

CRIME STRATEGY
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
July 2007

BACKGROUND

Context

Crime has fallen significantly since 1995. The British Crime Survey (BCS) shows that crime has fallen by around a third since 1997, and that the chances of being a victim of crime are at historically low levels. Yet despite these reductions we cannot be complacent, the rate of these reductions has either slowed or begun to flatten and so a new approach is needed to ensure that the reductions continue.

Aims & Objectives

The new crime strategy will mark a new phase in tackling crime. It will cover the new PSA period (2008/09 – 2010/11), and outlines a new approach to tackling crime and the harms caused by crime. The strategy is an overarching vision which brings together a number of policies and approaches across the spectrum of crime. It takes a rounded approach to crime and places greater emphasis on the responses and factors that cut across crime types. There are some new areas of focus, but a key message of the strategy is smarter working within existing policies and powers to maximise the impact of resources on reducing crime and improving community safety.

Delivering the crime strategy will mean real engagement between local delivery partners to identify the areas where they will dedicate particular effort in improving community safety to reflect local priorities. This approach will allow flexibility for delivery partners about what crime problems matter most to the public and will reinforce the fact that where solutions to different crime types often overlap, it is the local delivery partners who are all too aware of the common drivers of those crimes and are best placed to tackle them.

To add value to this new approach Central Government will tackle the underlying drivers of crime and will focus on outcomes, with fewer centrally mandated targets. The Government will work to ensure that performance measures are consistent across delivery partners, so that delivery partners are not pulled in different directions by conflicting priorities. This will include simplifying and integrating the assessments of performance for police, CDRPs/CSPs and Drug Action Teams, and aligning the single performance framework for police and community safety with those for local authorities, and Local Area Agreements.

The new strategy will ensure that resources are targeted on the places and offenders that will have the greatest impact on reducing crime and the harms it causes, on the victims most at risk, and on the actions and programmes with greatest effectiveness. This includes involving a wide range of partners to ensure that the combined resources of different organisations are used to best effect. It also means encouraging and empowering citizens to engage in preventing crime.

As well as practical solutions to reducing crime the new strategy seeks to increase public confidence in agencies, through greater engagement with the public by delivery agencies, and greater availability of local crime information. In addition, nationally and locally, a targeted approach is needed to strike the right balance between reducing disproportionate fear among vulnerable groups (e.g. older people) while encouraging public vigilance to prevent crime (e.g. locking doors, building awareness among young people of their vulnerability to violent crime after drinking alcohol).

Scope of the EIA work

The scope of this EIA looks at the Crime Strategy as a whole rather than at each individual policy contained within it, most of these policies are existing ones and so will have already been impact assessed and in many cases are due to be reassessed within the next year. This document highlights those areas which have already been assessed

as part of existing policies and legislation but also highlights areas of the strategy which have potential equality implications and signposts actions for future work as a result. Some new specific strategies will be published further to this over-arching strategy. These will be accompanied by individual equality impact assessments.

METHODOLOGY

Approach to evidence gathering

Crime extends across a wide spectrum, from some forms of anti-social behaviour to international terrorism. There are a wide range of policies and practices in place which we know are having a positive impact on the reduction of crime and in the main it is evidence from these that has been used to collect the data needed for this assessment. It is worth re-emphasising that this document does not intend to assess the equality impact on every single strand. What it sets out to do is indicate where assessments have already taken place when a policy was developed, and highlights areas of the strategy which may have equality implications and so will be subject to a full assessment in due course.

In addition to the evidence gathered from existing policies, there are surveys detailing the public's experience and perception of crime and the criminal justice system which have also been used as part of the assessment exercise;

- British Crime Survey 2006/07
- Policing and the criminal justice system – public confidence and perceptions: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey
- Citizenship Survey 2005
- Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System - 2005
- Disability Rights Commission – 'The Disability Agenda; Building stronger, safer communities.' 2007
- Age Concern: Survey of Fear of Street Crime amongst Older People – 2002
- UK Study of Abuse and Neglect of Older People; Prevalence Survey Report 2007
- All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism: The Government's Response 2006
- Hate Crime: Delivering a Quality Service – Good practice and Tactical Guidance - 2005

Our final approach to assessment was to contact a number of organisations working with, or representing, minority groups to ensure they were given the opportunity to comment and add value to the assessment; details of those consulted are set out within the *Consultation & Involvement* section of this report.

