

**Crown Prosecution Service**  
Delivering justice



**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS REPORT  
TENTH EDITION**

2016–17

INCLUDES DATA ON MEN AND BOYS

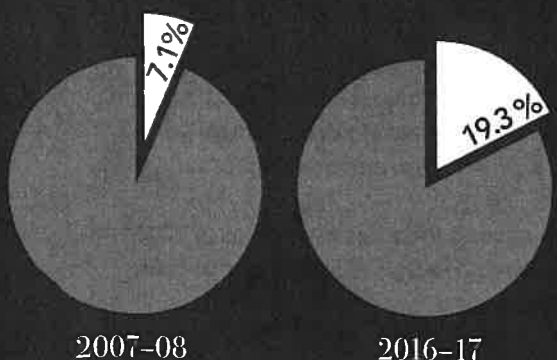
Revised edition

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# 10 YEARS AT A GLANCE

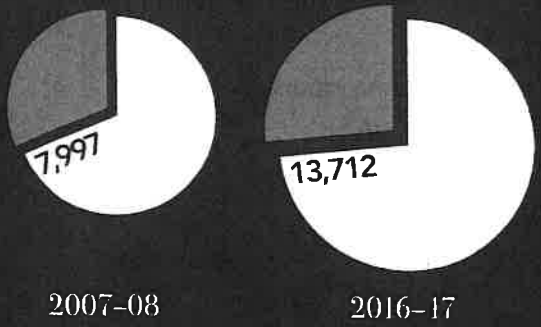
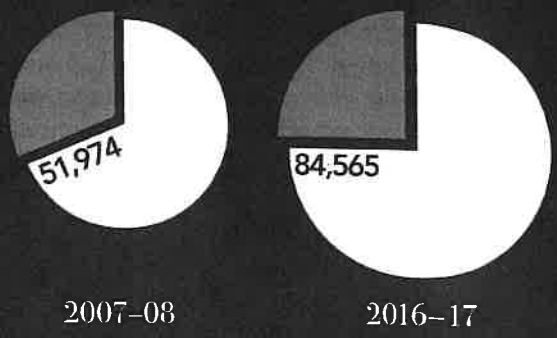


■ VAWG crimes\* ■ Other

In 2007-08, VAWG crimes accounted for 7.1% of the CPS' total caseload. In 2016-17, this rose to 19.3%; now almost one in five cases are VAWG related.

■ Conviction ■ Unsuccessful

There has been a 48.8% rise in prosecutions for VAWG crimes since 2007-08, and a corresponding 62.7% rise in convictions.

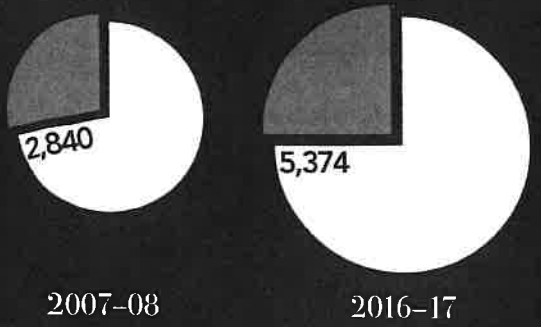
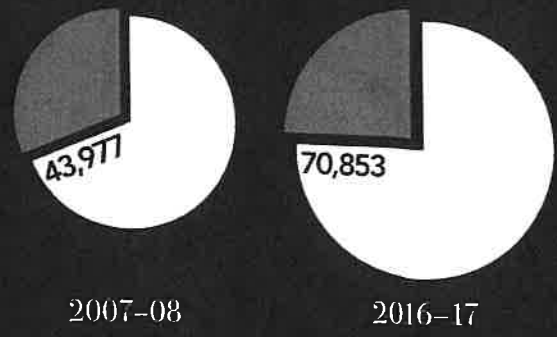


■ Conviction ■ Unsuccessful

In 2016-17 there were 5,715 more convictions for sexual offences including rape and child sexual abuse than in 2007-08. A 71.5% increase over 10 years.

■ Conviction ■ Unsuccessful

This year there were 26,876 more convictions for domestic abuse related offences than 2007-08.



■ Conviction ■ Unsuccessful

The CPS commenced 3,241 more prosecutions for child sexual abuse in 2016-17 than in 2007-08, securing 2,534 convictions – a rise of 89.2%.

