

## Crime recording policy

### Purpose

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The purpose of this document is to articulate the policy position of Victoria Police in regard to the recording of crime. Crime recorded by Victoria Police consists of those offences corporately recorded, regardless of when the offence occurred or when it was reported to police.

### Objectives

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Victoria Police supports the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) for the recording of crime. The NCRS comprises a uniform set of business rules and requirements that were developed in collaboration with police agencies across Australia to guide the recording and counting of criminal incidents for statistical purposes and enable consistency in recording. Victoria Police practice should be aligned with that standard. The NCRS has ten Recording Rules and five Recording Requirements, which are attached at Appendix A.

Victoria Police Crime Recording Standards have been developed to provide direction on reporting and recording crime in Victoria Police and to reflect and implement the NCRS.

The objectives of the Victoria Police Crime Recording Standards are to:

- Provide clear guidance to Victoria Police employees on recording crime and non-crime incidents
- Ensure the accurate and consistent recording of crime and non-crime incidents for operational, analytical and statistical purposes
- Enhance community confidence in Victoria Police's crime statistic data
- Inform the development of training, processes and systems relevant to crime statistics.

### Responsibility

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The Corporate Statistics Unit at Victoria Police is responsible for developing and maintaining the Victoria Police Crime Recording Standards and policy on the collection, recording and dissemination of crime statistics. The public release of crime statistics is undertaken by the independent Crime Statistics Agency.

### Policy in action

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This policy is given effect and supported by the following documents:

- Victoria Police Manual policy rules and guidelines; *Crime reporting and investigation*
- Victoria Police Crime Recording Standards

## National Recording Rules

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### Rule 1

A criminal incident consists of one or more offences (and their related victims and offenders) which are grouped into the same unique occurrence if they are committed by the same person or group of persons and if:

- they are part of actions committed simultaneously or in sequence over a short period of time at the same place; or
- they are part of interrelated actions, that is, where one action leads to the other or where one is the consequence of the other(s); or
- they involve the same action(s) repeated over a long period of time against the same victim(s) and only come to the attention of the police at the one point in time.

The purpose of this rule is to define a criminal incident.

### Rule 2

An incident will be recorded as one or more offences if prima facie (on the face of it) on the balance of probability (more probable than not):

- the circumstances as reported or detected amount to a crime defined by law and fall within the jurisdiction of the police agency; and
- there is not credible evidence to the contrary.

This rule provides a common basis for recording an incident with one or more offences according to the judgement of the police officer (as distinct from evidentiary or prosecutorial reasons).

### Rule 3

Each incident and any associated status changes need to be recorded in the crime recording system as soon as they are known.

This rule provides for timely recording of incidents and associated information.

### Rule 4

All records in the crime recording system need to be auditable.

This includes the full history of any record changes including the deletion of records.

This rule is intended to ensure the availability of system management information which may be used for quality auditing purposes.

### Rule 5

In recording offences for an incident, the level and nature of all offences will be recorded without unnecessary duplication.

If an assault occurs that results in a murder, both may be recorded and only the murder will be counted.

If an assault occurs to give effect to a rape both may be recorded and only the rape will be counted.

The purpose of this rule is to provide a common basis for recording and ultimately counting offences that avoids discretely counting offences which are an inherent part of the commission of another offence.

### **Rule 6**

The level of the offence can be increased or decreased and the nature of the offence can be changed depending on police assessment and investigation.

If an offence, as initially recorded, changes or evolves in level or nature it should be recorded in such a way that the latest state is counted, at least up to the point of an offender being charged for the offence.

This rule facilitates the recording of new information throughout a police investigation to ensure that the latest state is counted. This is consistent with rule 2, in that it is intended to be reflective of police decision making, not prosecutorial processes.

### **Rule 7**

All offences are to be given outcome codes which indicate the current status of the police investigation.

Outcome codes will be sufficient to enable application of the counting rules consistently.

The Outcome classification enables those states and territories that record above the NCRS requirements to filter out incidents that are outside of the scope of the national statistics. In addition, the Outcome classification is the basis for a data item in the Recorded Crime Victims collection and can be used for analytical purposes.

### **Rule 8**

All distinct offences must be recorded including the date of occurrence.

Where the date of the offence is unknown, the date range of the offence or incident is to be recorded.

Note: this rule was intended to facilitate analysis of data relating to historical as distinct from current offences. Implementation of this rule has been deferred.

### **Rule 9**

Incidents and offences are to be recorded in the state/territory where the incident occurred.

Generally incidents should be recorded with as much geographic specificity as possible.

This rule prevents double counting across jurisdictions.

### **Rule 10**

If it is a victim related offence, the record of the offence must be linked to the victim.

For each offence the nature of the victim needs to be defined (i.e. the person, the premises, the motor vehicle, the business) and linked to the offence.

Where there are multiple offences and victims involved, the offences are to be recorded for each victim as appropriate.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure a victim based counting unit is recorded and offences are recorded against each victim.

## Recording Requirements

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These are additional recording rules pertaining to specific offence types, which aim to facilitate the consistent application of national counting rules. These requirements and the offence types they relate to are:

### **Requirement 1**

All jurisdictions will need to be able to identify offences that are domestic violence related on their crime recording systems.

### **Requirement 2**

Unlawful entry with intent is identified as a crime against the premises and not a person or a business.

### **Requirement 3**

Where unlawful entry with intent occurs it is recorded in such a way that it will be counted as one offence against the premises where there is:

- incidental damage to give effect to the unlawful entry with intent; and/or
- theft (except theft of a motor vehicle).

### **Requirement 4**

Where motor vehicle theft or non-theft offences occur with unlawful entry with intent, each of those offences will be recorded separately. Damage caused by the act of breaking in to the premises should not be recorded as a separate offence.

For example:

- unlawful entry with intent and subsequent damage caused by a separate action = 2 offences (Unlawful entry with intent and property damage) against the premises
- unlawful entry with intent and assault = 2 offences – 1 against the premises (unlawful entry with intent) and 1 against the person (assault).
- Unlawful entry with intent and motor vehicle theft = 2 offences – 1 against the premises and one against the motor vehicle.

### **Requirement 5**

In recording motor vehicle theft, the victim is the motor vehicle. All thefts of a motor vehicle should be separately recorded.