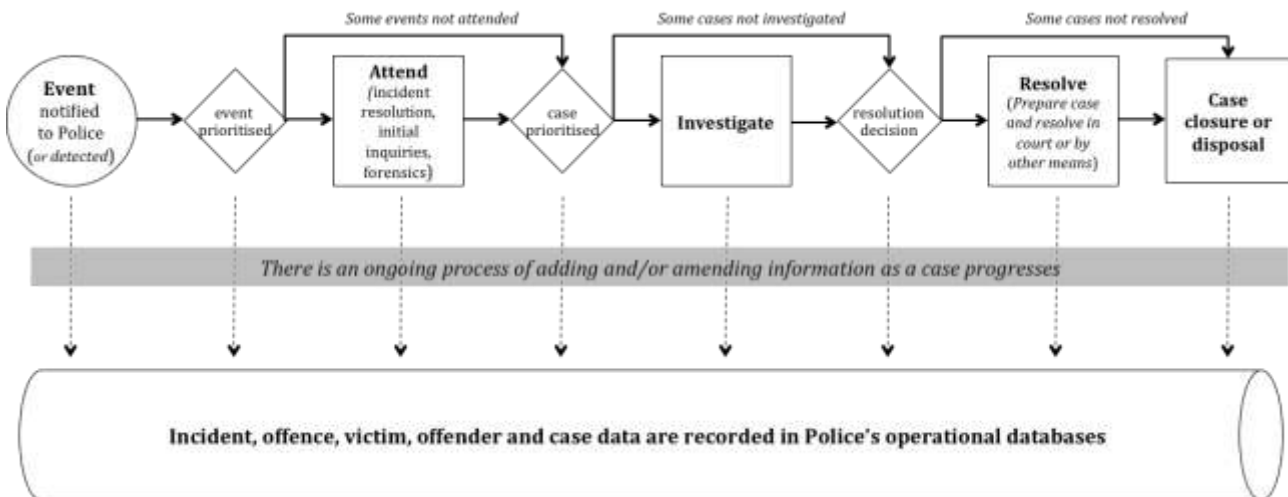


DATA RECORDING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Operational records

Police collect information about crime for operational purposes. The information is recorded so that Police can manage resources and support decisions related to attending incidents, and investigating and resolving cases. Statistics that identify victimisation and offending are produced from this operational data.

The following schematic is a generalised representation of how operational information is collected over the course of Police's response to a report of a crime or incident. It shows that the process of recording information is dynamic. The information that Police has about any particular event changes over time as inquiries progress and decisions on cases are made.



Crime Statistics Series

Three statistical crime series are produced from Police's operational data.

1. Recorded crime victims statistics ([RCVS](#))
2. Recorded crime offender statistics ([RCOS](#))
3. New Zealand Recorded Crime tables ([NZRC](#)) (these have now been discontinued and have been replaced by the RCVS and RCOS series)

Users of the new RCVS and RCOS data sets may refer to manuals and user information to aid interpretation of the data.

RCVS consists of two types of population: the victimisation population and the unique victim population. The victimisation population is the measure involving counting a person/organisation once within each criminal incident for each Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ANZSOC) Division in which they are recorded as being a victim of an offence. The unique victim population is the measure involving counting a person/organisation once in a given 12 month reference period for each ANZSOC

Division in which they are recorded as being a victim of an offence regardless of how many times they may have been victimised.

RCOS consists of two types of population: the proceeding population and the unique offender populations. The proceeding population is the measure involving counting a person once on each day they are proceeded against by police in the reference period, whether by court or non-court action. The unique offender populations are measures involving counting a person once in a given reference period regardless of how many times they may have been dealt with by police, whether by court or non-court action.

The old New Zealand recorded crime tables (which have now been replaced by RCVS and RCOS) contain information about recorded offences and apprehensions. The offence dataset contain offences recorded by Police. The tables also contain the numbers of offences that were resolved. The apprehension dataset contains statistics on apprehensions of alleged offenders. The recorded crime series used to be published at six-monthly intervals.

How crime can now be monitored using RCVS and RCOS

In practice, RCVS data is similar to recorded crime data provided previously contained in the discontinued recorded crime tables (albeit crime victims rather than recorded offences are counted) and the RCOS data is similar to offender data provided previously contained in the discontinued apprehension statistics.

How offences are assigned using the NRS and ANZSOC

Assigning offences to crimes is governed by Police's National Recording Standard (NRS) and by the ANZSOC.

The NRS is New Zealand Police policy. It provides the rules governing when crime and incident recording is required and what must be recorded. It also lists and defines options for data items for different types of crime and incidents. The NRS is published on the Police website and can be found [here](#). An offence *code book* is used alongside the NRS to help Police staff identify the most appropriate offence to use when recording a crime. These offence codes are aligned with the ANZSOC system. Further information about offence categorisation and ANZSOC can be found [here](#).

Recorded victim and offender data has been derived from administrative information collected for operational purposes. The NRS policy framework governs this information collection, staff are trained in the application of the policy, and there is oversight of practice to ensure consistency.

