

# NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

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**Response to the Inspection  
Conducted by His Majesty's Inspector  
of Constabulary and the Fire and  
Rescue Service on PSNI:**

**The Police Service of Northern Ireland –  
An Inspection of Crime Data Integrity**

## INTRODUCTION

The Northern Ireland Policing Board has a statutory duty to hold the PSNI to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient policing service for the whole community. The Board carries out this work in a number of ways through engagement with the community and key stakeholders and Committee and Board meetings. However, with the exception of information gathered through research about the PSNI's policy and practice on the ground, the Board is largely reliant on information provided by the PSNI. Information is received either through scrutiny at Board and Committee meetings, correspondence with the Chief Constable, face to face meetings between the PSNI and through questions from the Board on particular issues.

The Board's accountability function is strengthened by having access to independent professional policing assessments from relevant bodies such as His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) on how the PSNI is performing and discharging its responsibilities in a number of key areas. This enables the Board to hold the Chief Constable to account using an evidence-based approach.

As there is a statutory obligation on HMICFRS to undertake an annual efficiency and effectiveness inspection of the PSNI, the Board agreed with the Department to commission HMICFRS to undertake this inspection. The objective was to inform the public, the Board and the Department of the PSNI's strengths and areas for improvement in a number of key areas.

## THE 2023/24 HMICFRS PEEL INSPECTION

### [HMICFRS Inspection Report – “The Police Service of Northern Ireland An Inspection of crime data integrity” 2023/24](#)

The inspection assessed the Police Service of Northern Ireland's crime data integrity. It made one graded judgment that the PSNI's Crime Data Integrity is **Good**.

The Inspection fieldwork was carried out in November 2023 and January 2024 and the following areas of inspection were set out in the terms of reference:

- How well does the PSNI apply the standards of crime recording laid down by the Home Office, known as the Crime Recording Rules?
- How does leadership, culture- and behaviour in the PSNI affect crime recording?
- How accurately does the PSNI record reported crimes- that cause significant harm, such as crimes of violence, rape and other sexual offences, crimes against vulnerable victims, and crimes relating to antisocial behaviour?
- How appropriate are police decisions to cancel crimes of rape?

Overall, the HM Inspector observed:

“I am pleased with the performance of the PSNI in recording reported crime. . .

Although we have identified where some areas of improvements can be made, the service has maintained the high standards we found when we last inspected crime data integrity in 2015.”

## **BOARD ANALYSIS**

Members considered the Inspection Report at Board and Performance Committee meetings and observed that:

- Members expressed concerns with the Areas of Improvement set out on page 6 of the HMICFRS Report and agreed that these improvements need to take place;
- Members stated that PSNI should address the issues raised by HMICFRS in relation to the Contact Management Centre on page 9 of the report. Especially the recording of details of crime where officers have to contact the Contact Management Centre to report the crime details gathered; and
- In relation to the national standards for crime recording, Members agreed that PSNI should address the issue raised by HMICFS that there should be meetings with PSNI Departmental heads focused solely on crime recording standards or alternatively that PSNI should make sure that crime recording is a regular agenda item within the Service Performance Board (page 13 of the Report).

A progress report in relation to addressing all the recommendations was made available to Board Members for consideration at the September and October 2024 Performance Committee meetings. Members sought a number of clarifications from PSNI in the areas of improvements in the crime recording process, the role and remit of the internal Crime Recording Project Board and the recording of victim equality data.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, the Board welcomes the findings of the HMICFRS report and the rating of the PSNI as “Good” in this area of crime data integrity.

The report also suggests a number of areas for improvement for the PSNI and the Board has committed to continuing to monitor the implementation of the recommendations through the work of the Performance Committee.

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

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## DOCUMENT TITLE

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