broad objectives:

Quality Data
Helps us to:

- **Achieve our Mission**
  Prevent Crime and Harm Through Exceptional Policing

- **Deliver The Services New Zealanders Expect and Deserve**

- **Support our Operating Model**
  Prevention First

Championing Data Quality	Embedding an ethical recording culture, which is underpinned by efficient and effective data quality systems and processes.
Evolving the *National Recording Standard* (NRS)	Setting and Maintaining Standards - NRS and related Offence, Incident and alert metadata, management tools and related training resources.
Providing Organisational Assurance	Monitoring and Testing - Delivering an annual risk-based *National Audit Plan* (NAP), as well as promoting the development of quality assurance capability within districts and workgroups; focused on understanding performance and identifying improvement opportunities related to Leadership and Governance, Systems and Processes, and People and Skills.

Our report sets the scene in a Background section, which provides insights into how we work, and is then followed by a short summary of the environment we are working in - recent trends in Police data governance and reported Offences and Incidents. The main body of the report then outlines work done to achieve each broad objective, in the period July 2022 to June 2023 and finishes with a short summary of our focus for 2023/24.

Introduction → **Background** → **Championing Data Quality** → **Evolving the NRS** → **Providing Organisational Assurance** → **Focus for 2023/24**

Background
- DQ Operating Model
- National Audit Plan
- Data Governance and Infrastructure
- Offence and Incident Data Trends

Championing Data Quality
- Leadership and Governance
- Systems and Processes
- People and Skills

Providing Organisational Assurance
- National Audit Plan
- Development of QA check capability

BACKGROUND

Last year, we said:

Emerging topics for Data Quality last year were:
- Data Management and Strategy
- Offence and Incident Codes
- Robbery
- Core Data
- Resolutions Policy

Data Quality Operating Model

The adjacent *Three Lines of Defence Assurance Framework* and *Assurance Operating Model* shows how DQIT works to promote assurance across New Zealand Police, with a focus on risk and continuous improvement, based on evidence.

The team's activities occur within a *Three Lines of Defence Assurance Framework*, which draws the line between functions that own and manage risks (the 'hands-on' operational activity - first line), functions that oversee risks (offering organisational oversight - second line), and functions that provide arms-length assurance (the independent or third line perspective).

Within the *Assurance Operating Model*, DQIT set and maintain the *National Recording Standard* and the *National Audit Plan* (NAP). The NAP sets out the scope of the team's annual national, risk-based, internal audit programme for Police covering Offence and Incident recording.

In a third line capacity, DQIT undertake the 'Monitoring and Testing' (Detect) stage of the *Assurance Operating Model*. This includes automatic and manual checking including quality assurance, audit, scanning, and other activities.

When undertaking audits, the team enable continuous improvement through lessons learnt. They identify issues and examine underlying causes – grouping them under three broad headings:

    I.   Leadership and Governance

    II.   Systems and Processes

    III.   People and Skills.

Three Lines of Defence Assurance Framework

Assurance Operating Model

When publishing audit results, the team present findings using those headings along with improvement opportunities or recommendations.

The team also work with districts, Service Centres and PNHQ workgroups to embed the findings from their reports and to promote activities and actions that improve data quality outputs and outcomes.

This includes improvements to policy, system and process functionality and architecture, as well as increasing awareness of, and compliance with, the NRS.

The National Audit Plan

Through the NAP, the DQIT monitor the quality of data at each critical stage of the end-to-end (report to resolution) process. The team look at the extent to which reports are lost or misclassified as they travel through the different pathways (refer adjacent diagram).

Data Governance and Infrastructure Improvement

Police adopted a *Data Strategy and Roadmap* in 2022. Work to fill identified gaps in data governance and improve data architecture has begun. The Data and Information Sub-Portfolio has been established as a governance group for all Data and Information related work. DQIT have representation at this forum and provide regular reports to that group.

The two primary databases that collect reported Offence and Incident data, the Communications and Resource Deployment system (CARD) and the National Intelligence Application (NIA), are both due for modernisation or replacement, providing an opportunity to improve longstanding system issues for Offence and Incident recording.

Offence and Incident data trends

The charts shown on this page are sourced from Policedata.nz and relate to Crime and Non-Crime Demand, and Victimisations.

Overall Offence and Incident Demand

Police official statistics show an overall increasing trend in reports of Offences and Incidents. In the July 2022 to June 2023 period policedata.nz reports a 13% increase in crime and non-crime demand when compared to the previous year.
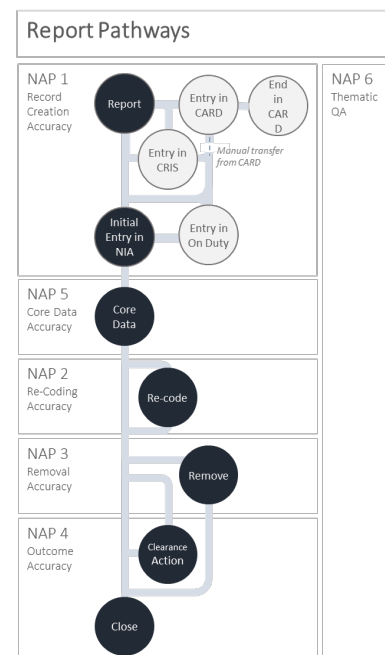
Victimisations

Within that wider demand picture, victimisation data shows a steady rise in the post-Covid period. The trend in victimisations is due to increases in both Theft and Assaults (referred to as Acts Intended to Cause Injury within official datasets). The trend in Assaults is likely attributable to improvements in the quality of coding within reports that have a Family Harm context. Fraud is not included in Police official victimisation data, but trends in that crime type are also increasing. Further detail about all three of these crime types is provided below.

