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CPS

Violence against women crime report

2007 – 2008

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION BRANCH

- the number of DV cases charged² increased from 62% in 2006-07 to 65% in 2007-08;
- unsuccessful prosecutions fell from 40% in 2005-06 to 31% in 2007-08;
- guilty pleas increased from 58% in 2006-07 to 62% in 2007-08;
- unsuccessful outcomes due to victim issues accounted for 17% of all domestic violence outcomes in 2006-07 falling to less than 16% in 2007-08.

Rape – key findings

- in the two years ending in March 2008, over 6,700 defendants were prosecuted for rape;
- 99% of defendants were men in 2006-07 and in 2007-08;
- 87% of victims were women in 2006-07 and in 2007-08;
- the number of rape cases charged increased from 33% in 2006-07 to 40% in 2007-08;
- unsuccessful prosecutions fell from 46% in 2005-06 to 42% in 2007-08;
- guilty pleas increased from 33% in 2006-07 to 35% in 2007-08;
- unsuccessful outcomes due to victim issues accounted for 9% of all rape outcomes in 2006-07 falling to less than 8% in 2007-08.

Sexual offence – key findings³

- in the two years ending in March 2008, over 16,400 defendants were prosecuted for sexual offences (other than rape);
- almost 96% of defendants were men in 2007-08 (little changed compared with 2006-07);
- unsuccessful prosecutions fell from 32% in 2005-06 to 27% in 2007-08;
- guilty pleas increased from 53% in 2006-07 to 58% in 2007-08;
- unsuccessful outcomes due to victim issues accounted for 4% of all sexual offence outcomes in 2006-07 falling to less than 3% in 2007-08.

Forced marriage and so-called ‘honour’ crimes

The report also provides data on forced marriage and so-called ‘honour’ crimes from a pilot in four CPS Areas carried out for nine months in 2007-08. 35 cases were identified of which 21 were finalised at the time of data collection. All defendants were men; aged on average 29 years old, and most were Asian, with cases more likely to be finalised at the Crown Court than the magistrates’ court. A number involved more than one defendant and victim. Some, but not all, were within a domestic violence context. In cases where men were found to be victims, it was linked to a relationship with a woman who was also harmed.

Child abuse

The report also provides data on prosecution of child homicides; offences against the person and sexual offences.

- in the two years ending in March 2008, there were 59 defendants prosecuted for homicides⁴; 4,654 defendants prosecuted for offences against the person and 7,783 defendants prosecuted for child sexual offences.

² Data on charging is only available from 2006-07

³ CPS data on sexual offences is more limited than for domestic violence and rape. Sexual offences are identified only at the conclusion of a prosecution, while data on domestic violence and rape is additionally held for pre-charge proceedings

⁴ Homicides comprises offences of murder or manslaughter, conspiring or attempting to cause murder or manslaughter and threats to kill.

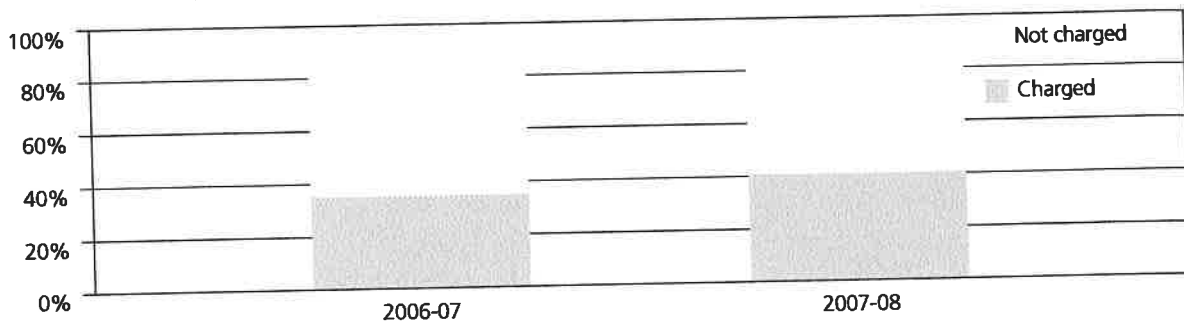
7 Rape: key findings

Since April 2008 the Crown Prosecution Service has reported on the prosecution of rape crimes as part of the Violence against Women (VAW) strategy, as well as measuring performance within the performance review process.