Results of consideration of existing evidence

Overall, we know that crime affects different groups of people disproportionately. The existing evidence shows:

Geographic Location:

Crime statistics¹ show that crime is not evenly distributed across England and Wales. Whilst geographic patterns and concentrations of offences vary across crime types, crime rates tend to be higher in urban and in deprived areas. For example, the 2006/07 BCS showed that people living in more deprived areas were more likely to be a victim of crime than those living in less deprived areas. The risk of being a victim of crime was higher than the national average in 'hard-pressed' and 'urban prosperity' ACORN² areas, for

¹ Home Office (2007) Crime in England and Wales 2006/07, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/07

² ACORN: A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods which groups households according to the demographic, employment and housing characteristics of the surrounding area.

example, ten per cent of households in these areas had been a victim of vehicle theft in the 2006/07 BCS, compared with seven per cent of households nationally. In contrast, the risk of being a victim of crime was lower than the national average in 'wealthy achiever' areas.

The 2006/07 BCS also showed that a higher proportion of people living in urban areas had high levels of worry about burglary, car crime or violent crime compared with the proportion in rural areas. For example, 19 per cent of people in urban areas had a high level of worry about violent crime, compared with ten per cent of people in rural areas. Overall, 20% of people living in 'hard-pressed' areas had a high level of worry about car crime, compared with 13% nationally, while 31% of people living in 'hard-pressed areas' perceived there to be a high level of anti-social behaviour in their area compared with an average of 18%.

The 2006/07 BCS showed that perceptions of anti social behaviour (ASB) followed the same pattern. For example, 20% of people resident in urban areas perceived there to be a high level of ASB in their area compared with eight per cent in rural areas.

Race:

The British Crime Survey shows that, after taking age into account, there are no differentials in rates of victimisation. Nonetheless, minority ethnic groups have higher rates of fear/concern about crime. Previous research has shown that people in Black and Minority ethnic groups have higher levels of worry about crime than white people.³ The 2006/07 BCS shows that people from non-white groups overall were more than twice as likely to have high levels of worry about burglary, vehicle crime and violent crime as those from white ethnic groups.

However, we do need to be aware that there are certain forms of crime that minority ethnic groups experience that need a clear response. For example, minority ethnic groups experience racially motivated hate crimes:

- From the Citizenship Survey (2005) minority ethnic respondents were considerably more likely than White respondents to say that they were worried about being subject to a physical attack because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion: 20 per cent said that they were very worried compared to four per cent of White people.
- Twenty per cent of people from minority ethnic groups were 'very worried' about being attacked due to their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion compared to four per cent of White people. Conversely, half of White people (50%) were not at all worried about being attacked for these reasons, compared to only 16 per cent of people from minority ethnic groups.

Alongside this, however, is a concern about whether minority ethnic groups will be treated fairly by the police: Minority ethnic respondents were most likely to expect to be treated worse than other races by the police (24%) than by any other organisation. According to the 'Policing and the criminal justice system – public confidence and perceptions: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey', white people were more likely to be confident that the CJS respected the rights of people accused of committing a crime and treated them fairly than Mixed and BME groups.

³ Jonathan Allen (2004) Worry about crime in England and Wales: findings from the 2003/04 and 2004/05 British Crime Survey, Home Office Online Report 15/06.

Finally, we also need to recognise that there is still disproportionality in the CJS:

- People from a Mixed, Asian or Black ethnic background were more likely than those in other ethnic groups to be stopped in a vehicle by the police (16%, 13% and 15% respectively). This compares with 9% of Whites and 6% of Chinese and other ethnic groups. People from minority ethnic groups were significantly more likely to say that they felt upset than White people (17% compared to 7%).
- The report 'Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System - 2005' tells us that of the 839,977 police recorded stop and searches in 2004/5 14% were of Black people, 7% of Asian people and 1,5% of 'Other' Ethnic origin. The report goes on to say that relative to the general population, black people were 3 times more likely to be arrested than White people.

Faith:

The Home Office is currently working on identifying whether there are any differential rates of victimisation by faith. However, like minority ethnic groups, there are some forms of victimisation against faith groups on the basis of their beliefs. There is currently limited data available on crimes against people according to their faith, however we do know that nationally 2% of assaults without injury recorded by the police in 2006/07 were racially or religiously aggravated and that of the 257,327 harassment offences 11% were racially or religiously aggravated.

The Met Police has now started to record data on faith hate fuelled crime. In addition, as stated in its response to the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism, the Government is working with police forces to identify better and more consistent ways of collecting and managing data on hate crimes including antisemitic incidents and crimes. This should be in place by 2008-09.

Gender:

One of the clearest differences in rates of victimisation between men and women is around violence. In terms of domestic violence:

- Domestic Violence is a serious violent crime comprising 16% of all violent incidents. with 1 incident being reported to the police every minute. About 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men had been a victim of domestic violence since the age of 16⁴.
- 89% of those suffering 4 or more attacks are women and women were likely to suffer greater injury and be classed as chronic victims⁵. On average 2 women a week are killed by a partner or former partner⁶.

Young men are also much more likely to be victims of stranger violence.