Theft

As can be seen by the adjacent charts, the trend in overall victimisation is driven primarily by the trend in Theft reports. Theft makes up over half of all victimisation statistics. Delving into the data, this increase is heavily influenced by increases in retail theft which is being reported predominantly through the non-emergency channel and has likely been influenced by easier access to reporting using a third-party reporting mechanism (Auror). The volume of theft reports through the non-emergency channel (including both 105 phone and online) was close to
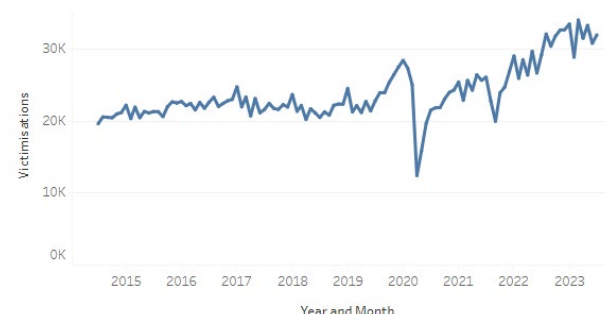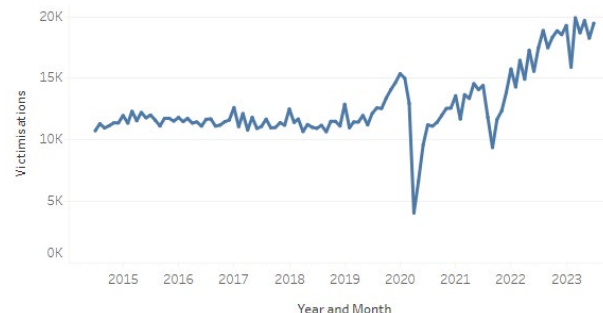
Report Pathways

Trend in Crime and Non-Crime Demand

Trend in Victimisations

Trend in Theft Victimisations

90,000 in 2019 but reached 155,000 in 2022[1]. Work underway to further improve reporting processes may lead to even greater increases in the future.

Fraud

The New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey reports that Fraud is the most common Offence type for victims, and both the number of Offences and proportion of people affected is increasing.

Reports to Police[2] are also increasing with over 50% more Fraud reports received in 2022 than in 2019.

Pre-Covid, Police processes required people reporting Fraud to go to their local Police station to report. The impracticalities of that during the Covid period saw Police effectively change this policy and accept reports both over the phone and via the Online reporting tool.

Since then, the number of reports being processed by these channels has dramatically increased. Now more than 60% of all reports are taken either by Online reporting or via the non-emergency phone line (105).

More than half of all reports to Police relate to Offences that occur in the Online environment.

Work is underway to upskill the people who take Fraud reports via the non-Emergency channels, and to better align forms they use to ensure all relevant information about the Fraud is captured at the point of initial contact. These improvements could contribute to more offences being recorded and coded as Fraud.

NZ Crime Victim Survey

Fraud Offences are increasing
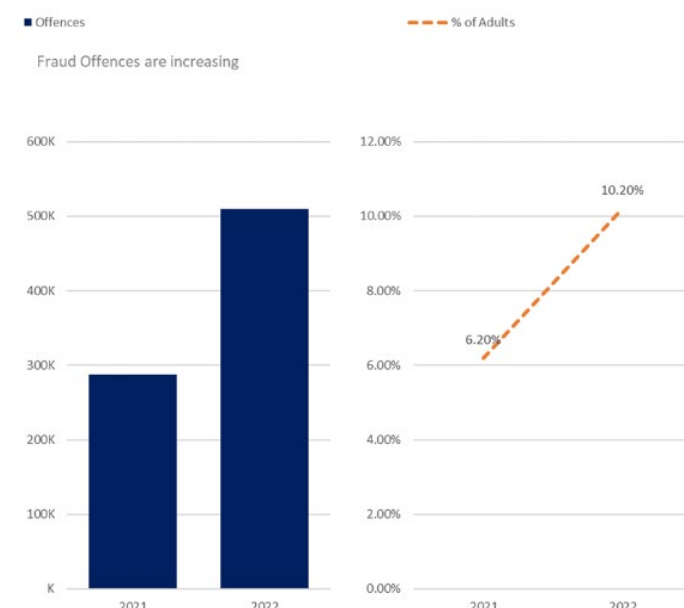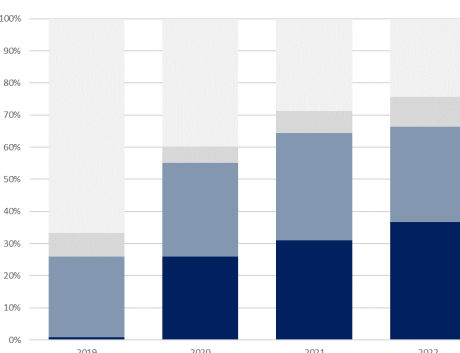

NZ Police Offence Data

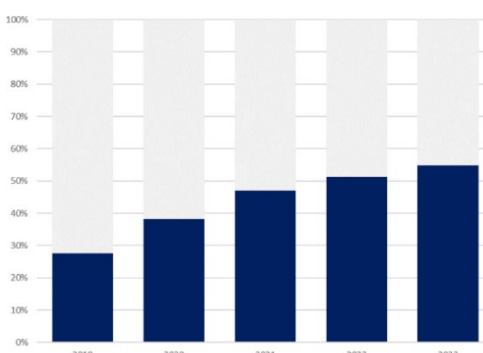Fraud Offences reported to Police are increasing
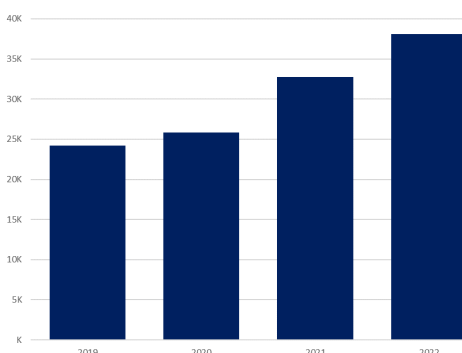
NZ Police Offence Data

Within 4 years, Fraud Offences have switched from being predominantly reported directly to Districts, to now being predominantly reported via Online, then 105 Phone

NZ Police Offence Data

Fraud reported to Police is increasingly offending that is occuring in an Online environment.

