National Crime Agency

UK Missing Persons Bureau

Missing Persons
High Level Data Report
2014-15

Date: 9th December 2015

Version number: 1.1

Leading the UK's fight to cut serious and organised crime

Index

	Page
Glossary	2
Executive Summary	3
Missing Incidents	4 - 6
Age and gender demographics	7
Duration missing	8
Harm suffered	9
Absent	10

Glossary

Absent
A person not at a place where expected or required to be. From April 2014 the absent category was developed to include the term 'no apparent risk'.

Command and Control System
A system used for the recording and management of information relating to incidents received by a police service control room and the subsequent allocation and management of police resources.

COMPACT
A missing persons case management system in use in 22 police services.

Duration missing
The time between the report of a person first recorded as missing by the police and the time the police are notified that a person has been found or has returned.

Found Reports
Reports completed by the police when a missing person is found or has returned. The content of the found report is based on information from the previously missing person derived from safe and well checks or return home interviews.

Harm suffered
Details of emotional or physical harm including being a victim of crime drawn from found reports in case management systems.

Incident
A single episode of someone being reported missing or absent to the police which is recorded by the police.

Individuals
A person who has been reported missing which is recorded by the police. One person may be recorded as being missing on more than one incident.

Missing
Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person maybe subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

Missing Persons System
A case management system used by the police to manage the investigation of missing person cases.

Niche
A Resource Management System also used as a missing persons case management system in use in 8 police services.

Executive Summary

This high level data report has been produced to provide an overview of *missing*[a] and *absent* person cases for the financial year 2014-15. A full data analysis report and assessment is being prepared and will be published before the end of March 2016.

The data used to produce this report has been taken from both police service *command and control systems* and *missing person systems*. Data has been obtained from 44 services in England, Wales and Scotland. Data from Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) is not available[b].

Further to the introduction of absent in April 2013, for the year 2014/15 the number of police services implementing absent has doubled from 16 in 2013/14 to 32. Equally the number of police services providing complete absent *incident* data has also doubled from 10 to 20 providing a broader picture than before.

The data for 2014/15 shows a 3% increase in the overall number of command and control missing incidents when compared with 2013/14. This seems to follow 2013/14 where an increase is noted for the first time in four years. Although 16 police services have seen a decrease in the number of missing incidents, 26 services have shown an increase. The remaining 2 forces have yet to provide data for comparison. This equates to 8,345 more records in comparison with the previous year. Initial analysis shows that the highest increases are attributable to a handful of police services. The variation in reported figures from police services over the years will be explored in detail in the full report.

Harm suffered for 2014/15 has been provided by 20 police services compared with 19 for 2013/14. A preliminary consideration of harm suffered categories shows an increase in the recording of sexual offence victims from 109 in the 2013/14 year to 162 in the current year. While this is a significant increase in numerical terms, the increase in percentage is small, 0.3% in 2014/15 compared with 0.2% in the previous year. It is still considered that this figure is well below current estimates of missing children linked to child sexual exploitation. The found safe and well category shows no change in terms of percentages while the actual numbers have increased from 53508 in 2013/14 to 59585 in the current year.

The missing persons data used in this report is continually being received and reviewed, so could potentially differ when the full report is published.

[a] Words in *italics* are explained in the glossary

[b] There is no statutory requirement for PSNI to submit data but it does fully engage with the work of the Missing Persons Bureau. On this occasion it was not possible for PSNI to provide a validated data return in the very short turnaround time required

Missing Incidents

315,517

The number of calls made to a police service regarding a missing or absent person. To date 41 England and Wales Police Services and Police Scotland have provided data.

275,591 The number of calls recorded by police in England and Wales

An increase compared with last year (270,699)

39,926 The number of calls recorded by Police Scotland

An increase compared with last year (36,473)[c]

Table 1: Calls made to a police service in England, Wales and Scotland regarding missing or absent persons 2010 – 2015

Financial year	Total Missing Incidents
2010/11	326,764 (39,197)[d]
2011/12	313,019 (32,662)
2012/13	306,118 (32,799)
2013/14	307,418 (36,473)
2014/15	315,517 (39,926)

211,521 The number of incidents created on a police service missing persons management system, 43 police services within England and Wales provided data. This is an increase of 8% compared with last year (196,560).

137,146 The number of individuals recorded missing on a police service missing persons management system, 43 police services within England and Wales provided data. This is an increase of 4% compared with last year (132,237).