There are also differences in perceptions:

⁴ Walby, S. and Allen, J. (2004) Domestic Violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. Home Office Research Study No. 276. London: Home Office

⁵ Walby, S. and Allen, J. (2004) Domestic Violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. Home Office Research Study No. 276. London: Home Office.

⁶ Coleman, K. , Hird, C., and Povey, D. (2006) Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004/05 (Supplementary Volume to Crime in England and Wales 2004/05). Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/06.

- The 2006/07 BCS shows us that women were more likely than men to think the crime rate had increased a lot in the previous 2 years for the whole country (37% and 29% respectively)
- The 2006/07 BCS tells us that for each age group, women were over twice as likely to be worried about violent crime as men and this was especially apparent in the young ages groups; among 16-24 year olds 30% of women had high levels of worry compared with 13% of men.

Sexual Orientation:

As with faith related crime we are currently exploring victimisation rates by sexual orientation. However, work is underway to explore whether levels of victimisation can be measured by surveys.

The police estimate that as much as 90% of homophobic crime, goes unreported (source: Hate Crime: Delivering a Quality Service) because victims are too frightened or embarrassed to let someone know.

Age:

'Public confidence and perceptions: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey' shows us that confidence in the CJS was higher among young people (aged 16-24) for all measures except confidence that the CJS respects the rights of people accused of committing a crime, this is despite almost four-fifths (78%) of the public being confident that the CJS respects the rights of people accused of committing a crime and treats them fairly.

10% of adults reported having been stopped by the police while in a vehicle and 3% had been stopped while on foot. Young men aged 16-24 were particularly likely to have been stopped by the police.

BCS 2006/07 – Older age groups were generally more likely than younger age groups to think that the crime rate in the country as a whole had risen a lot in the previous 2 years. For example, 49% of women aged 65 to 74 years and 46% of those aged 75 and over thought crime levels had risen a lot compared with 23% of women aged 16 to 24.

High levels of perceived anti-social behaviour decreased with age. Both men and women aged 16 to 24 were considerably more likely to perceive high levels of anti social behaviour than any other age group (21% and 29% respectively). Those aged 75 years and over were least likely to perceive high levels (6% of men and 5% of women).

A 2002 Age Concern survey about the Fear of Street Crime among Older People found that a sense of vulnerability increased with age. The Comic Relief and Department of Health commissioned report, 'UK Study of Abuse and Neglect of Older People; Prevalence Survey report' highlighted the need for more to be done to protect older, vulnerable people. The report showed that 2.6% of people aged 66 and over living in private households reported that they had experienced mistreatment involving a family member, close friend or care worker during the past year. This equates to about 227,000 people aged over 66 and over in the UK who were neglected or abused in the past year.

Disability:

Because of methodological issues, it is difficult to ascertain whether there are any differentials in rates of victimisation. However, there is perceptual data available. According to the 'Policing and the criminal justice system – public confidence and perceptions: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey', confidence in the CJS was

higher amongst those without a disability or illness than those who reported that they had a limiting disability or illness, for all aspects of the CJS.

Research by Mencap⁷ indicates that 9 out of 10 people with learning disabilities reporting harassment as a feature of everyday life. And in its document 'Building stronger, safer communities' the Disability Rights Commission states that there is consensus within the CJS that equal access to justice for disabled people is currently accorded low priority and investment.

Other groups according to social situation:

According to the 2006/07 BCS people's perceptions of the crime rate nationally varied a great deal according to educational level; 45% of people who had no educational qualifications thought that crime in the country had risen compared with only 23% of people whose highest qualification was a degree or diploma.

Those living in the social rented sector (40%) and owners (33%) were much more likely than those living in the private rented sector (23%) to perceive an increase in the crime rate.

People living in urban areas were twice as likely to perceive high levels of anti-social behaviour as those living in rural areas (20% and 8% respectively). Social renters were almost twice as likely as those in owner occupied or private rented accommodation to have high levels of perceived anti-social behaviour (31%, 15% and 18% respectively).

What is being done to address these issues?

In recent years, the Government has focused much effort on reducing social deprivation, reducing crime, increasing community cohesion and improving life chances to lift people out of risk of offending. Crime has reduced by around a third since 1997 but there are new challenges to address. The new crime strategy will reinvigorate efforts to continue the reduction in crime and will ensure that resources are targeted on the areas, programmes, actions and offenders that will have the greatest impact on reducing crime and the harms caused by crime.

The new strategy will take a rounded approach to crime, from early intervention to reducing reoffending, and will focus on the offender and not just the offence. The increased focus on local delivery of local priorities allows for greater engagement with members of the whole local community and gives them greater opportunities to raise their concerns and set out more easily how certain issues impact on them particularly.