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[1] Data based on counts of Offences in the Theft ANZSOC division. Methodology to determine channel was based off the existence of a CARD linked event, and combinations within Reporting Channel and Reporting Station fields.

[2] Police data relating to counts of Offences within the Fraud ANZSOC division. The channel allocation has been calculated using a combination of Reporting Channel and Reporting Station.

Non-Emergency Demand and Impact on Dedicated Quality Assurance Work

For the non-Emergency channel, there has been a combined increase of over 30,000 additional reports relating to Theft and Fraud alone. The ability for them to maintain high data quality standards is being tested. This is likely to also have been a contributing factor to delays in the introduction of routine second line of assurance quality assurance checking processes within this group.

Assaults - Family Harm

Another significant contributor to the increase in recorded Offences and Victimisations stems from improved accuracy of Family Harm recording. This is particularly evident in the ANZSOC division Acts Intended to Cause Injury (source policedata.nz).

Accurate Offence coding within a Family Harm context has been problematic in the past and has been identified as a major contributor to missed victimisations within Police records. There are pleasing signs that coding accuracy within Family Harm records is improving, resulting in a higher proportion of Family Harm reports being correctly coded as Offences, and fewer being coded as Incidents (5F). The effect of this is that even if there was no change in the number of overall Family Harm reports, the more accurate coding makes it appear as though there has been an increase in Offences. Because Assaults are the most common Offence associated with Family Harm, the increase is particularly evident within the ANZSOC division Acts Intended to Cause Injury.

Trend in Acts Intended to Cause Injury

Family Harm Occurrences

The proportion of Family Harm Occurrences with at least one offence continues to slowly climb. This is expected as the quality of coding improves.
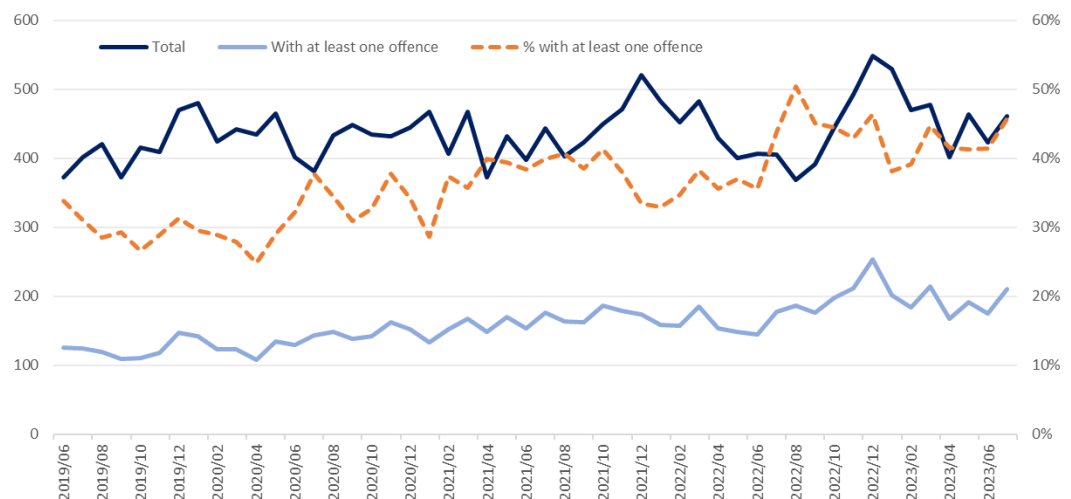
This trend is set to continue for some time. The orange dotted line in the chart above shows the proportion of Family Harm reports that contain at least one Offence. This has tracked from the 30% mark in 2019 to around 45% this year. While this is an improvement, the rate is still short of the 55 to 60% mark that earlier audits indicate the rate should be if all reports were accurately coded.

Removed and Re-Coded Offences

As a proportion of all Closed Offence Records, around 3% are Removed. This rate has remained steady in the last year. The rate of Re-Coding - i.e., changing the classification of an Offence - has also remained steady. The number of Re-Codes and Removed Offences has increased when compared to the same period in previous years. Some of these increases are attributable to an issue identified in the Removed Offences audit (refer Section 3 for further details).

1. CHAMPIONING DATA QUALITY

The work of championing data quality encompasses all the activity in the prevention section of the *Assurance Operating Model* and as such, takes in a wide range of topics. To tease out the breadth of the work in this area, the topic has been divided into the three broad areas of influence – Leadership and Governance, Systems and Processes, People and Skills.

Leadership and Governance

Last year, we said our aims for this year were to:

- Support and promote the Data Strategy and Roadmap at every opportunity. Contribute advice to business change programmes by supporting existing governance, and steering working groups.

- Deliver District 'Roadshows', aimed at improving District leadership knowledge and engagement in Data Quality issues. In particular helping leaders to understand the need for culture change and giving them the tools, they need to successfully lead change with their staff.

- Embed an agreed Service Level Agreement for Hate Crime recording outlining stakeholder roles and responsibilities, as well as improving engagement and collaboration with districts and Service Centres.

- Establish a recommendations database – to align/consolidate, prioritise recommendations from DQIT reporting and ensure there is national visibility of progress and the ability to upwardly 'flag' issues of national concern.

DQIT members were very active in the past year advocating for improvements to ICT systems and architecture and business processes in line with the *Data Strategy and Roadmap*. The aim of this work is to improve the quality of Offence and Incident data by making it easier to get it right at the first point of collection.

The team contributed to regular consultation meetings, workshops and reviewed documentation across all major change programmes, projects and cross-workgroup discussions touching on Offence and Incident recording and reporting. Significant contributions include:

- Development and provision of draft wording and diagram options for the Resolution Policy and associated training materials that are being used as the basis for the new policy,
- Detailed one-on-one interviews for improvement in Data Architecture (CARD replacement and NIA Modernisation programmes) as well as Data Governance improvements; and
- Work within ReFrame, informing 'Digital Case' design, and building Offence and Incident data reporting models.