\*VAWG crimes' includes domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences



## Foreword by the Director of Public Prosecutions



This is the tenth year of our publication of an annual Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) crime report. We are committed to publishing the analysis and assessment of our performance each year, to assist in improving the effectiveness of our VAWG prosecutions. Over this ten year period VAWG convictions have risen from 51,974 to 84,565 – a 63% rise.

We have worked in partnership across the Criminal Justice System, and with our stakeholders, to encourage victims to report these crimes and prosecutions of domestic abuse, rape and sexual offences now account for one in five of the CPS' total caseload. In 2007–08, prosecutions related to VAWG accounted for 7.1% of the CPS's total caseload; in 2016-17, this rose to 19.3%

In 2016–17, tackling VAWG continued to be a priority for the CPS. We prosecuted and convicted more defendants for sexual offences (including rape and child sexual abuse) than ever before. More than 13,500 defendants were convicted – 1,670 (14%) more than in the previous year and more than a third of these convictions were for sexual abuse of children. For the first time the data on the age of rape victims is robust enough to publish, indicating that more than half of victims are under 24 years of age, and nearly one in five aged 14–17 years. We are addressing the targeting of young people through our work on child sexual abuse, as well as making use of new offences to deal with the increase in the extreme nature of sexual abuse, such as 'possession of extreme pornographic images portraying rape', the streaming of indecent images of children and the 'possession of a paedophile manual'.

The volume of rape defendants prosecuted and convicted following an initial allegation of rape reached the highest level ever, with a steady conviction rate. In the coming year we are committed to contributing to a cross-government 'Deep Dive' exercise to identify ways to further reduce attrition rates in cases of serious sexual offences. Specifically within the CPS we aim to further improve performance through revised guidance and training, for both prosecutors and advocates. We are developing training on acquaintance rape involving intoxicated individuals as well as a psychological evidence toolkit for prosecutors

Our prosecution of cases involving social media has increased, not only for sexual offences but also for domestic abuse, stalking and harassment. We prosecuted more than 460 offences of disclosing private images without consent (so-called 'revenge pornography'). There have been prosecutions of more than 300 offences of coercive and controlling behaviour, since the law was introduced last year, with many involving control of victims through the internet, tracking software and social media platforms. We have also prosecuted a higher proportion of domestic abuse-related offences of indecent or grossly offensive communications.

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During the year we met with groups supporting male victims of crimes identified as 'VAWG' offending and published a public statement on CPS support for men and boys - part of our overall strategic approach to secure justice for *all*. We outlined our commitments to update our legal guidance, training and case studies for prosecutors to include details of the experience of male victims, as well as help challenge myths and stereotypes and provide details of specific support services available for men.

In 2016–17 we recognised that the overall volume of domestic abuse prosecutions had fallen from 100,930 in the previous year to 93,590, following fewer cases being referred by the police. We are working closely with our police colleagues, locally and nationally, to ensure that we address the fall in volume and take forward appropriate cases. We have raised the issue through the Ministerial Domestic Abuse Working Group, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Home Office National Oversight Group to ensure it is addressed at the highest level. By the end of the year the conviction rate rose to 75.7%. We are also working more widely across the Criminal Justice System in developing a domestic abuse best practice model for use in all courts and will provide further training to all of our prosecutors in 2017–18.

I would like to thank stakeholders in our VAWG External Consultation Group and the Community Accountability Forum who have continued to provide their national support and expert advice during 2016–17. In addition, thanks to our dedicated Area VAWG Coordinators, staff in our Rape and Serious Sexual Offence Units and all CPS staff who deal with these cases, as well as the organisations that have supported our local scrutiny panels.

As ever, there is still more to be done in the coming year. We will continue to build on our achievements, implementing changes from the lessons we have learned and working with our partners to ensure an even better service for the victims of these crimes and our society as a whole.



