

Appendix 2

Explanation of the Changes to the Recording Systems and the Impact on Targets

Following recommendations by HM Inspectorate of Constabularies and the proposals in the Home Office Review of Crime Statistics in July 2000, the Association of Chief Police Officers agreed to introduce a new National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) across all 43 police forces in England and Wales. The new standard has two main aims: to develop a more consistent national basis of recording crime to ensure that the data collected by individual forces is comparable with others and to take a more victim-centred approach to crime recording.

The national crime recording standard will lead to an increase in the number of recorded crimes for those forces that adopt it. This will occur because forces will now be asked to ensure that they record crime reports that previously might have been rejected at the reporting stage as either clearly non-criminal or lacking sound evidence, or which the police might have been disinclined to record for other reasons, for example because the crime could not be investigated further and therefore detected.

Lancashire Constabulary, along with four other forces, led the way by commencing the implementation of these changes in April 2000. All forces will move to the new standard by the end of March 2002.

At present it is difficult to accurately assess the impact of this change due to the variations in timing and different degree to which forces already record on a consistent victim-oriented basis. An initial analysis of the effect of introducing the NCRS made earlier this year shows that there has been an increase in the amount of recorded crime, mainly at the lower levels of criminal damage and certain types of assaults. The five forces using the new standard recorded an increase in recorded crime of 2.4% overall, compared to a fall of 3.4% on average across the other 38 forces. Lancashire has seen an overall 8.1% increase.

The percentage change in all notifiable offences recorded in each police force in the 12 months to 31 March 2001