At the end of June 2023 approval was given for DQIT to initiate a *Core Data Project.* The initial phase of the project is aimed at better aligning the organisation's information needs with the data routinely collected about Offences and Incidents. The small project team will review a small set of pivotal data fields and recommend policy, system and process changes that are required to efficiently collect accurate and relevant data, that meets a wider range of organisational needs. This work will inform rationalisation of, and improvements to, data collection forms and processes planned in the coming years.

While not an exhaustive list, other groups, forums and change topics with regular DQIT input included:

- Infringements Transformation Programme
- NIA Modernisation
- CARD Replacement
- Te Raranga
- Understanding Policing Delivery (UPD)
- Disability Data Working Group
- Digital Notebook Working Group

- Family Harm OnDuty Form
- Formal Warnings
- Ram-Raid Reporting
- WAI 3060 data stocktake
- Operational Performance Framework
- NIA Reference Group
- Firearms Event Reporting

The Hate Crime Quality Assurance Team drafted a Service Level Agreement, working with districts, workgroups and Service Centres, to identify and agree roles and responsibilities for dealing with reports of perceived Hate.

DQIT established a database that contains the audit recommendations from all our reporting and is the resource to track progress made against those recommendations and/or to identify risks for national escalation and discussion.

DQIT have promoted the concept of Police undergoing a Data Maturity Assessment and regularly monitoring this as a way to drive and detect progress in data maturity.

This year the Australian Bureau of Statistics initiated a review of the Australian, New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ANZSOC) rules and definitions. DQIT have met with relevant New Zealand stakeholders and agreed to lead the cross-sector NZ response. Police provided comprehensive feedback to the initial proposal, and most of the suggestions put forward have been incorporated into the final proposal. The new standard is due to be published in November 2023 and changes to Police and other agency systems and processes will follow.

Systems and Processes

Last year, we said our aims for this year were to:

- Work with and advise Emergency Communications Centres (ECC) and Service Group to establish more robust systems for the transfer and recording of reports that are not attended.

- Progress ongoing Hate Crime and Check Node recording enhancements in NIA.

- Refine Data Quality check list reports and make them more efficient.

- Introduce a machine learning monitoring process as part of our BAU Hate Crime quality assurance activity.

- Support national Family Harm and Youth teams with the evolution of second line Quality Assurance capabilities.

Technological and business process changes to fix identified issues at a national level are complex and difficult to overcome. For that reason, the team's focus has been to ensure change programmes build new systems and processes better meet the organisation's data needs (as outlined above). The team have also worked with existing reports and made the follow-on processes more effective where they can.

At district level DQIT members have been identifying achievable topics to drive change locally. In the Tāmaki Makaurau Districts, the District Crime Registrars (DCRs) have influenced this region to have a small, dedicated, locally funded data quality assurance team.

This group regularly checks all CARD Events required in NIA to see if they have been recorded in NIA. The DCRs in this region have been working with the local districts to identify opportunities to improve the process that follows the initial check. This work is explained in more detail in *District Initiative Example 1* below. This, along with other initiatives in the region, has helped increase the rate at which Offences and Incidents required in NIA are recorded in NIA. There has been an almost 40% drop in the number of Offences and Incidents not recorded in NIA between 2019/20 and 2022/23, equating to over 4,500 records per year.

Tamaki Makaurau - NIA Required Records

The proportion of CARD events required in NIA, that make it to NIA has increased. The volume of NIA required CARD events that are not in NIA has reduced and become more stable.
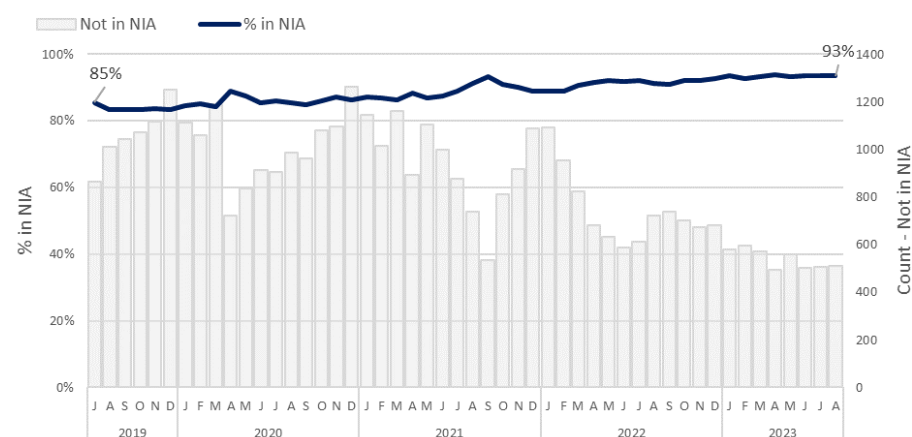
Tāmaki Makaurau - In the Detail, Getting Missed Records Fixed

In Tāmaki Makaurau, District Crime Registrars have been working with the local Data Quality Assurance Team to increase the rate at which records sent to staff to fix, get fixed.

After the record is sent to District Management identifying a record needs to be fixed, the process to get that to occur involves several people and steps. The effectiveness of this process varies from place to place within the region.