**Alison Saunders CB**

**Director of Public Prosecutions**

**November 2017**

- In 2016–17, the volume of rape referrals from the police fell from 6,855 in 2015–16 to 6,611 – a fall of 244 referrals (3.6%), with a corresponding fall of 6.1% in suspects charged. MoJ do not hold data on referrals from the police.
- The completed rape prosecutions rose from 4,643 in 2015–16 to 5,190 in 2016–17 – the highest volume ever recorded – a rise of 547 prosecutions (11.8%). 45.0% of rape flagged prosecutions in 2016–17 were perpetrated against child victims. Note MoJ data indicated that 3,716 defendants were proceeded against for a principal offence of rape in 2016 - not the highest volume ever.
- The data on the age of rape victims indicates that over 3,000 (52.3%) of rape victims with recorded age were under 24 years of age – 24.7% were aged 18-24 years (1,425); 18.3% were 14-17 years (1,059); 7.5% 10-13 years (435 victims) and 1.8% (103 victims) under ten years old.
- Convictions for rape rose from 2,689 in 2015–16 to 2,991 in 2016–17 – the highest volume ever recorded – an increase of 302 convictions (11.2%). The CPS conviction rate stayed steady at 57.6% in 2016–17, compared with 57.9% in 2015–16. Data from the MoJ shows that 1,352 offenders were convicted specifically for rape, the highest volume ever.<sup>11 12</sup>
- From CPS data 2016–17, 5,045 (98.9%) of cases initially flagged as rape were finally prosecuted for the principal offence categories of ‘sexual offences, including rape’ or more serious<sup>13</sup> principal offences of ‘homicides’ or ‘offences against the person’. Of these, 4,240 were for sexual offences including rape; 17 for homicide and 788 for offences against the person.

**Link to the Rape section of the data report pages A16–A22 for details of CPS activity, next steps and detailed data analysis**

**The following case study outlines a domestic abuse rape case where consent was challenged.**

A defendant forced vaginal sexual intercourse on his partner after an incident of domestic abuse. He bit the victim’s upper thigh, tried to strangle her and threatened to tie her up. She stated that she knew he would not let her go unless she submitted to his demands and replied “yes” when he asked if they could have sex. The defendant argued consent. At trial the victim’s attendance was secured by way of witness summons, following a retraction statement and she gave evidence to the court that she did not believe that she had been raped as she ‘agreed’ to have sex with the defendant. Robust prosecution and skilful re-examination of the victim outlined the legal case of rape and consent. The defendant was subsequently convicted of Rape and Actual Bodily Harm. He was sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment.

<sup>11</sup>The MoJ conviction ratio for 2016 was 36%. MoJ conviction ratios are calculated as the number of convictions as a proportion of the number of proceedings. This gives a measure of the relative number of defendants who are found guilty within a given year for a certain offence, when compared with the number who are prosecuted that year for the same offence. As trials can span more than one year, offenders found guilty in a calendar year are not always the same defendants who were prosecuted in that year. Further, defendants may be found guilty of a different offence to that offence for which they were originally prosecuted.

<sup>12</sup>To contextualise the difference in conviction ratios/rates between MoJ and CPS, it is useful to compare CPS figures with a MoJ analysis from 2013, which assessed the proportion of defendants prosecuted for rape offences in 2009 ultimately convicted of any offence between 2009 and 2011. This analysis indicated that, of those initially prosecuted for rape, 56% were convicted for any offence, including 33% who were convicted for rape. The proportion convicted for any offence was more comparable to the CPS conviction rates in 2008–09 of 57.7%; 2009–10 of 59.4% and 2010–11 of 58.6%.

<sup>13</sup>CPS principal offence category: charged offences are allocated one of twelve offence categories to indicate the type and seriousness of the charges brought against the defendant. The Principal Offence Category indicates the most serious offence with which the defendant is charged at the time of finalisation. The order of ‘seriousness’ of the top three key principal offences is: homicide; offences against the person; sexual offences.





## Female Genital Mutilation

- Lead Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) prosecutors for each CPS Area provided early investigative advice to police following any FGM reports and were involved in local training and safeguarding events, to support community engagement.
- Whilst mandatory reporting by front line professionals has not resulted in a significant increase in cases being investigated and referred for prosecution, they have led to safeguarding measures being put in place with families and/or FGM Protection Orders being granted as preventative measures.

**Link to the FGM section of the data report page A29 for details of CPS activity and next steps**

## Child abuse<sup>17</sup>

**For detailed data and analysis of child abuse please link to the child abuse section of the data report pages A30–A33**

The CPS continued to play a central role in the Home Office-led cross government strategy to respond to sexual violence against children. This included engaging with a young witness initiative to expedite cases involving child witnesses under the age of 10 years. The CPS was also involved with the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation.<sup>18</sup>

The CPS network of child sexual abuse (CSA) specialists was reinvigorated to act a source of expertise for colleagues dealing with CSA cases, both locally and nationally. Guidelines on prosecuting indecent images of children were updated in 2016.