Victim and offender personal information

The NRS governs how certain information is recorded, such as victim or offender ethnicity, and what options are available. In general, where personal information is collected it is obtained from the victim or offender themselves. Users should refer to the NRS for further detail.

Periodic statistical updates

Each of the crime statistics series are periodically drawn from operational data. At the time statistics are created they provide an up-to-date picture of what is known about each particular case involving a crime that has been reported to Police.

Users should also refer to release notes for these data sets, which identify changes that may have occurred at each update.

At the moment statistics are updated, some of the data included in the statistics will relate to active cases, while other data will relate to cases that have closed. Because some cases will be active, over time the information about those particular cases may change. This means that if data is extracted from the operational system at a later time then it will reflect any changes that have occurred (e.g. a case that was previously unresolved, may subsequently become resolved). This is an important consideration when using RCVS and RCOS.

The RCVS and RCOS manuals describe the victim and offender data sets in detail ([RCVS Manual](#); [RCOS Manual](#)). These RCVS and RCOS data sets are updated each month. As well as adding data for a new month, each update includes an update of the statistics for prior months, which will include data that has changed as a result of new operational information being recorded.

The old New Zealand Recorded Crime tables were produced biannually and published as either calendar year or fiscal year (1 July - 30 June) series. Recorded Crime statistics from previous years were not updated at each production date.

Channels to report crime

Users of crime statistics should note that crime or incidents may come to the attention of Police in a variety of ways. Crime and incidents are usually notified to Police by a member of the public. Staff members from other agencies may report crimes to Police. Police officers may also detect offences independently of others.

Police have a wide variety of ways to receive this offence and incident information. For example:

- Telephone systems (111 emergency system, a non-emergency crime reporting line, calls to Police stations, etc)
- Police premises accessible to the public (public counters / watch houses, community policing centres, etc)
- Via Police officers in public (e.g. when on patrol)

It is also possible to report crime anonymously to Police on the Internet using the third party *crimestoppers* service (<http://www.crimestoppers-nz.org>).

All data concerning crime is recorded in accordance with Police's National Recording Standard (found [here](#)).

Depending on how the initial information is received, it may be initially recorded in Police's communications and dispatch database (CARD) from where it will automatically be sent to Police's main records management system (the National Intelligence Application - NIA). Alternatively, information may be recorded in Police's record management database from the outset. All crime that has been recorded in the NIA system is reflected in the published crime statistics.

Certain offences and incidents are not included in official statistics

Users of crime statistics should note that certain incidents and offences are not included in official crime data.

Not all offences against New Zealand law are contained in the crime statistics published by Police. Offences detected and investigated by specialist enforcement agencies (e.g. Inland Revenue, Serious Fraud Office, Ministry for Primary Industries) are not recorded by Police so are not included.

Infringement offences dealt with by Police are not included (e.g. infringement offences associated with breaches of liquor bans).

Crime reported to Police will not be recorded as an offence if a Police member assesses that evidence of an offence does not exist. An offence is an act (or omission) that on first sight indicates there has been a breach of New Zealand law. An incident, on the other hand, is a matter that has been reported to or discovered by Police that is not an offence. Decisions about whether or not to record events as a crime or an incident are governed by the NRS.

Recorded crime and the prevalence of crime

Users of crime statistics should be aware of the difference between recorded crime (which reflects crime that has been recorded by Police) and the prevalence of crime. Other sources of information, such as the [New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey](#) provide insight into the prevalence of crime and victimisation in the community.

How data quality is managed

The quality of crime statistics is assured through a multi-layered series of policies, oversight and quality control. These can be described at three levels:

1. Operational assurance
2. Corporate level assurance
3. Independent assurance

Operational assurance

Operational assurance ensures that frontline staff members understand their roles and responsibilities to record crime and incident information, and ensures that staff members fulfil these requirements correctly.

The operational assurance measures include:

- Policy statements - such as the NRS
- Standard operating procedures
- System level controls - such as workflow embedded in data entry software, recording of data change history, and authorisation processes
- Staff training
- Supervision
- Key result areas for staff and supervisors that relate to data quality
- Independent verification, including regular audit at local levels
- Data quality reporting.

Corporate assurance

Corporate level assurance addresses advisory and monitoring functions, which are separated from those directly responsible for managing Police operational activity. The system of corporate level assurance includes:

- Executive Leadership that sets and reinforces expectations across Police
- Work at the corporate level to ensure that policy and other support resources are kept up to date and that training is given to staff

- Having staff with specific roles to address data quality – such as District-based Crime Registrars and a National Crime Registrar at Police National Headquarters
- Internal governance structures, including an NRS Reference Group and Data Quality Steering Group
- A programme of national auditing (e.g. reviewing local operational level audits)
- Regular reporting of indicators of data quality to senior management and reporting setting out audit results and improvement actions
- Remote monitoring/anomaly detection
- Benchmarking of practice with overseas jurisdictions.

Independent assurance

Independent assurance involves arms-length testing and verification of standards, policies and practices associated with information management and statistics production. The independent assurance measures include:

- External audit
- Statistics New Zealand oversight
- Ongoing review by Police's independent Assurance and Risk Committee.