The District Crime Registrars have been working with the districts to analyse what is working and what is not, and when a blockage occurs, what can be done to unblock it.
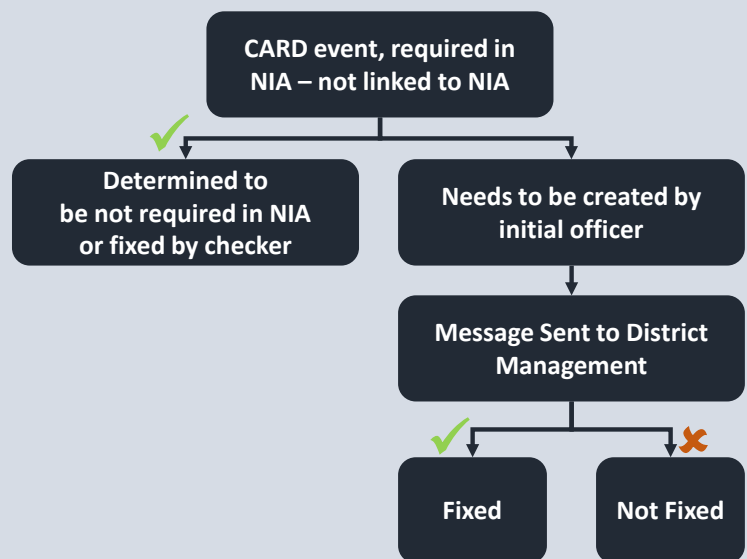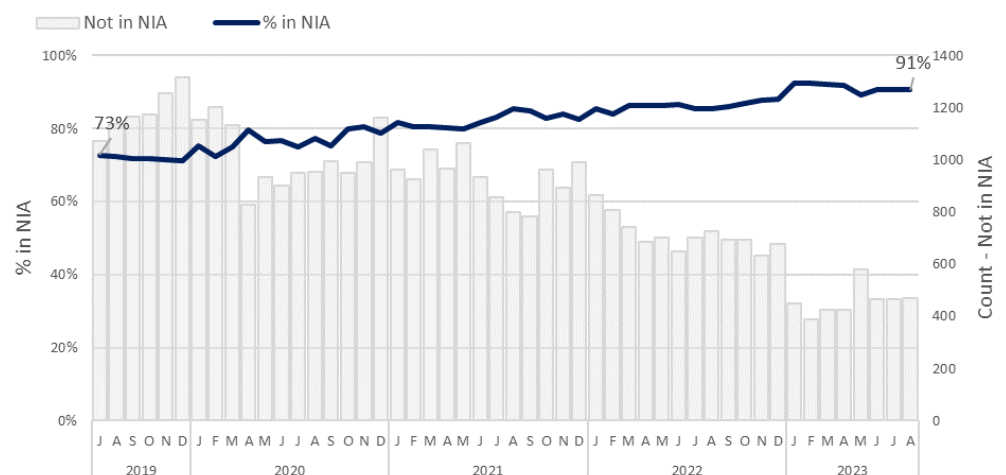

Since their introduction in 2021, the District Crime Registrars in Te Wai Pounamu have introduced QA systems and have trained staff with the same aim - to increase the number and rate at which records required in NIA, are recorded in NIA. Without a dedicated local Quality Assurance team, they have had to use different tactics. They have supported the region to improve Quality Assurance checks in certain risk area, for example, within Family Harm recording, Missing Persons, but have also

Te Wai Pounamu- NIA Required Records

The proportion of CARD events required in NIA, that make it to NIA has increased. The volume of NIA required CARD events that are not in NIA has reduced.

more broadly tried to tackle all 'NIA Required Records'. One example of these initiatives relates to an induction process for new recruits and is highlighted as *District Initiative Example 2* in the next section of this report. Collectively, these initiatives have been very effective. In the FY 2019/20 there were over 13,000 NIA required records not in NIA. By 2022/23 this has more than halved. The rate of transition to NIA has increased from 73% to 91% over this time.

The District Crime Registrars in this region have also undertaken 'Day in the Life' checks of every record for a day – to gain an understanding of the broader data quality issues across all Offence and Incident recording and identify the priority topics to expand on their work to date.

People and Skills

Last year, we said our aims for this year were to:

- Secure specialists to deliver DQ training requirements. Create an advanced QA training programme, train and accredit staff that do QA work. Expand our range of online / CEP training - Leadership training / leadership development resources and request inclusion of data quality rules and principles into Police's promotion qualification framework. Develop and deliver induction training resources for all staff.

- Create / develop more engaging training and communication resources addressing 'the why' – for leaders and for frontline.

- Update our DQ Intranet pages – simplifying where possible.

- Support Service Group, Family Harm and Youth to establish/build on and embed NRS principles and how to apply them into training for their staff.

- Grow District Crime Registrar numbers and increase their outreach and ability to influence change.

At a national level, DQIT prepared a comprehensive Training Approvals and Quality Board application, seeking support for national training to improve Offence and Incident data quality. The application was successful and work to incorporate NRS principles and 'the why' into Recruit Training both at the RNZ Police College and their subsequent in-District training is underway. DQIT have also recruited a person at 8 hours per week to support the ongoing development and management of training topics for the team.

Requests to get the topic accepted into the promotional framework have not yet been successful, but lobbying will continue.

DQIT have updated many of their Intranet pages, moving to a simpler 'tile' format. This makes it easier for users to find the content they are looking for. Further work on this is planned.
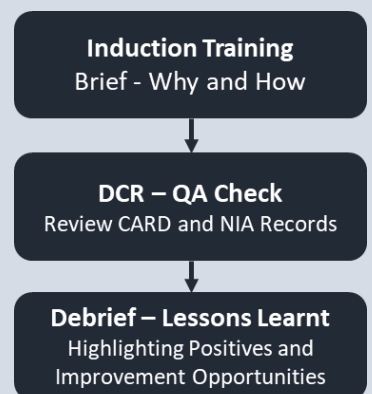
Both the Family Harm and the Youth teams have sought assistance and advice from DQIT in the development of their national training programme design and content. Both groups are acting on recommendations from relevant DQIT reports last year and focus on ensuring consistent and accurate collection of data.

A Quality Assurance survey was completed establishing who is doing QA work across the country now and what this work looks like. This is being used to inform the development of the Data Quality Assurance Manual (DQAM).

District Initiative Example 2

Induction Process for Recruits

In some parts of Te Wai Pounamu, District Crime Registrars have been engaging with staff as they enter Districts from the RNZ Police College.