As well as the new approach set out in the strategy there are a number of policies already in place, or being developed to be implemented in the near future, which seek to improve the levels of community engagement (including better engagement with hard to reach groups), eliminate the social drivers of crime and increase people's confidence in the institutions and systems in place to affect this change; details of some of these are set out below:

Neighbourhood Policing

Neighbourhood Policing aims to respond to the needs of a diverse range of individuals and communities. Critical to Neighbourhood Policing is the idea that neighbourhood

⁷ MENCAP (1999) 'Living in Fear', MENCAP; National Schizophrenia Fellowship (2001) 'Give Us A Break – Exploring harassment of peoples with mental health problems.'

officers will engage local communities to understand the problems that affect them, in order to identify neighbourhood priorities for police, partners and public action.

The Government set out its commitment in the White Paper *Building Communities, Beating Crime* (Nov. 2004) to ensuring that every area in England and Wales would benefit from neighbourhood policing.

When fully rolled out by April 2008, every community in England and Wales will benefit from dedicated, accessible and visible neighbourhood policing teams; these will be led by police officers and include Police Community Support Office (PCSOs) and Special Constables and, depending on the needs and priorities of the neighbourhood, will include local ward councillors, wardens, neighbourhood managers, housing managers, youth workers and voluntary and community organisations.

Neighbourhood Policing is more than just increasing police visibility on the street. It will provide a neighbourhood with a dedicated policing team who will become familiar and frequently-seen faces in the community. It is this familiarity and visibility that creates confidence amongst members of the community.

Neighbourhood Policing is about putting communities' priorities and concerns at the heart of local policing, and research evidence indicates that a neighbourhood policing approach tackles both crime and the fear of crime, and helps to create communities that not only are safe, but feel safe. Examples include:

- A Community Team in Grantham introduced a method of monitoring and held a cultural equality day, to help prevent public order disturbances in the area resulting from the arrival of migrant workers. The purpose of the event was to engage stakeholders in order to establish, for example, multi-agency racial support group and other support networks, an 'early warning' system for racial tension, and to enhance the community team's response to race and hate crimes.
- In Sussex, a PCSO who previously worked teaching English as a second language has made links with the local college to enable her to set up a Police and Communities Together priority setting process for the migrant workers in her area.

The Home Office's evaluation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) – carried out in six trial sites each matched to a comparison site – found that neighbourhood policing can deliver improvements in crime, perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour, feelings of safety, and public confidence in the police. When the evaluation was published in January 2006⁸, practitioners asked whether the improvements resulting from the NRPP were experienced by both white and BME residents. Further analysis has been carried out by the Research, Development and Statistics section at the Home Office on the issue in the ten NRPP sites without comparison sites as these contained sufficient concentrations of BME residents, this research was published in February 2006⁹.

The evaluation also provides support for a neighbourhood policing approach which goes beyond traditional forms of consultation (such as public meetings) and includes more inclusive and proactive methods that capture of broad range of community views (e.g. door knocking, street briefings and 'have a say days').

⁸ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/r272.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/r273.pdf>

National Standards for CDRPs/CSPs

Greater engagement between local delivery partners and, collectively, with local communities is the main thrust of delivering continued reductions in crime. To aid this engagement we are introducing a set of regulations, as part of the CDRP Reform Programme, that will establish a framework of minimum standards for partnership working based on the six 'hallmarks' of an effective partnership framed around an obligation on the CDRP to formulate and implement a strategy to address the crime, disorder and substance misuse issues in their area. These factors were developed during stakeholder events over the summer of 2006 as the principal factors that will support all CDRPs improve performance. They are as follows:

- Empowered and effective leadership
- Intelligence-led business processes
- Effective and responsive delivery structures
- Community engagement
- Visible and constructive accountability
- Appropriate skills and knowledge

The Regulations are currently being drafted: guidance on how to implement the new standards will follow later in the year. What is key within these new standards for minority groups is the requirement on CDRPs to obtain the views of all key groups, particularly those most affected by the implementation of the partnership plan, across the entire local community when prioritising their efforts to reduce crime and substance misuse.

Confidence in the CJS

As the evidence referenced in the *'Results of consideration of existing evidence'* illustrates many minority groups lack confidence in the CJS. The Government considers this an important priority and has therefore signalled its intention to address this by stating it as a core part of our current PSA suite. This current PSA 2 seeks to target to reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and building confidence in the CJS without compromising fairness.