Charging

Cases in which the CPS decided that a defendant should be charged rose from 32.7% of rape cases submitted for pre-charge decisions by the police in 2006-07 to 40% in 2007-08. Further work is underway to improve charging rates.

Table 1: Pre-charge decisions



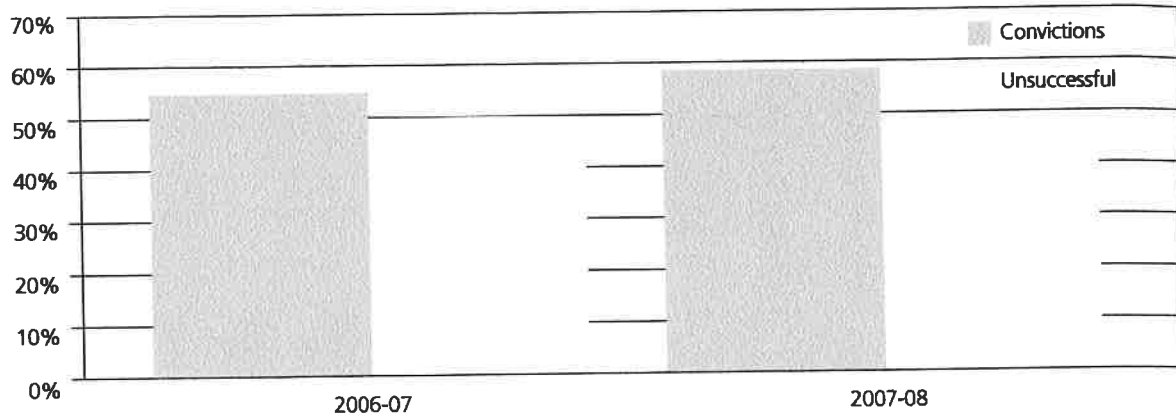
All defendants	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Charged	1,963	32.7%	2,220	40.0%
Request for further evidence	110	1.8%	55	1.0%
No prosecution	3,559	59.3%	3,025	54.5%
All other decisions	369	6.1%	251	4.5%
Total	6,001		5,551	

Statutory Charging was fully rolled out on 3 April 2006

Convictions

In the two years ending March 2008, over 6,700 defendants were prosecuted for crimes involving rape. Table and chart 2 below provide a breakdown of prosecutions over the two year period, showing that convictions rose from 55% in 2006-07 to 58% in 2007-08. During the fourth quarter of 2007-08, convictions for rape crimes reached 61%.