Child abuse referrals and defendants charged rose in 2016–17. Child abuse and CSA prosecutions and convictions reached the highest volumes ever.

- Between 2007-08 and 2016–17, CSA conviction volumes have risen from 2,840 to 5,374, a rise of 2,534 convictions, and the highest volume since records began – an 89% rise over this ten year period.
- In 2016–17, the volume of child abuse referrals from the police increased from 13,282 in 2015–16 to 13,310 – an increase of 28 referrals (0.2%). 8,974 (67.4% of referrals) were charged, a rise of 85 from 2015–16, the highest volume ever recorded.
- The volume of prosecutions completed rose from 11,130 in 2015–16 to 11,793 in 2016–17 – a rise of 663 (6.0%), the highest volume ever recorded.
- The volume of convictions rose from 8,439 in 2015–16 to 8,999 in 2016–17 – a rise of 560 (6.6%) – the highest volume ever recorded.
- CSA offence prosecutions completed in 2016–17 rose from 6,217 to 7,181 – a rise of 964 (15.5%) and the highest volume ever recorded.

<sup>17</sup>There is an overlap of rape, sexual offence and child sexual abuse data due to the volume of rape and sexual offences against children.

<sup>18</sup>The Centre of Expertise was set up by Barnardo's and the London Metropolitan University Child and Woman Abuse Study Unit.



Throughout the year, CPS prosecutors were also involved in training Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) to further improve their understanding of the prosecution process.

- Early analysis of the implementation of s.76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015: Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in an Intimate or Family Relationship was carried out in spring 2016. A further review was carried out in April 2017. Both reviews confirmed appropriate application by prosecutors of the legal guidance. It was noted however that the majority of victims of controlling or coercive behaviour were waiting until a violent act had occurred before they made a report to the police.
- We shared learning from the cases we reviewed with the police and have developed a bespoke e-learning course which all prosecutors had to complete before July 2017.
- A Revised Out-Of-Court Disposal (OOC) Framework pilot that began in November 2014 concluded in October 2015. The forces were granted an exemption to the DPP's guidance on conditional cautions which allowed them to use this disposal in place of a simple caution, when it was an appropriate course of action. The findings are being analysed by Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and partners.
- In September 2016 the DPP's guidance on charging was amended to make clear that where prosecutors, outside the pilot Areas, felt that a conditional caution was an exceptionally appropriate course of action for DA cases, this could be authorised with the agreement of the VAWG strategy team.
- A Justice Select Committee was held in 2016 on Restorative Justice and their findings, including their potential use in DA cases, were published in July 2016. The MOJ is leading discussions to create a cross-government position paper which will outline the criteria for any potential use, including safety issues and risk assessments.
- A number of local initiatives have been identified as good practice throughout 2016–17, for example:
  - CPS Area LSIPs addressed DA case issues including coercive or controlling behaviour, ethnicity and Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) victims.
  - Many CPS Areas work closely with IDVAs, e.g. CPS Cymru-Wales and CPS North West held specific IDVA engagement sessions.
  - The majority of CPS Areas ensured DA cases in Magistrates' and Crown Court were prosecuted by specialist trained lawyers; where trials were unavoidably conducted by agents, Areas instructed selected experienced agents. CPS West Midlands insisted that trial advocates consulted with managers before they spoke with victims or witnesses on any case progression proposals.
  - DA courts in CPS Mersey Cheshire worked closely operationally (for example discussing summonses and risk on individual cases) as well as at a strategic level, with good performance.
  - Some CPS Areas endeavoured to list DA cases for trial with 14 days of the first hearing which reduced victim attrition.
  - In CPS North West the Divisional Court reaffirmed the CPS approach to the use of *res gestae*<sup>24</sup> in DA cases when challenged.
  - CPS North West has also introduced a specific court to hear all DA custody cases, enabling specialist prosecutors, police officers and support agencies to attend.

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<sup>24</sup>See glossary for definition.



# Stalking and harassment

## Introduction

The CPS performance data shows that there has been an overall fall in prosecutions commenced in relation to stalking, harassment and breaches of non-molestation orders (NMOs) in 2016–17, compared with 2015–16. There was a rise in prosecutions commenced for breaches of restraining orders. There was a higher proportion of DA-related harassment offences, breaches of NMOs and breaches of restraining orders on conviction commencing prosecutions in 2016–17.

