 17th July 2020

**Demands on the police forces in England and Wales during the Covid-19 pandemic**

**Introduction**

This release presents the latest data on the demands being placed on the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The latest figures cover the 4-week period to ending 5th July 2020 and are compared with the equivalent 4-week period in 2019.

**Calls for Service**

As last reported, calls for service remain lower compared with the same period last year. The level of reduction is similar to that reported last month: with 999 calls down by 14% and 101 calls by 15% (compared with 16% and 12%) and follows much larger falls in the early months of the public health restrictions (Table 1).

**Table 1: Trends in telephone calls for service to police forces in England and Wales, 4 weeks ending 5th July 2020 compared with the equivalent 4-week period in 2019**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **% change** |
| 999 calls | -14% |
| 101 calls | -15% |

Calls for service generate incident recording which can be categorised by broad themes. While there has been a general reduction in calls for service, this masks some variation when considering different types of incidents. While the volume of incidents related to reports of missing persons was down 27% (similar to the 29% reported last month) other safeguarding incidents rose (Table 2). There was a small rise of 5% in incidents related to mental health and follows previous reductions (down 2% and 8% in the last two reporting periods).

The increase in recorded domestic abuse incidents was slightly lower this month (up 6% compared with an 8% rise reported last month. Domestic abuse incidents are a measure of concerns that have been brought to the attention of the police. Not all such incidents will result in a crime being identified and recorded. Nor will hidden abuse be captured in these data.

**Table 2: Trends in safeguarding incidents recorded by police forces in England and Wales, 4 weeks ending 5th July 2020 compared with the equivalent 4-week period in 2019**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **% change** |
| Domestic abuse related | +6% |
| Missing person related | -27% |
| Mental health related | +5% |

**Crime**

We have reported marked falls in most crime types compared with the equivalent period in 2019 (Table 3). However, the latest figures show a slowing of the rate of reduction in most crime types and the first indications with some early signs of a possible return towards normalisation.

We continue to see reductions in high volume crimes such as burglary, vehicle-related theft and shoplifting. This is to be expected given the reduction of opportunities for criminals to commit acquisitive crime but as restrictions are eased there is a risk that these may return to levels seen prior to the lockdown.

There also continues to be a reduction in most contact-crimes including rape, assaults (including both Grievous Bodily Harm and Actual Bodily Harm) and robbery committed against individuals. For these types of crime, the closure of the night-time economy will be a key driver.

**Table 3: Trends in crime recorded by police forces in England and Wales, 4 weeks ending 5th July 2020 compared with the equivalent 4-week period in 2019**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **% change** |
| All notifiable crime | -14% |
|  |  |
| Rape | -7% |
| Assaults and personal robbery | -22% |
| Assaults on emergency workers | +19% |
|  |  |
| Residential burglary | -30% |
| Theft from and of a vehicle | -33% |
|  |  |
| Shoplifting | -38% |

One exception is the 19% rise in assaults on emergency workers compared with the same 4-week period in 2019. This was a slightly lower rise than reported last month but these offences are recorded in relatively low volumes so percentage changes can fluctuate. As previously reported, it is thought the rise may be driven by increases in common assaults on police constables, including suspects spitting on officers while claiming to be infected with Covid-19.

The police in England and Wales recorded a total of 35,637 Covid-19 related incidents in the 4 weeks to the 5th July. This is much reduced on the 102,304 reported last month and is likely to reflect in part the easing of the restrictions and reduced reports of reports from the members of the public about breaches of the regulation by others.

**Understanding the data**

The data reported here is based on a new ad hoc NPCC collection instituted to inform Operation Talla. The purpose was to provide a mechanism for monitoring and tracking demands on the police during the Covid-19 outbreak to inform operational decisions.

A small number of key indicators have been collated from the 43 territorial forces in England and Wales by the NPCC team. We are aware that not all forces have been able to supply consistent returns across all indicators. The data should be viewed as provisional, having been gathered at speed, and as only indictive of recent trends.

In this release, we have restricted our reporting to those indicators that we have confidence are sufficiently robust to provide a reliable picture.