Table 2: Completed prosecutions by outcome

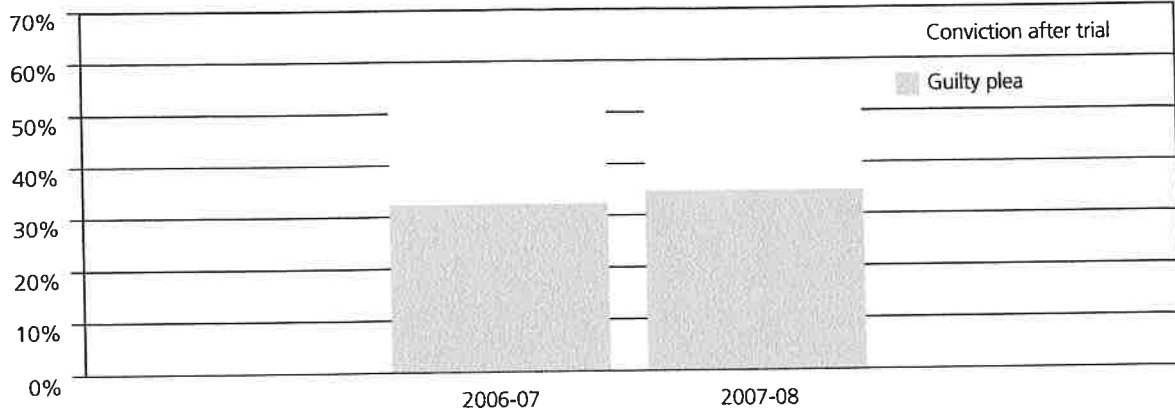


	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Convictions	1,778	54.5%	2,021	57.7%
Unsuccessful	1,486	45.5%	1,482	42.3%
Total	3,264		3,503	

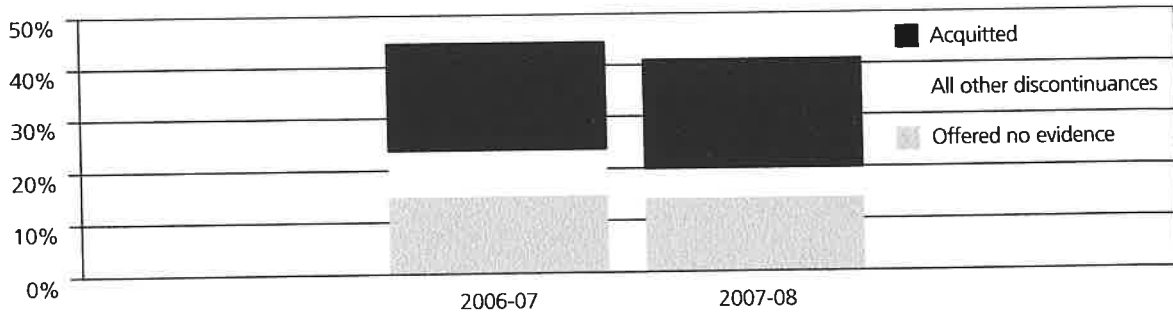
The table and charts below show a detailed breakdown of prosecution outcomes for rape crimes in 2006-07 and 2007-08. Guilty pleas increased from 33% to 35%, contributing to an improved conviction rate of 58% overall in 2007-08. Prosecutions dropped by CPS, including discontinuances and those in which no evidence was offered, fell from 24% to less than 23%.

Table 3: Prosecution outcomes

Convictions



Unsuccessful outcomes



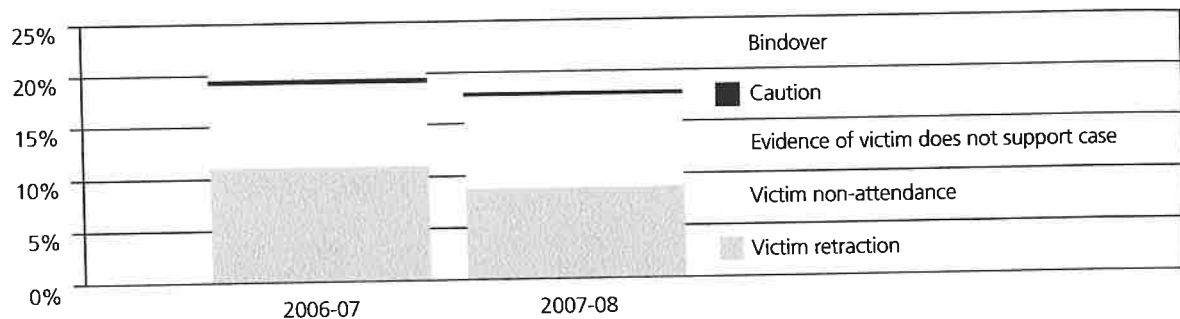
	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Administrative finalisation	29	0.9%	37	1.1%
Discharged committal	7	0.2%	7	0.2%
Prosecutions dropped <i>inc. discontinued, no evidence offered & withdrawn</i>	780	23.9%	795	22.7%
<i>of which – no evidence offered</i>	486	14.9%	494	14.1%
Dismissed after full trial	7	0.2%	5	0.1%
No case to answer	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
Judge directed acquittal	84	2.6%	99	2.8%
Jury acquittal	578	17.7%	539	15.4%
Unsuccessful outcomes	1,486	45.5%	1,382	42.8%
Guilty plea	1,077	33.0%	1,235	35.3%
Conviction after trial	701	21.5%	786	22.4%
Proved in absence	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Convictions	1,778	54.5%	2,021	57.7%
Total prosecutions	3,264		3,503	