Following the HMIC/HMCPsi thematic inspection on stalking and harassment in 2016–17 the CPS is committed to improving performance in 2017–18 through updating guidance, training, monitoring and consultation with victims' groups.

## Summary of CPS activity

- The CPS stalking and harassment working group, consisting of cross-government CJS specialist and third sector agency representatives, revised stalking training for prosecutors.
- CPS social media guidelines were published in October 2016 containing a section on stalking and harassment.
- Six CPS Areas were inspected by HMIC/HMCPsi in 2016–17, with a report published in July 2017, outlining issues for improvement in the coming year.
- The CPS worked collaboratively with the MoJ in their consideration of the stalking and harassment sentencing penalties within the Policing and Crime Bill, resulting in the maximum sentence for stalking being increased from 5 to 10 years. The Police and Crime Act 2017 received Royal Assent on 31 January 2017.
- In December 2016, the Home Secretary announced her intention to introduce new stalking protection orders which will help protect victims, at the earliest possible stage, particularly prior to prosecution.
- A number of local initiatives have been identified as good practice throughout 2016–17:
  - CPS Cymru/Wales carried out a stalking deep-dive exercise and CPS Mersey and Cheshire dip sampled stalking cases during 2016–17.
  - Following the HMCPsi inspection, local specialist training is planned in CPS Cymru/Wales, Mersey and Cheshire, North East, North West and South East.
  - Joint action plans with the police have been/are being developed in CPS North West and CPS South West; CPS North West is also holding a scrutiny panel.

## Next steps

- Reinvigoration of the CPS Area leads on stalking and harassment.
- Holding a webinar/face-to-face meeting with the CPS Area leads to share the results of the HMIC/HMCPsi thematic inspection of stalking and harassment and the actions to take forward improvements.



- The CPS was also part of the National Rape Monitoring Group, chaired by HMIC. In November 2016, CPS rape data from 2010–11 to 2015–16 was released with that of the police and MoJ for every police force area. The data was provided to Police and Crime Commissioners and local CJS agencies to analyse and scrutinise how rape is dealt with in their local area and address further improvements.
- An internal audit of five RASSO units, undertaken by the Government Internal Audit Agency, led to recommendations for improvement in the areas of organisation and structure, skills, training and support which are being addressed in 2017–18.
- A number of local initiatives have been identified as good practice throughout 2016–17, for example:
  - CPS Area Rape LSIPs addressed technology, communication with victims, support from ISVAs and cases within domestic abuse scenarios.
  - In rape cases some CPS Areas held Case Management Hearings or provided lawyers with individual feedback on their decisions. This improved the quality of decision-making.
  - CPSD, CPS North East and CPS North West developed clear escalation policies with the police to deal with non-compliance with their action plans. They also used IQA and spot reviews. This has improved timeliness and in turn maintained good performance.
  - CPS London developed the outline of a toolkit to address myths and stereotypes using expert evidence and built relationships through the local ISVA group.
  - CPS North West successfully used live links to obtain evidence from witnesses abroad.

## Next steps

- The CPS will be contributing to a cross-government ‘Deep Dive’ exercise to identify ways to reduce attrition rates in cases of serious sexual offences.
- The CPS will work with the Criminal Bar Association and Bar Council to ensure that essential CPS training required for the accreditation of external advocates is delivered.
- Training on the handling of vulnerable witnesses will be delivered to all advocates dealing with serious sexual offences by the end of 2018.
- A new face-to-face training course is being developed to support prosecution of acquaintance rape cases involving intoxicated victims.
- Specialist Youth Training will be delivered in 2017–18 to all RASSO prosecutors including a specific section on RASSO youth cases.
- Training on protecting victims of sexual offences by restricting evidence or questions about their previous sexual history (s.41 YJCEA 1999) will also be delivered.
- The legal guidance will be updated to include details of the experience of male victims to help challenge myths and stereotypes and provide details of support services for male victims. In addition work is underway to improve the recording of the gender of victims.
- The CPS will work with a leading consultant forensic psychiatrist to develop a psychological evidence toolkit for prosecutors.





- There will be further development of the knowledge hub on the internal CPS Intranet site, for prosecutors to share casework examples and provide them with additional reference material to assist in case building.