There are 3 elements to the confidence element of this PSA:

- Confidence in the Criminal Justice System
- BME people's perceptions of fair treatment by CJS
- Victim and Witness satisfaction

A programme of work is under way to improve confidence in the CJS through:

- **Research:** to improve our understanding of the drivers of confidence and what works in tackling it, also to improve our understanding of crime, sexual orientation and disability
- **Supporting local delivery:** ensuring coherent arrangements for planning and performance at local agency/partnership level, and providing central support for local delivery
- **Community engagement:** ensuring a cross-agency approach to community involvement and to addressing local concerns
- **Staff engagement:** increasing staff understanding of the end-to end system and the CJS reform; and their willingness to act as advocates for the system
- **Communications:** increasing coherence and effectiveness of messages to the public on crime, disorder and justice

People's perceptions of fair treatment by the CJS

The Government is committed to building a society with opportunities for all. A key part of that is a Criminal Justice System (CJS) which treats all communities equally, is seen to be fair and representative and is effective in tackling racist crime. Enormous progress has been made in recent years but there is still much to do and much planned:

Police: From July 2006, data for all forces has been available to show the satisfaction levels by ethnicity and incident type. This data will enable forces to identify areas of improvement. Full roll out of Neighbourhood Policing and the introduction of APACS will go a long way to changing people's perceptions of the police.

Probation: To ensure that probation responds to the needs of BME offenders, NPD has and will continue to support and evaluate the NPS in developing 'pathfinder programmes' for BME offenders.

CPS: Will improve targeted communications with BME organisations and communities as part of implementing CPS communications and community engagement strategies. It will also undertake equality and diversity impact assessments of key policies and practices both in relation to prosecution business and employment, and act on any significant results.

Prisons: Will continue to make progress on the CRE joint action plan – 'A Shared Agenda for Change' – across the estate, and will continue to follow their newly revised Prison Service Race Equality Scheme.

Courts: Results of a recently conducted research project into 'BME user satisfaction'. Will indicate if the causes of dissatisfaction are related either to the service received, to other diversity factors or to the capacity in which they have experienced the court.

YJB: All Youth Offending Teams will:

- Develop action plans to deliver the target to reduce disproportionality.
- Achieve equal treatment at local level for comparable offences by different ethnic groups.
- Deliver targeted prevention activity that substantially reduces local differences by ethnicity in recorded conviction rates, by 2008.
- Hold regional workshops to showcase and disseminate emerging good practice

Victim and witness satisfaction with the CJS

A vital element of the Government's PSA target on public confidence is to increase the satisfaction of victims and witnesses with their experience of the criminal justice system. A programme of reform and improvements is underway to support delivery of this target, focused on ensuring:

- Victims and witnesses receive good quality information about the CJS and other support and about their own case.
- Victims and witnesses receive a consistently high quality service from CJS staff.
- Victims and witnesses who require practical and emotional help are offered relevant services.
- Victims' views are sought and used throughout the CJS process.
- The needs of vulnerable or intimidated witnesses are identified and met; and victim and witness intimidation tackled.
- An improved experience for victims and witnesses going to court.
- The needs of domestic violence victims are met and repeat victimisation is tackled

Understanding the impact on people with disability

Our knowledge and evidence on the impact of crime on individuals with disabilities is limited and is something that we are actively seeking to redress. We are increasing our engagement with organisations representing individuals with disabilities so as to better

understand the effect on, and needs of, this particular minority group in relation to crime; as a first step we have met with the disability organisations who contributed to this impact assessment.

In addition to this increased engagement we are actively considering how to act on the recommendation of the independent Smith review¹⁰ to extend the sample frame of the BCS to include people living in group residencies.

As data collected for the BCS is done face to face it is possible for many people with disabilities to participate, and many do. To enhance this opportunity we are planning to include an in-depth disability awareness session as part of the training interviewers receive prior to undertaking interviews; this is something that we will discuss in more detail with stakeholders.

Understanding the needs of older victims and offenders

The Department of Health is working with the Care Services Improvement Partnership and colleagues in the Health and Social Care in Criminal Justice team on a programme to raise awareness of the care and treatment of vulnerable offenders, including older prisoners and prisoners with disabilities. They are seeking to introduce GP registration for prisoners to improve the sharing of health information within the prison estate and to support the continuity of care on release. (This is beneficial for disabled offenders, particularly those with Learning Disability and older prisoners. It can make a significant impact on reducing reoffending).

Work continues to establish strong partnerships between the local prison service and Primary Care Trusts and Local Authority adult social care departments. When this happens there are clear benefits in reducing social nuisance type crime and successfully maintaining ex-offenders in the community. The National Standards for CDRPs, particularly around information and intelligence sharing, should help this process.

Legislation to prevent racist or religious hate crime

As part of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 the Government introduced nine new racially-aggravated offences. These offences, which include assaults, criminal damage and harassment, carry higher maximum penalties where there is evidence of racial hostility in connection with the offence.

In the aftermath of the events of September 2001 the Government felt that it was important to legislate quickly to protect those who risk assault or abuse because of their religious beliefs. The Anti-Terrorism, Crime & Security Act 2001 therefore created new religiously-aggravated offences. These expand on the offences mentioned above by affording the same protection against violence to religious groups, such as Muslims and Christians, as already existed for racial groups (which the courts have deemed to include Jews and Sikhs). These new offences carry the same higher maximum penalties as their racially-aggravated counterparts.