Unsuccessful prosecutions

Cases mainly fail for reasons of insufficient evidence, because prosecution is not in the public interest, or because the defendant is acquitted at trial. In addition there are cases which are unable to proceed because of non-attendance or retraction by a victim or witness, and those proceedings subject to an administrative finalisation. The proportions falling within each category showed some variation from 2006-07 to 2007-08. In 2007-08, 2.5% were unsuccessful for administrative reasons and 4.9% for public interest reasons, similar to the previous year. However evidential reasons for case failure rose by 4 percentage points to 45.3%; 9.5% were unable to proceed, a fall of 3 percentage points, and 37.8% fell into other reasons, including acquittal after trial, a reduction of around 2 percentage points.

Table 4 gives a more refined analysis, showing the proportion failing due to victim issues (including victim retraction and cases in which a victim failed to attend a court hearing), those resulting in a bindover, and those in which the defendant was cautioned. Within these key reasons, victim retraction and those where the evidence of the victim did not support the case remained the largest categories, changing little over the period under review at 18% to 17% of unsuccessful outcomes. However, within the 17%, recorded in 2007-08, victim retraction fell by over 2 percentage points to 8.6%, while cases in which the victim's evidence did not support the prosecution case rose by over 1 percentage point to 8.8%. The proportion failing because of the victim key reasons remained stable, at 19% of all unsuccessful outcomes. Of the remaining reasons for unsuccessful outcomes in rape cases, 36% were due to acquittals, 13% to unreliable witness or witnesses and 11% to conflicts of evidence.

Table 4: Key reasons for unsuccessful prosecutions



	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Victim retraction	162	10.9%	128	8.6%
Victim non-attendance	15	1.0%	9	0.6%
Evidence of victim does not support case	109	7.3%	131	8.8%
Caution	6	0.4%	7	0.5%
Bindover	0	0.0%	5	0.3%
Total key reasons	292	19.7%	280	18.9%
All other reasons	1,165	78.4%	1,165	78.6%
Administrative finalisations	29	2.0%	37	2.5%
Total	1,486		1,482	

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the author to the editor. The letter discusses the author's interest in the topic and the reasons for writing the paper. It also mentions the author's previous work in the field and how this new work builds upon it. The letter concludes with a request for the editor's consideration and a statement of the author's confidence in the quality of the work.

2. The second part of the document is the abstract. It provides a concise summary of the paper's objectives, methods, results, and conclusions. The abstract is designed to be a quick overview of the entire document, allowing readers to decide if they want to read the full paper. It includes key terms and phrases that are central to the research.

3. The third part of the document is the introduction. It sets the context for the research, discusses the background of the field, and identifies the specific problem or question that the paper addresses. The introduction also outlines the structure of the paper and the author's approach to the research.

4. The fourth part of the document is the main body of the paper. It is divided into several sections, each focusing on a different aspect of the research. The sections include a detailed description of the methods used, a presentation of the results, and a discussion of the implications of the findings. The author provides a thorough analysis of the data and compares the results to existing literature in the field. The discussion also addresses the limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research.