[c] Police Scotland has changed the method in which the yearly figure is calculated. The figures are not directly comparable year on year

[d] Police Scotland total calls

Table 2: Breakdown of calls, incidents recorded on case management systems and individuals recorded by the police, by police services and by child and adult, in England, Wales and Scotland

Police Service	Total calls	Total Adult Incidents	Total Child Incidents	Total Incidents	Total Adult Individuals	Total Child Individuals	Total Individuals
Avon and Somerset	9,765	1,567	1,542	3,109	1,400	974	2,374
Bedfordshire	3,205	135	189	324	134	151	285
Cambridgeshire	2,788	376	685	1,061	357	475	832
Cheshire	4,537	898	2,490	3,388	990	1,660	2,650
City of London	114	41	6	47	41	8	49
Cleveland	3,383	986	2,392	3,378	928	1,884	2,812
Cumbria	1,483	429	799	1,228	477	664	1,141
Derbyshire	3,848	715	1,223	1,938	621	718	1,339
Devon and Cornwall	8,757	3,747	4,282	8,029	2,896	2,208	5,104
Dorset	2,292	379	416	795	359	275	634
Durham	1,095	349	746	1,095	326	404	730
Dyfed Powys	2,171	844	1,099	1,943	700	685	1,385
Essex	3,248	1,513	1,925	3,438	1,402	1,251	2,653
Gloucestershire	0	845	1,195	2,040	697	616	1,313
Greater Manchester	20,402	9,006	13,673	22,679	7,346	5,809	13,155
Gwent	3,611	622	2,952	3,574	594	1,184	1,778
Hampshire	11,448	2,108	4,795	6,903	1,826	2,351	4,177
Hertfordshire	3,308	1,439	1,841	3,280	1,152	841	1,993
Humberside [1]	3,950	563	1,445	2,008	514	786	1,300
Kent	10,406	3,175	7,395	10,570	2,749	3,572	6,321
Lancashire	7,135	1,792	4,941	6,733	969	1,660	2,629
Leicestershire	4,249	851	1,537	2,388	800	771	1,571
Lincolnshire [3]	0	335	326	661	316	248	564
Merseyside	10,148	1,509	3,500	5,009	1,343	1,677	3,020
Metropolitan	42,956	20,736	22,220	42,956	16,769	12,357	29,126
Norfolk	2,613	1,151	1,262	2,413	1,029	761	1,790
North Wales	3,206	651	993	1,644	616	591	1,207
North Yorkshire	3,819	833	2,189	3,022	740	950	1,690
Northamptonshire	2,786	496	540	1,036	448	380	828
Northumbria	17,645	3,221	5,316	8,537	2,678	2,255	4,933
Nottinghamshire	3,441	1,430	2,439	3,869	1,242	1,528	2,770
South Wales[2]	7,391	2,674	4,717	7,391	2,302	2,372	4,674
South Yorkshire	7,401	2,052	3,928	5,980	1,765	2,109	3,874
Staffordshire	3,272	950	2,218	3,168	819	1,128	1,947
Suffolk[3]	0	911	1,248	2,159	845	759	1,604
Surrey	1,801	896	900	1,796	814	575	1,389
Sussex	10,405	946	1,435	2,381	888	778	1,666
Thames Valley	10,894	4,280	5,874	10,154	3,724	3,335	7,059
Warwickshire	1,870	493	682	1,175	419	397	816
West Mercia	4,722	1,281	1,761	3,042	1,097	847	1,944
West Midlands	17,529	2,760	2,902	5,662	2,235	1,740	3,975
West Yorkshire	7,238	2,564	4,067	6,631	2,332	2,467	4,799
Wiltshire	2,854	1,210	1,677	2,887	641	605	1,246
Total E&W	**275,591**	**83,759**	**127,762**	**211,521**	**70,340**	**66,806**	**137,146**
Total Police Scotland[6]	**39,926**						
Total	**315,517**			**211,521**			**137,146**

[1]The total call figure is slightly lower than actual figure due to direct entry into missing persons system in Q4

[2]The total call figure is the same as missing person incident figure due to direct entry into missing persons system

[3]Police Services have to date been unable to provide total call figures

[4]Additional is required to confirm data for Northamptonshire

[5]Metropolitan Police figures adjusted to remove duplicates created by multiple entries into MPS CAD system. Additional work required to confirm data.

[6]Police Scotland is only able to provide a figure for total incidents. A further breakdown is not available at present.

Demographics

Gender and Age

42 police services provided data for missing persons age. Men and boys are more likely to go missing (52%). Compared with last year, this figure shows a slight decrease (53%).

Table 3: Gender of Missing Incidents by age group (n=187,057)

	Male	Female	Total	%
0-4yrs	588	463	1,077	0.58%
5-8yrs	1,077	508	1,614	0.86%
9-11yrs	3,486	1,843	5,384	2.88%
12-14yrs	17,620	19,995	37,858	20.24%
15-17yrs	28,622	37,364	66,319	35.45%
18-21yrs	6,307	6,268	12,678	6.78%
22-39yrs	18,907	10,908	30,083	16.08%
40-59yrs	13,051	6,863	20,077	10.73%
60-79yrs	4,868	2,359	7,292	3.90%
80+yrs	1,889	1,182	3,120	1.67%
Unknown	723	712	1,555	0.83%
Total	97,138	88,465	**187,057**	0.58%
%	**52%**	**47%**		

Note that the remainder of % is either unknown or transgender categories

Under 18

For those under 18years old, girls (54%) are more likely to go missing than boys. When compared with last year, this figure has slightly increased (52%).

Of any age grouping, 12-17 year olds are most likely to go missing: this age group accounts for 56% (n=104,177) of all missing child and adult incidents, where age is recorded in the reported data (n=187,057). This is in line with last years figures.