Additionally, there is a statutory duty on sentencers, where a court is considering any offence other than the specific racially- or religiously- aggravated offences outlined above, but where there is nonetheless evidence of a racist or religious element in the commission of a crime, 1) to consider this as an aggravating factor meriting an increased sentence, and 2) to state in open court that such an aggravating factor was present.

¹⁰ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/crime-statistics-independent-review-06.pdf>

The introduction of these statutory offences and other provisions sends a clear message that racially- and religiously-motivated criminal activity is unacceptable and will not be tolerated

Monitoring

Monitoring will play a vital role in ensuring that the local delivery partners are accurately targeting their resources and efforts to have the greatest impact in their area. To ensure the monitoring processes in place best support the new crime strategy the existing performance assessment frameworks for community safety are also being reviewed. There will be a single framework for assessing performance on community safety – the Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS), which streamlines three frameworks into one. APACS will be developed during 2007/08 for implementation in 2008/09.

Every indicator in APACS will have specific and agreed responsible partners, including the police, local authorities, and primary care trusts. The Safer Communities PSA will be included as indicators within APACS. It will also include scope for assessing outcomes which are identified by partnerships as local priorities.

We are aiming to align APACS with this new framework for Local Authority performance in England. This will ensure that the police, local authorities and other partners are all working towards the same set of nationally and locally prioritised targets for which they are jointly accountable.

It is intended that the framework will be used to show if services are, among other things, equitable. In practice this comes down to including indicators which link to fairness and equality. In this respect we are fully behind the commitment in the Local Government White Paper to include 'convergence' measures.

CONSULTATION & INVOLVEMENT

Stakeholder /community involvement in developing proposals

A wide range of stakeholders, including other Government departments, the police, local delivery partners and voluntary organisations have been involved in varying levels in the development of this new strategy. Key delivery partners have had opportunities to comment on drafts of the strategy to ensure the new ways of working being suggested are in fact workable. On the whole the new approach to tackling crime set out within the new strategy has been welcomed from across the broad range of stakeholders engaged in the process.

We would like to take this opportunity to specifically thank Respond, Voice UK, the Ann Craft Trust, NACRO, Victim Support and the Runnymede Trust for their contributions to this equality impact assessment.

Organisations invited to input to the equality impact assessment process

1990 Trust
Age Concern
Faith Communities Consultative Council
Fawcett Society
Mencap
NACRO
Press For Change
Respond

Stonewall
The Anne Craft Trust
The Howard League for Penal Reform
The Runnymede Trust
Victim Support
Voice UK

ASSESSMENT & ANALYSIS

Key findings from the assessment and community engagement

In undertaking this assessment, analysis has been carried out on the impact on the differentiation within the spectrum of crime; to the end to end approach to tackling crime and the cross cutting drivers and finally to the delivery and enablers. The table at the end of this document sets out the results of this analysis and also details current position or action for each area.

This impact assessment has been intended to detail the potential impact on equality for all the varying workstreams within the Crime Strategy, more often than not this has already been completed as each individual policy was developed, the table at the end of this assessment details where this is the case. What this impact assessment seeks to do is confirm what is already in place and highlight areas of the strategy which may have equality implications and so will be subject to a full assessment in due course.

Geographic Location & Social Deprivation

We know that one of the strongest drivers of crime is the economy and that evidence shows that when the economy performs well, crime falls. It therefore follows that community deprivation, unemployment-related income inequality and related education, housing, family and health disadvantage create situations where crime flourishes. This is supported by the 2006/07 BCS which confirms that the risk of being a victim of crime varies geographically by the level of deprivation; generally people living in more deprived areas, and we know that there are high levels of BME communities residing in such areas, are more likely to be a victim of crime than those living in less deprived areas.

Yet the social conditions referred to above exist for many people even when the economy is doing well. It is fair to say that economically disadvantageous circumstances make crime more tempting and/or acceptable amongst peers. For example, 67% of prisoners were unemployed in the four weeks before their imprisonment, compared to an unemployment rate of around 5% in the general population¹¹

In recent years, the Government has focused much effort on reducing social deprivation and improving life chances to lift people out of risk of offending. Initiatives such as Sure Start, Every Child Matters, Respect, multi-agency working at a local level and creation of the minimum wage have been successful. Absolute poverty has halved, income has risen faster for the poorest 20% of the population than the richest 20%, and 800,000 children and one million pensioners have been lifted out of relative poverty.¹² The Government's refreshed approach to tackling social exclusion is set out in the Cabinet Office document '*Reaching out: an action plan on social exclusion*'.