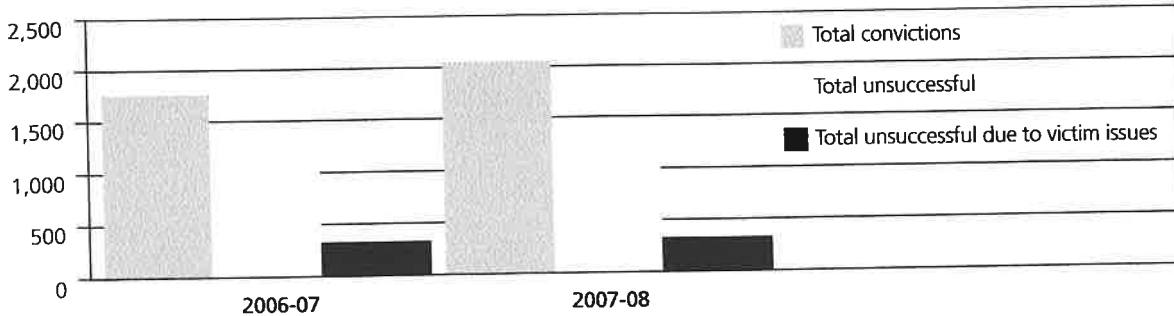
5. The fifth part of the document is the conclusion. It summarizes the main findings of the study and reiterates the author's conclusions. The conclusion also discusses the broader significance of the research and its potential impact on the field. The author expresses their confidence in the results and their belief that the findings will contribute to the understanding of the topic.

6. The sixth part of the document is the references. It lists all the sources cited in the paper, providing a comprehensive list of the literature that informed the research. The references are organized alphabetically by author's name, following the standard format for academic writing.

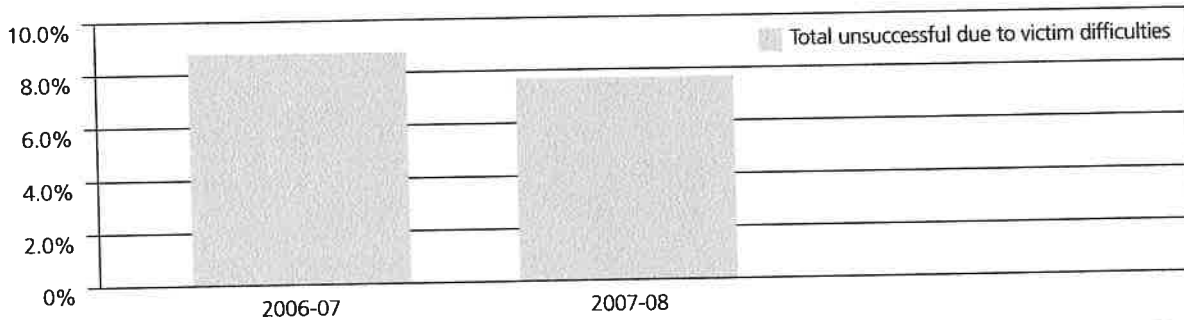
Table and chart 5 show the volume and proportion of victim issues in relation to all outcomes. The volume and proportion of those unsuccessful due to victim difficulties fell slightly from 286 (8.8%) in 2006-07 to 268 (7.7%) in 2007-08. Total unsuccessful outcomes fell from over 45% in 2006-07 to 42% in 2007-08.

Table 5: Comparison of key victim issues

Victim issues in relation to all outcomes



% Victim issues



	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Total unsuccessful due to victim issues	286	8.8%	268	7.7%
Total unsuccessful	1,486	45.5%	1,482	42.3%
Total convictions	1,778	54.5%	2,021	57.7%
Total prosecutions	3,264		3,503	

Retraction

While the facility to collect information on the issue of retraction has been in place since April 2007, the completeness and reliability of the data remains under development. Work is planned for 2009-2010 to improve data collection and quality.

