

## RECORDED CRIME ‘OCCURRENCE ONLY’ AND ‘DV-NO OFFENCE’ NARRATIVE AUDIT

### EVENTS BETWEEN JULY 2010 AND JUNE 2011

The Bureau’s Recorded Crime Audit Strategy includes the identification of possible under-reporting of criminal incidents through an annual analysis of ‘occurrence only’ and ‘DV – no offence’ incident narratives.

#### AIM

To determine the extent of under-reporting of criminal incidents by NSW Police through the use of non-criminal ‘occurrence only’ and ‘DV - no offence’ incidents in the NSW Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS).

#### DEFINITIONS

**DV – no offence** – Domestic Violence-related incidents where no offence is considered to have taken place eg neighbours have called Police out to what is ascertained to be a verbal argument. These incidents are not counted in the Recorded Crime data.

**Occurrence only** – ‘occurrence only’ incidents are not classified as criminal incidents and so are not counted in the Recorded Crime data. The NSW Police Crime Recording Standard states: “OCCURRENCE ONLY incidents should only be used where there is no other applicable COPS Incident Category and used where there is no police investigation / action required.”

#### METHOD

##### Sample selection

A random sample of 200 ‘occurrence only’ and 200 ‘DV – no offence’ incidents with an event date between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011.

##### Audit Method

Using the information recorded in the event narratives on COPS, and the instructions in Crime Recording Standard, we set out to answer the question ‘Did a criminal incident take place?’ with three possible answers: Yes, No and Unclear.

For those records where a criminal incident did take place, we then asked ‘Was there a criminal incident created in the same event?’ with two possible answers: Yes and No.

#### RESULTS

##### Sample 1: ‘Occurrence only’ incidents

Sampled incidents	200
No criminal incident took place	182
Criminal incident did take place	16
Unclear whether a criminal incident did take place	2
Criminal incident did take place but no criminal incident was created in that Event	7

Of the 200 sampled 'occurrence only' incidents, there were seven (3.5%) where the event narrative indicated that a criminal incident did take place but there was no corresponding criminal incident created within that event.

### Sample 2: 'DV – no offence' incidents

Sampled incidents	200
No criminal incident took place	183
Criminal incident did take place	17
Criminal incident did take place but no criminal incident was created in that Event	8

Of the 200 sampled 'DV – no offence' incidents, there were eight (4%) where the event narrative indicated that a criminal incident did take place but there was no corresponding criminal incident created within that event. Two of the eight incidents have a clear-up status of "under investigation".

In six of the eight incidents, either an AVO was applied for or an application made to add conditions to an existing AVO.

## CONCLUSION

There appears to be only limited under-reporting of crime through the use of non-criminal incidents. Three and a half percent<sup>1</sup> of a sample of 'occurrence only' incidents and 4%<sup>2</sup> of a sample of 'DV – no offence' incidents involved a crime for which a criminal incident was not created on COPS.

**NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research**  
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<sup>1</sup> This sample proportion of 3.5% has 95% confidence interval bounds of 1.0% and 6.0%.

<sup>2</sup> This sample proportion of 4% has 95% confidence interval bounds of 1.3% and 6.7%.