CONCLUSION

¹¹ SEU (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: HMSO

¹² Cabinet Office (2007)

We have concluded that the new strategy will not have an adverse impact on any group within society but rather it will impact positively on all, and in particular for those minority groups who, for what ever reason be it geographical location, educational attainment level or employment status are disproportionately affected by crime. There are already some policies in place, as detailed in the *'What are we doing to address these issues?'* section which, whilst targeted at the whole community have an additionally positive impact on these groups. The focus on local delivery and local partnership working will see greater engagement with these groups and will allow their needs to be met more easily and will allow them greater access to relevant local delivery partners.

The issue for the Government and local delivery partners is to continue addressing all of the issues affecting local communities, in new and innovative ways so as to improve people's life chances and opportunities to participate more fully in their local community and society more widely. This new crime strategy places the focus of delivery on tackling local priorities, in areas of high deprivation this will mean addressing other social issues which have an impact on crime, such as employment, access to goods and services and alcohol and drug misuse.

The table below sets out next steps for the related policies which sit within the Crime Strategy. The strategy itself is the first, high level, document setting out the Government's new approach to reducing crime; it will be followed in the autumn by publication of the new PSAs and related delivery agreements.

WORKSTREAM	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT	CURRENT POSITION / ACTION
1. DIFFERENTIATING WITHIN THE SPECTRUM OF CRIME		
Anti-social behaviour and volume crime	<p>Relevant. Because of the differential impact of ASB and volume crime on hard-pressed communities and the minority groups within them, this means that Home Office policies on tackling ASB and volume crime are making a positive contribution to improving the lives of BME communities. We also encourage agencies to use ASB tools and powers, such as anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and anti-social behaviour injunctions, as a means of tackling unacceptable behaviour targeted at BME groups.</p> <p>There is some evidence to suggest that those with disabilities are disproportionately victims of anti-social behaviour and volume crime.</p>	<p><u>Anti-Social Behaviour</u> Guidance on the use of ASBOs has recently been updated to underline the importance of local agencies' assessing the impact of their ASB policies on BME groups. Link to guidance; http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/antisocialbehaviour/antisocialbehaviour55.htm</p> <p>Existing policies will be assessed by the end of March 2008 To take account of research findings on race issues in ASB (indicating disproportionately high levels of perception of ASB for BME people, especially for the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, and the need to identify any barriers to reporting ASB for BME people) in our policies and strategies and to reduce this differential impact.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of revising guidance to local areas and are working to develop a toolkit for practitioners working to tackle anti-social behaviour, and with reference to work with victims and witnesses. This will include reference to the legal duty of public bodies with reference to the Sex Discrimination Act as well as other relevant legislation. The guidance for anti-social behaviour tools and powers is due to be published in Autumn 2007, and for victims and witnesses by March 2008.</p> <p><u>Volume Crime</u> High volume crime such as burglary and vehicle crime, despite significant reductions over the past ten years, continues to be a significant proportion of total crime. With proven, mature, policies in place the new focus on partnership working and local delivery or local priorities is very significant. Previous crime specific policies were assessed and monitored for their impact on equality. The new way of working set out within the strategy will see local delivery partners undertaking robust local strategic assessments to ensure the priorities and needs of their communities are met and that the needs of the full range of victims are considered when prioritising community safety effort.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u> http://www.drc-gb.org/newsroom/news_releases/2007/tackling_crime_priority.aspx</p>
Violent crime	Relevant	<p><u>Violent Crime</u> Tackling Violent Crime Programme - all participating Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) are asked to equality impact assess their activity as part of the programme. This will be reviewed as part of regular evaluation process.</p> <p>Strategy - strategic approach is to look at harm (to society as well as the individual) as well as volume. The</p>

		<p>extent that victims of violent crime (especially hate crime, such as religiously/racially aggravated offences) are from BME groups is an additional harm factor and we are building race equality into our Strategy.</p> <p>Under-reporting is greater where the victims of homophobic, race or faith hate crimes are women so policies, programmes and interventions whose purpose is to increase reporting serve to reduce that gender inequality.</p> <p>Existing policies will be assessed by the end of March 2008 To ensure that race and diversity issues are built into the Violent Crime Strategy and the Tackling Violent Crime Programme and increased reporting of hate crime.</p> <p>Policies on domestic violence and sexual offending, areas where women are disproportionately victims, will be equality assessed as part of that review.</p>
Organised crime and terrorism	Relevant	<p>We are aware that sections of the community – in particular Muslim communities - are concerned about counter-terrorism powers. It is important that we address these concerns, countering the terrorist threat and ensuring good community relations are interdependent and we are continuing to work closely with communities to reassure them that law enforcement is appropriate and proportionate.</p> <p>The Serious Organised Crime Agency Equality Scheme established a framework where equality issues are embedded within all strategic planning, policy development and organisational processes. Link to SOCA Equality Scheme http://www.soca.gov.uk/downloads/SES2006-2009.pdf</p>
2. END TO END APPROACH TO TACKLING CRIME AND CROSS-CUTTING DRIVERS		
Early intervention	Relevant	<p>Existing policies within DCSF (Dept for Children, Schools and Families) and YJB falling within this area of work will have already been equality assessed as they were developed. New pieces of work will be assessed for their equality impact as they are developed.</p> <p>Examples of existing policies:</p> <p>Youth Matters: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/Youth%20matters%20pdf.pdf</p>
Situational prevention	Not relevant. There is no evidence to suggest that design against crime policies will have any impact on equality issues.	<p>Although there is not directly relevant it is worth noting that work existing work on situational prevention, particularly on 'safer places' e.g. the introduction of alley gating, has a positive impact on all aspects of the local community.</p> <p>http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/724/SaferPlacesThePlanningSystemandCrimePrevention_id1144724.pdf</p>