## Rape data

CPS data on successful rape prosecutions includes not only cases resulting in a conviction for rape, but also cases initially flagged as rape where a conviction was obtained for an alternative or lesser offence. The flag is applied to CPS files from the start of the case following an initial allegation of rape. This flag will remain in place even if the decision is taken to charge an offence other than rape, or where a rape charge is subsequently amended. This is for case management purposes to ensure that the principles of the rape and sexual offence policy are considered throughout the life of all relevant cases. The accuracy of flagging of cases stayed steady at 98.4% in 2016–17 compared with 98.8% in 2015–16.

Data provided below relates to *all* rape defendants and victims, irrespective of gender, with further details of gender where available. Data reported here will overlap with that in the Child Abuse section of the report related to child sexual abuse as 45.0% of rape flagged prosecutions were perpetrated against children.

The Ministry of Justice provides the official National Statistics<sup>39</sup> on rape while CPS data is primarily collected for case management purposes to ensure that the principles of the rape and sexual offence policy are considered throughout the life of all relevant cases. It should be noted that there are important differences as to how rape offences are recorded between the different data systems. These differences include: MoJ data is on a calendar year basis, rather than financial year; data on offenders convicted for rape only includes cases where the final conviction was for a specific offence of rape. Cases initially charged as rape resulting in a conviction for an alternative charge such as a serious sexual assault, will be recorded for the alternative offence. It is not possible to separately identify such cases in MoJ figures. The differences in recording leads to CPS reporting a higher number of prosecutions than recorded in MoJ data.

Further detail in respect of MoJ data and the differences between the datasets is provided in Annex 2 page B11.

- The volume of rape referrals from the police fell from 6,855 in 2015–16 to 6,611 – a fall of 244 referrals (3.6%).
- The average number of days to charge in 2016–17 reached 67.3 days, from 52.7 days in the previous year<sup>40</sup>. However the number of cases submitted to the CPS for a pre-charge decision, where no advice had been given for a period between 28 days and 3 months, fell from 307 in April 2016 to 125 in March 2017. The number of cases submitted to the CPS for a pre-charge decision where no advice had been given for a period in excess of 3 months fell from 40 to one. This indicated that where CPS alone has responsibility for the delay in the charging process, improvements have been achieved.

<sup>39</sup>The official statistics relating to crime and policing are maintained by the Home Office and the official statistics relating to sentencing, criminal court proceedings, offenders brought to justice, the courts and the judiciary are maintained by the Ministry of Justice.

<sup>40</sup>This data reports on the average number of calendar days that has elapsed since the first decision was sought by the police, to the date in which the last decision was made to charge. The data will include cases where the police were required to submit further evidence prior to a decision to charge.



- 3,671 defendants were charged, a fall in volume of 239 charged defendants (6.1%) from 3,910 in 2015–16. Of all police referrals, 55.5% were charged compared with 57.0% in 2015–16.
- The proportion of rape flagged cases, as a percentage of all indictable-only prosecutions, has risen year on year to 15.6% in 2016–17 from 13.2% in 2015–16.

Table 5: Rape caseload as % of total Crown Court indictable only outcomes 2010–11 to 2016–17.

	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
CPS NATIONAL	10.0%	9.9%	9.8%	11.1%	12.8%	13.2%	15.6%

Graph 7 (left): Volume of Police rape referrals

Graph 8 (right): Rape prosecution and conviction and charged defendants, 2010–11 to 2016–17 volumes 2010–11 to 2016–17