Table 4: Gender of Missing Incidents under 18years (n=112,252)

	Male	Female	Total	%
0-4yrs	588	463	1,077	0.96%
5-8yrs	1,077	508	1,614	1.44%
9-11yrs	3,486	1,843	5,384	4.80%
12-14yrs	17,620	19,995	37,858	33.73%
15-17yrs	28,622	37,364	66,319	59.08%
Total	51,393	60,173	**112,252**	0.96%
%	**46%**	**54%**		

Duration Missing

74% of missing people are found within 24hours

This figure is based on the 22 police areas which use the *COMPACT* system to record information on the length of time for which people go missing. It should be noted that this data represents a partial picture, as in some cases if a missing person is found or returns within a short period of time the case is not transferred onto the COMPACT system from the service's central control system. However the findings are consistent with those in previous years in that the majority of missing people return or are located within 48 hours with only 5% outstanding for longer than a week (no change compared with 2013/14).

Table 7: Number of incidents broken down by time missing

	Duration Missing						
	0 - 8 hrs	8 - 16 hrs	16 - 24 hrs	24 - 48 hrs	2 - 7 days	7+ days	Total
Total	**20,687**	**8,605**	**5,375**	**5,567**	**4,584**	**2,299**	**47,117**

Duration	Total	
Within 24hrs	34,667	**74%**
Within 48hrs	40,234	**85%**
Over a week	2,299	**5%**

Harm suffered

96% of missing people are found safe and well

Data is taken from 20 police areas which use the COMPACT system to record their missing data. It should be noted that there are limitations to this data as it is based on: an officer's interpretation; and, the accuracy with which the found report is completed. In addition it relies on the disclosure by the missing person during the return interview/ safe and well check as to whether they came to any harm while missing. Whilst the numbers have increased, this percentage remains the same as the previous year.

Table 8: Number of incidents, broken down by type of harm suffered

	Accidental harm	Emotional harm	Found deceased	Physical injury	Self harmed	Sexual offence victim	No harm suffered	Unspecified	Total
Total	**223**	**67**	**255**	**795**	**960**	**162**	**59,585**	**4**	**62,051**
Percentage	**0.4%**	**0.1%**	**0.4%**	**1.3%**	**1.5%**	**0.3%**	**96%**	**0%**	

Category	Total
Found safe and well	**96.0%**
Hurt or harmed[e]	**3.3%**
Sexual offence victim	**0.3%**
Found deceased	**0.4%**
Unspecified	**0%**

In the harm suffered table the number of sexual offence victims is shown as 162 in a population of 62,051 (0.3%). This is a slight increase when compared with the figure seen in the previous year, where the number of sexual offence victims is shown as 109 in a population of 55,623 (0.2%). Please note police services can report more than one category of harm for each incident.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner reported in November 2015 that the extent of child sexual abuse in England has been vastly underestimated. Its study claims around 50,000 cases were recorded in the two years to March 2014 but the true number could be nearer 450,000[f].

[e] Hurt or harmed includes Accidental harm, Emotional harm, Physical injury and Self harmed
[f] www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/protecting-children-harm

Absent

Of the police services below all 32 have implemented the category of absent and 20 police areas provided full incident data for 2014/15. The ratio of absent child to adult is 5:2. The overall number of absent incidents at 38,302 will feature as part of the total calls to the police (315,517).

Table 5: Incident and individual data for absent people

	Adult Incidents	Child Incidents	Adult Individuals	Child Individuals
Police Service	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**
Bedfordshire	529	1,380	406	537
Cambridgeshire	203	702	197	358
Cheshire	147	1,001	116	541
City of London[1]	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	164	688	152	531
Cumbria	24	67	24	73
Dorset	312	486	267	246
Durham[3]	45	192	0	0
Dyfed Powys[3]	18	141	0	0
Essex	18	109	18	75
Greater Manchester[2 3]	2,144	3,981	0	0
Hampshire	339	996	330	700
Hertfordshire	142	481	111	184
Humberside	37	191	32	115
Lancashire[3]	148	925	0	0
Leicestershire[2]	183	535	92	181
Lincolnshire[4]	0	0	0	0
Merseyside	280	1,406	249	511
Metropolitan	641	3,077	344	1,295
Norfolk	998	552	934	542
Northamptonshire	311	1,132	298	969
Nottinghamshire	291	696	271	362
South Yorkshire	535	1,255	489	657
Staffordshire	86	795	79	83
Suffolk	62	254	58	191
Surrey[2 3]	307	571	0	0
Sussex[2 3]	919	1,707	0	0
Thames Valley	755	878	607	393
Warwickshire	17	51	16	41
West Mercia	65	323	59	183
West Yorkshire	993	2,261	921	1,367
Wiltshire	213	542	190	375
Total E&W	**10,928**	**27,374**	**6,260**	**10,510**
	38,302		**16,770**	

[1] Service has implemented absent but no incidents recorded
[2] Service unable to provide data for adult and child individuals
[3] A joint figure was provided by service for adult and child incidents/individuals. Figures calculated based on 65% of reported incidents are related to children
[4] Service has implemented but unable to provide data at present