Induction Training
Brief - Why and How

DCR – QA Check
Review CARD and NIA Records

Debrief – Lessons Learnt
Highlighting Positives and Improvement Opportunities

Exact methods and timings have varied to accommodate differences in the way each district inducts staff more generally. Broadly however, the process starts with an 'Induction Training' session. After a period, quality assurance checks are done of the new staff's operational records (CARD and NIA) to see if they can properly apply the National Recording Standard. This is followed by a feedback session, where lessons learnt are discussed in small groups. Where possible this is done alongside the recruits' supervisors and field training officers.

This process has helped new staff and their mentors to understand the expectations of them and provided the support they need to know how to properly create records.

The process has also helped highlight gaps in the existing recruit training and post-college workplace assessment processes and identify improvements that can be made to the data entry forms and processes to make them more intuitive – easier to get right.

DQIT continue to deliver face-to-face training about NRS and 'the Why', to all File Management Centre staff as well as emergency and non-emergency call-takers and dispatchers, as well as staff processing reports received through the Online portal.

As part of their routine activity, the Hate Crime Quality Assurance Team (HCQAT) audit over 1000 records (from either CARD or NIA) per month. When data quality issues are found that require correction or clarification by the staff involved in taking the report, messages are sent to them outlining the issue, and what needs to be done to fix it. These messages are supportive and help raise awareness of a broad range of Offence and Incident recording issues. The team send 70 to 80 of these personalised informative messages each month.

While the types of records checked by the HCQAT are skewed towards public order and threat offences, the consistency of the process means changes detected by them can be seen as a litmus test for data quality generally. Back in 2020 DQIT reported that 46% of Hate records audited that should be in NIA, were recorded in NIA. This year the HCQAT checks show this has improved, with rates of entry into NIA now over 80%.

At a local level, as noted in the previous section, the District Crime Registrars in Te Wai Pounamu have been active training a range of staff. One initiative relating to the training of recruits new to their district is outlined in more detail in the box above labelled *District Initiative Example 2*. This initiative has resulted in valuable feedback that will be incorporated into both the enhancement of national recruit training, as well as the re-design of the ICT systems used to record Offences and Incidents.

Fiscal restraints have meant there has been no growth in District Crime Registrar numbers. Given these constraints DQIT prioritised other work over the delivery of the intended District Roadshows.

2. EVOLVE THE NATIONAL RECORDING STANDARD

Within the broader prevention activity, setting clear standards for Offence and Incident Recording is a particular focus of the DQIT.

Set Clear
Standards

Last year, we said our aims for this year were to:
- Do a significant update of NRS, addressing clarity issues identified in audit reports and stakeholder feedback.
- Evolve content for a detailed Data Quality Assurance Manual covering linked processes and training requirements.
- Update our existing *Recording Offenders* guide which draws together recording policy for all resolution types.
- Address recording requirements for Missing Persons.
- Create an LRT strategy, and initiate work to simplify codes / prepare a rationalised coding framework (aligned to the Data Strategy principles and known business needs).

DQIT have established new processes for logging requests for change of the NRS and developed a plan for reform of the key Offence Recording Rules. The NRS has been updated this year, but major change is awaiting detailed analysis of audit results to inform impact assessments.
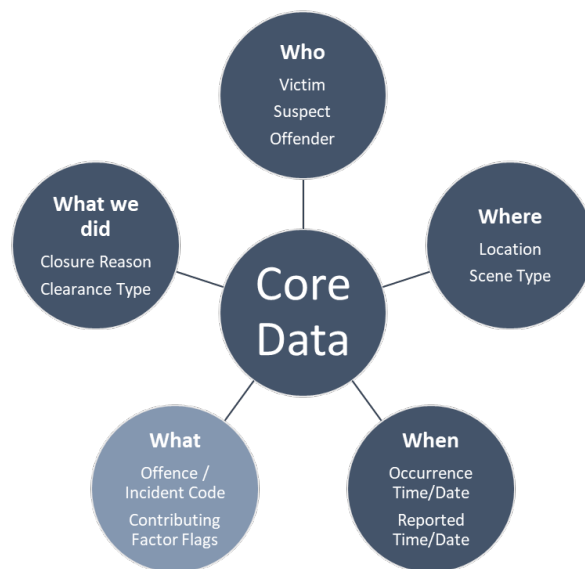
The Data Quality Audit Manual introduction and principles have been drafted and detailed instructions for specific Quality Assurance risk topics are being drafted as the team works through the audits within this year's National Audit Plan.

A significant amount of work was done reviewing the Recording Offenders guide. The work done underpins the team's feedback regarding a comprehensive Resolution policy for adult offenders. The need for a guide in the future will depend on the wording and format of a proposed overarching Resolutions Policy.

DQIT has tried to address issues with Missing Person forms and processes, but this work has not yet been progressed within the ICT change programme. Changes to the QA processes and policy wording are now being considered as an interim measure.

DQIT created and are working to a plan to manage the Offence and Incident code tables (known as the Legislative Reference Table – LRT). The team have managed to progress a considerable amount of 'housekeeping' work for the LRT, including making Victim Offences more easily identifiable, improving search functionality, updating links and cross checking the Police LRT with the Ministry of Justice system equivalent to ensure concordance. Work is ongoing to update and re-align both systems. New codes have been created for the Drink and Drugged Driving legislation passed earlier in the year, and links from the table to legislation, coding and investigation guides have all been updated.

The team are preparing themselves to lead the cross-sector plan for the introduction of the updated ANZSOC classification system in New Zealand. This work is complementary to the Core Data Project that is underway, outlined in the earlier section of this report, which incorporates a full review of Offence and Incident Codes. This work is needed to prepare both Police and the wider Justice Sector to use and share a wider range of data fields relating to Offences and Incidents.

3. PROVIDE ORGANISATIONAL ASSURANCE

This strand of work involves the delivery of an annual risk-based *National Audit Plan* (NAP), as well as promoting the development of quality assurance capability within districts and workgroups.