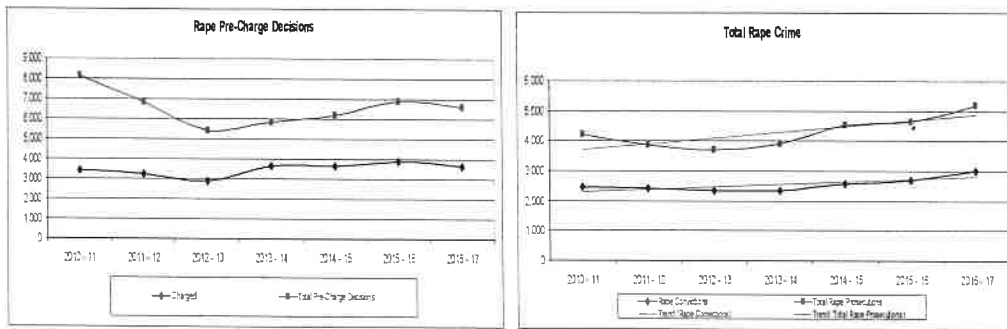


Table 6: Completed rape prosecutions by outcome

	2010 - 11		2011 - 12		2012 - 13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%
Convictions	2,465	58.6	2,414	62.5	2,333	63.2	2,348	60.3	2,581	56.9	2,689	57.9	2,991	57.6
Unsuccessful	1,743	41.4	1,450	37.5	1,359	36.8	1,543	39.7	1,955	43.1	1,954	42.1	2,199	42.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,208</b>		<b>3,864</b>		<b>3,692</b>		<b>3,891</b>		<b>4,536</b>		<b>4,643</b>		<b>5,190</b>	

- In 2016–17<sup>41</sup> the number of prosecutions completed rose from 4,643 in 2015–16 to 5,190 – the highest volume ever recorded and a rise of 547 defendants (11.8%).
- The volume of convictions rose from 2,689 convictions in 2015–16 to 2,991 in 2016–17<sup>42</sup> – a rise of 302 (11.2%). This was the highest volume of convictions ever recorded.
- The CPS rape conviction rate<sup>43</sup> stayed steady at 57.6% in 2016-17 from 57.9% in 2015-16. This should be assessed against the significant rise in the volume of rape prosecutions and convictions.

<sup>41</sup>Note the numbers of defendants charged covers those cases, by suspect, forwarded to CPS during 2016–17 for charging decisions and are not directly comparable in numbers with those prosecuted which covers cases, by defendant, finalised during 2016–17.

<sup>42</sup>Data on conviction outcomes is not currently broken down by gender of defendants.

<sup>43</sup>Outcomes from charge to conviction; see details at start of data section.



# Sexual offences (excluding rape)

## Introduction

In 2016–17, the volume of prosecutions and convictions of sexual offences (excluding rape) rose to the highest volumes ever recorded, with the highest conviction rate.

## Summary of CPS activity

- During 2016 the use of pre-trial recorded cross-examination was piloted in Leeds, Liverpool and Kingston Crown Courts. This latest special measure, available under the Youth Evidence and Criminal Evidence Act 1999, is for particularly vulnerable victims<sup>56</sup>. This is especially helpful for victims of sexual offences who often find cross examination distressing. The recording is carried out as soon as possible after the alleged offence and shown as evidence at the trial, which reduces the stress and trauma for young or vulnerable victims.
- The CPS is engaging with CJS partners to build on this work undertaken during 2016. The Government is committed to rolling out such arrangements across England and Wales during 2017–18.
- CPS Area Sexual Offence LSIPs included addressing communication with victims and clearance of the public gallery.

## Next steps

- The CPS is engaging with CJS partners to build on work undertaken during 2016 on the use of pre-trial recorded cross-examination of victims.
- Legal guidance for prosecutors and the knowledge hub will be updated as in the Rape section of the report.

## Sexual offences (excluding rape) data

CPS records do not include data relating to pre-charge decisions regarding sexual offences (excluding rape), as the principal offence category of 'sexual offences', which includes rape and all sexual offences, is only allocated to cases at the conclusion of prosecution proceedings<sup>57</sup>. Data provided below relates to *all* defendants of sexual offences (excluding rape), with further details of gender where available<sup>58</sup>. Data reported here will overlap with that in the Child Abuse section of the report related to child sexual abuse, as 37.5% of sexual offences are perpetrated against child victims.

<sup>56</sup>Particularly vulnerable victims' include those who are under 16 at the time of the hearing; suffer from a mental disorder within the meaning of the Mental Health Act 1983; have a significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning; or have a physical disability or a physical disorder and the quality of their evidence is likely to be diminished as a result.

<sup>57</sup>CPS sexual offences data (excluding rape) is derived from the principal offence category 'sexual offences' by excluding the rape flagged defendants. There is no separate monitoring flag for 'sexual offences' that is applied, either when the CPS receives a request to make a pre-charge decision or at receipt of the charged case file. The principal offence is allocated only at the conclusion of a prosecution proceeding, based on the most serious offence the defendant is charged with at the time of finalisation.

<sup>58</sup>Data on victims is extracted from the Witness Management Service which includes no record of the victims of sexual offences, other than rape, as that information is compiled only at defendant level.