Enforcement	Relevant	<p>Home Office policy document 'Rebalancing the Criminal Justice System In Favour of the Law-Abiding-Majority', published in July 2006, states that we currently have a system where those from certain ethnic groups are disproportionately more likely to be arrested, to be convicted of a serious crime, and to be imprisoned. It makes clear that part of rebalancing must be in favour of the law-abiding majority, but also ensuring that there is no built-in unfairness based on race, creed or colour.</p> <p>Link to policy document: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/CJS-review.pdf/CJS-review-english.pdf?view=Binary</p> <p>The accompanying Race Equality Impact Assessment highlights actions within the review which have potential race equality implications and signposts a set of actions for future work as a result. It also highlights policies which have already been assessed as part of previous policies or legislation.</p> <p>Link to REIA: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/CJS-review.pdf/CJS-REIA.pdf?view=Binary</p>
Reducing Re-offending	Relevant	An EIA will be conducted ahead of the new strategy on reducing reoffending, due for launch in Autumn 2007.
Drug misuse	Relevant	New Drug Strategy will commence April 2008 and a project team will work on the development of this between April and the end of 2007. An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the formulation of the new strategy.
Alcohol misuse	Relevant. Race and diversity issues are considered within the Alcohol Strategy. The alcohol measures within the Violent Crime Reduction Bill form part of the existing Strategy and they differential impact on BME groups has been examined and considered very unlikely. Evidence suggests that BME groups	The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy has been published. Race and diversity issues are built into the strategy. http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Alcohol-strategy.pdf?view=Binary

	drink less than their White counterparts and are less likely to be impacted by most of the measures which are targeted at binge-drinkers and on-trade retail premises that serve them alcohol.	
3.DELIVERY AND ENABLERS: A NEW WAY OF WORKING		
Partnership	Relevant	Creation of a smaller more strategic centre, devolving responsibility for delivery to frontline and new framework of accountability between centre and operational arms. Opportunity to ensure that equality principles are built into the new framework. Action to ensure that EIAs are carried out in planning for and setting up the new organisation.
Accountability	Relevant	<p>Further to the in-depth review of partnership provision of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as announced in the Police Reform Act 2002, the provisions of the Police and Justice Act will resolve a number of difficulties currently facing CDRPs, which have, in the past led to distraction from delivery of local crime reduction and improved community safety. Changes to the role and functions of CDRPs will have no impact on equality of opportunity or good race relations. The new role for local authority Scrutiny and Overview Committees to cover community safety will mean, amongst other things, that they will be in a position to help monitor race equality issues across the CDRPs work.</p> <p>The creation of a mechanism to enable local communities to secure action by the police and community safety partners when they have failed to address a particular problem via their ward councillor means that there is lesser risk of aggravating community tensions if it results in visibly more resources in one area rather than another.</p> <p>Regulations setting out what the new national standards for CDRPs will consist of are currently being drafted: guidance on how to implement the new standards will follow later in the year. The new standards will place a requirement on CDRPs to obtain the views of the local community when prioritising their efforts to reduce crime and substance misuse.</p> <p>Link to Partnerships mini site: http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/regions/regions00.htm</p>
Effective organisation and partnerships	Relevant	Some groups are more likely to be affected by crime and disorder than others. Young people, people of mixed race and young Asians face a greater risk of being victims of crime than other groups. (This is particularly important as the numbers in the latter groups are expected to rise significantly in future years). Black people are five times more likely – and Asians twice as likely – to be murder victims than white people.

		<p>In addition, the number of offences of violence, harassment and criminal damage which were recorded as racially aggravated rose in 2003/04. BME groups are also disproportionately represented at all stages of the Criminal Justice System process.</p> <p>The introduction of the National Policing Improvement Agency is also important in delivering an improved CJS. Our assessment is that by ensuring the Police Service adopts more effective means of gathering intelligence and responding to the needs of citizens the NPIA should impact positively on the experience of all citizens and, particularly, BME citizens' experience of the CJS.</p>
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***Crime Strategy Unit
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