DQIT have a key role in monitoring and testing Offence and Incident data quality, learning lessons from that, sharing them with the rest of the organisation, and, in some instances, managing identified issues.

Methods of detection include formal monitoring and auditing of specific identified risks, but also include using established networks to receive information about concerning culture, practice, or processes to do not align with NRS principles or rules.

Last year, we said our aims for this year were to:

- Deliver the NAP audits planned for 2022/23.
- Maintain suite of QA list reports. Target QA activity more to risk and provide a national structure for QA and templates by rolling out the DQAM. Explore machine learning opportunities to improve free text searches.
- Establish a routine checking and fix process for all Robbery Re-codes and Removed Offences.
- Evolve the national Hate Crime QA process to include more insights into investigation and resolution activities.
- Evolve Data Quality and Hate Crime performance reporting and dashboards and enable Sub-Type reporting within the Hate Crime Insights Report.

Evolve and Maintain Networks and Feedback Loops
- Maintain and build on networks with business groups managing ICT applications and business processes involved in Offence and Incident recording.
- Continue to engage with operational staff in districts.
- Review and update email 'help and advice' processes (potentially re-brand and re-publicise our capability).

Extra scrutiny regarding Robbery recording - After concerns were raised in the previous year about Robbery Offences, every Robbery reported in a month was checked. This review found some known issues, but not at a concerning rate. Subsequent standard checks of Re-coded and Removed Robberies found the rates of accuracy to be high. The team are satisfied there are no systematic or cultural issues significantly affecting Robbery recording. It is possible that lower accuracy results reported in last year's routine audits were the result of increased variance due to smaller sample sizes in that year's audit.

Removed and Re-Coded Offences - Checks of Re-Coded NIA records and Removed Offences (NAP2 and NAP3) have been undertaken for many years. These two topics are inter-twined, the underlying causes of data quality issues related to both risk areas are often the same. The choice to Re-Code or Remove can vary depending on a range of factors, including the accuracy of what was recorded initially. For example, in similar scenarios, some people Re-Code, others Remove and add new Offences.

The Re-Coding audit this year found a reduction in overall accuracy of records checked. Pleasingly, the very high-risk categories of Sexual Offences and Robbery had very high rates of accuracy: 95% and 96% respectively, both improvements from the previous year. While lower-than-expected accuracy rates for burglary were detected, there were no discernible trends in regional or thematic topics that were symptomatic of a systemic issue.

ReCoded Offence Accuracy
2021 2022 2023
Categories: Burglary, Robbery, Sexual, All RCVS, Overall

As with Re-Coding, the accuracy rate for Removed Sexual Offences and Robbery remained high at 92% and 88% respectively. However, for other Offence types, the accuracy declined slightly from 90% the previous year to 87% this year. The audit detected a non-compliant change in practise within one region. The issue has subsequently been brought to the attention of that region and all affected records are being re-checked and rectified. When those records are excluded from the results, the accuracy rate was 90%, the same as in 2022. The chart alongside shows the results compared to previous years, including the 2023 result when the records relating to the known issue are removed.

Removed Offence Accuracy
2021 2022 2023 2023 Amended
Categories: Burglary, Robbery, Sexual, All RCVS, Overall

Baseline - The DQIT team continue to work through data from the very large data sets derived from our Baseline audit last year. The detailed records have been moderated, cleaned, and prepared for analysis. Although some high-level findings were published in last year's Annual Report, there are a wealth of other insights to be gleaned from the work.
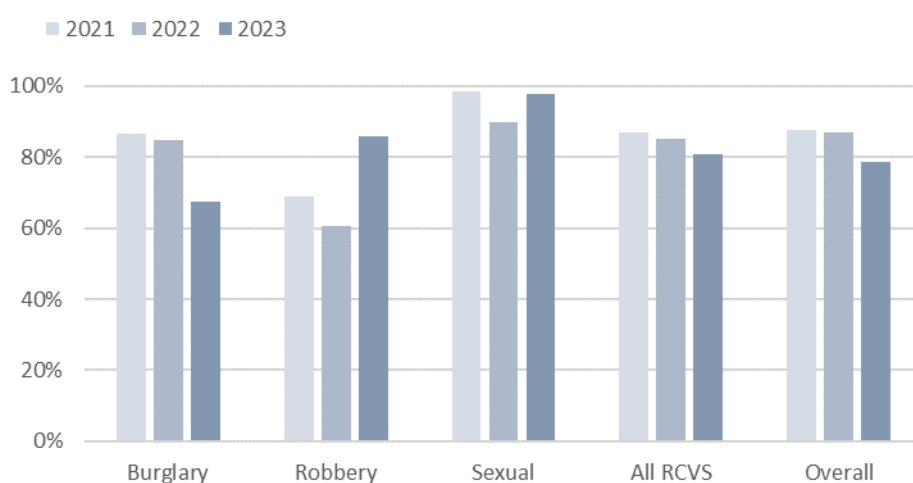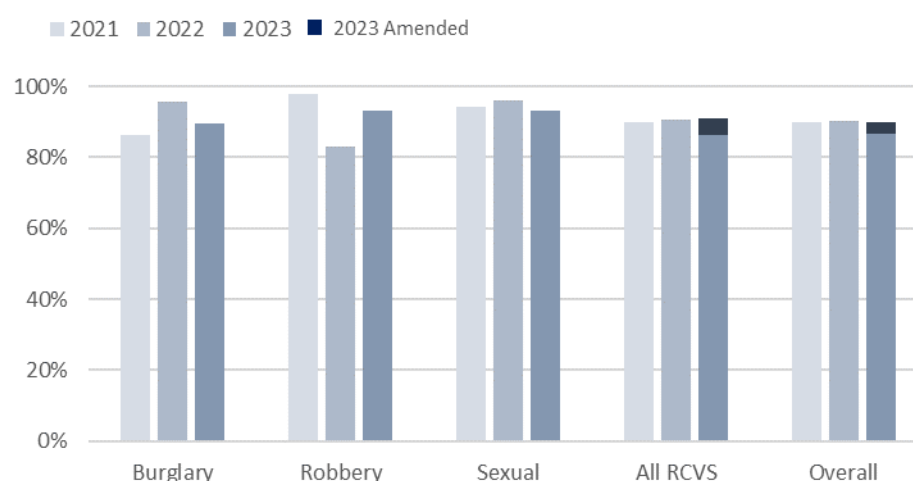
More detailed findings will be published when the analysis is completed, and this will inform future discussions about systems, process and practice.