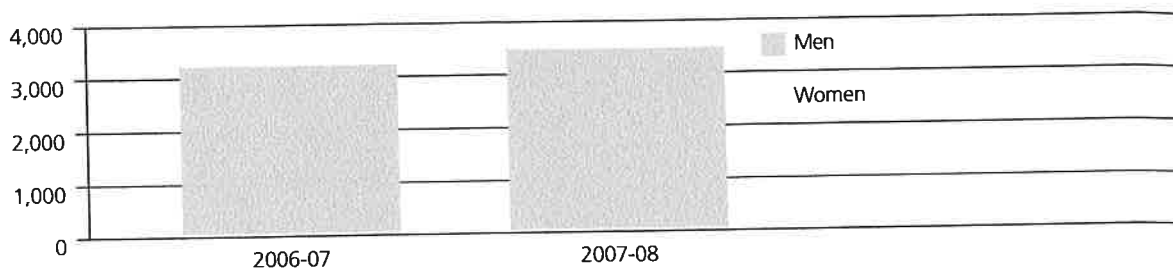
Equalities

(i) Defendants

Gender

Table 6 provides a breakdown of the gender of defendants. The proportion of defendants who were men remained the same at 99% in both 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Table 6: Completed prosecutions by gender of defendant



	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Women	35	1.1%	38	1.1%
Men	3,227	98.9%	3,465	98.9%
Unknown	2	0.1%	0	0.0%
Total	3,264		3,503	

Ethnicity

Ethnicity data on defendants is collected by the CPS in accordance with the agreed Criminal Justice System definitions for the 16+1 ethnic categories. In 2007-08, 59% of rape crime defendants were identified as belonging to the White British category, and 64% were categorised as White. 7% of defendants were identified as Asian, 6% Caribbean, 5% African, and 2% from "other" Black backgrounds. 6% of defendants did not state an ethnicity.

Other equality data

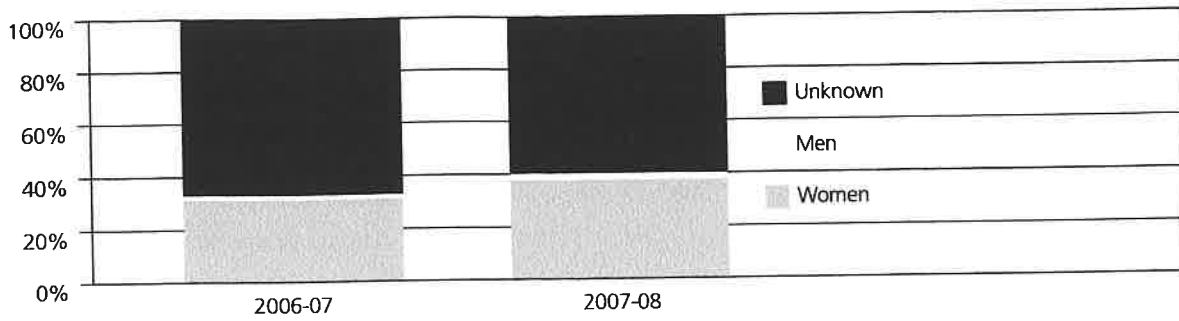
Provision for data collection on the religion or belief and disability of defendants has been in place since April 2007 and the completeness and accuracy of this data remains under development.

(ii) Victims

Gender

Table 7 provides a breakdown of the gender of victims. Data on victims is extracted from the Witness Management System, and is available only from April 2006. The completeness and accuracy of this information remains under development and work is underway to improve recording. Of those victims whose gender has been identified the highest proportion were women, at 87% in both periods.

Table 7: Gender of victims



	2006-07		2007-08	
	Volume	%	Volume	%
Women	415	28.3%	1,053	34.6%
Men	64	4.4%	161	5.3%
Unknown	989	67.4%	1,829	60.1%
Total	1,468		3,043	

Other equality data

Data on victims is extracted from the Witness Management System. Data on ethnicity is available from April 2006, and data on religion or belief and disability from April 2007. The completeness and accuracy of this information remains under development and figures have not been included in the present report. Work is planned for 2009-2010 to improve data collection and quality.

