

Police ASB Incidents – A Change in Recording

Introduction

From the 1st April 2011 there are changes being made to the way in which Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents are recorded by Police.

Following a full review of National Standards for Incident Recording (NSIR) in 2009 by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) on behalf of Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), it was recommended that NSIR was rationalised and simplified. NPIA, working closely with the Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), have shifted the NSIR focus from incident recording to risk assessment and more accurately identifying vulnerability, particularly around anti-social behaviour (ASB).

For the past five years the police have been using the fourteen categories of ASB as defined by the NSIR for dealing with incidents that fall short of being notifiable crimes. Whilst these categories provided a suitable data set for recording ASB, they did not encourage call-handlers to consider the risk involved for the caller, other individuals or the community as a whole if the ASB continued.

ASB in NSIR for 2011 reflects a case management ethos rather than an incident based approach. It considers the spectrum of harm, encourages the management of risk and emphasises problem-solving. It simplifies and rationalises police activity in every aspect from recording, investigating, risk assessing and analysing through intervening and on to follow-up action.

The three proposed new ASB categories are:

- (1) Personal**
- (2) Nuisance**
- (3) Environmental**

These simplified categories are designed to change the emphasis from merely recording and responding to incidents, to identifying those vulnerable individuals, communities and environments most at risk and therefore in need of a response before the problems escalate.

ASB - Personal

'Personal' is designed to identify ASB incidents that the caller, call-handler or anyone else perceives as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large. It includes incidents that cause concern, stress, disquiet and/or irritation through to incidents which have a serious adverse impact on people's quality of life. At one extreme of the spectrum it includes minor annoyance; at the other end it could result in risk of harm, deterioration of health and disruption of mental or emotional well-being, resulting in an inability to carry out normal day to day activities through fear and intimidation.

ASB – Nuisance

‘Nuisance’ captures those incidents where an act, condition, thing or person causes trouble, annoyance, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims. It includes incidents where behaviour goes beyond the conventional bounds of acceptability and interferes with public interests including health, safety and quality of life. Just as individuals will have differing expectations and levels of tolerance so will communities have different ideas about what goes beyond tolerable or acceptable behaviour.

ASB - Environmental

‘Environmental’ deals with the interface between people and places. It includes incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings including natural, built and social environments. This category is about encouraging reasonable behaviour whilst managing and protecting the various environments so that people can enjoy their own private spaces as well as shared or public spaces.

People’s physical settings and surroundings are known to impact positively or negatively on mood and sense of well-being and a perception that nobody cares about the quality of a particular environment can cause those effected by that environment to feel undervalued or ignored. Public spaces change over time as a result of physical effects caused, for example, by building but the environment can also change as a result of the people using or misusing that space.

Source: NPIA – The National Standard for Incident Recording 2011

Further Information

Glossary

National Standards for Incident Recording (NSIR): introduced to replace the wide variety of incident recording (and non-recording) that differed from force to force so that common understanding and recording practices would result in effective data provision and use. NSIR now helps record effectively over 80% of calls for police action.

Websites

National Policing Improvement Agency

<http://www.npia.police.uk/>