Weapon Data - An audit of the accuracy of recording of Weapons was completed. The audit findings were helpful in identifying ways code options, code names and data fields relating to weapons could be simplified and rationalised. The work will inform the Core Data Project.

Sexual Offences - An audit was completed to provide assurance around the quality of investigations for Sexual Assault Offences. The audit found no systemic or widespread concerns regarding the quality of investigation of these Offences. The checks also included examination of several aspects of Offence recording, and findings will inform decisions on Core Data requirements for Closure Reasons, Offence Code descriptions, Clearance and Link types, and Modus Operandi requirements for Sexual Assault Offences.

District Quality Assurance Activity - As noted in earlier sections of this report, District Crime Registrars have been undertaking and mentoring districts to undertake Quality Assurance checking of some risk areas for data quality.

Hate Crime Flag Checking – As well as checking all Hate flagged records, in July 2022 the team introduced 'free text' checks. This process sees them check approximately 500 CARD Events and 500 NIA records each month that were not flagged but contain words in the narrative that indicate Hate may have been a factor. Approximately 20% of all confirmed Hate records are found using this process.

Development of QA check capability across Districts and Workgroups

Maintain QA Check Processes

Further NIA changes were made to the Check Node, in preparation for the use of this process to record all QA and Audit checks for standard NAP topics. The new node is being used for some QA checks and audits but delays in establishing methods of reporting the results of the checks means we have not been able to fully transition to using NIA to document audits. In turn, this has delayed the production of QA training, and the writing of related Data Quality Assurance Manual (DQAM) chapters.

However, existing SAS reports have been maintained alongside help and guidance documentation.

DQIT conducted a Noise Audit, checking the variation in professional judgement of around 20 potential QA checkers. This work helped the team understand the extent of variation in judgement, identify topics that had wide variation in opinion, and will inform the eventual QA training programme and DQAM chapters. More Noise Audits are planned as both a way to monitor variance, and as a useful training method.

July 2023
Assurance Group

NEW ZEALAND POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa

NOISE AUDIT: Exploring the Consistency of Staff Decision Making
Prepared by: Insp. Andrea Johnston and Gavin Redman - Principal Advisors Assurance Group, PNHQ

INTRODUCTION
A Noise Audit is a method for identifying variation in an organisation's decision making and/or expression of professional judgement. DQIT conducted a Noise Audit to assess pass/fail decisions about Re-code and Removed Offence practice in NIA. Fifteen coders participated, checking 20 records of each check type. The results are intended to inform training needs and methodologies, and the content of an evolving Data Quality Assurance Manual (DQAM).

KEY FINDINGS
The decisions of coders were less varied for Removed Offences than for Re-code transactions. Removed Offence variation was even lower when the assessment was strictly about whether the removal was justified (as opposed to whether the scarcity records reason code was used).

Networks and Feedback Loops

District Crime Registrars and the HCQAT have developed and produce regular dashboard reporting to districts and Te Raranga on showing Offence and Incident recording trends. The teams also send quarterly 'Update' reports to their networks to encourage two-way discussions about topics of interest.

DQIT updated their team email system to make it easier for people to find and communicate with the team, and for the team to answer queries and questions more efficiently.

The team have identified several issues using their networks and have successfully supported individuals and groups to fix inaccurate records and improve practise. For example, the team identified that current processes for recording Offences and Incidents where the people involved are not identified are varied and impact on the quality of identity data. This initiated work with ICT towards standardising how we record these types of Offences and Incidents.

District Governance

District uptake and support of local monitoring and governance processes for data quality assurance continues to be inconsistent and variable. As noted in earlier sections of this report, regions with District Crime Registrar support have active engagement of District Leadership Teams and some processes in place. However, in other parts of the country there is no regular engagement or ownership at the district leadership level.

Service Group Quality Assurance Capability

Service Group have indicated an interest in establishing a QA capability. Given their influence over initial recording, and data entry and processing after the initial report, this would be welcomed and likely bring about important gains in the accuracy of coding and other core data fields. However, the Group have had high operational demand and have not been able to commit resources to this activity in this financial year.

FOCUS FOR 2023-24

Improving the First Line – It is a long, slow process to make national system and process changes, but a number of opportunities exist to make change. It is important that this work is carefully considered and implemented well. Through the Core Data Project, DQIT will continue to contribute important insights and guidance. Police are unlikely to get new systems in place this year but will continue to progress work towards streamlined processes for data collection in both the CARD and NIA environment.

DQIT also aims to improve training and support for recruits and those that mentor them, through the national training programme.

Setting the base for routine Quality Assurance checks – Establishing a QA check node in NIA, and the ability to report reliable results from it, has also proved to be a long, slow process. Progress has been made, but further work is needed this year make this work operationally. The team aim to utilise the Check Node for National Audit Plan audits this year, with a view to expanding its use to other workgroups and districts when the processes are proven to work and are ready to be scaled up.

APPENDIX - ACRONYMS

ANZSOC – Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification

DCR – District Crime Registrar (DQIT team members based in, and supporting districts)

DQAM – Data Quality Assurance Manual

DQIT – Data Quality and Integrity Team

HCQAT – Hate Crime Quality Assurance Team

ICT – Information and Communications Technology group

LRT – Legislative Reference Table (the database table holding all Offence and Incident codes and associated metadata)

NAP – National Audit Plan

NRS – National Recording Standard

QA – Quality Assurance

SAS – A data analytics platform

WAI 3060 – Justice Kaupapa Inquiry