

Youth recidivism data collection stage 2: progress report 1

February 2014

Background

The purpose of this project is to continue development of a data collection to measure youth recidivism. The first stage was completed in 2013 and involved testing and refining the principles and data specifications developed by Richards (2010) (see AIHW 2013). This second stage will focus on developing methods to measure the severity of youth recidivism. Outcomes will include a method of classifying the severity of youth offences and developing key measures of severity.

Progress

Establish reference group and confirm scope

A meeting was held with Mark Collis (AJJA Chair) in September 2013 to confirm scope and discuss the reference group. It was agreed that the RIG would be the reference group and that AJJA would determine the members of the project control group.

Following the meeting, the AIHW provided the AJJA secretariat with a list of milestones and dates for progress reports to the project control group.

Review of existing classification systems

A request for information about the methods used to determine offence severity was sent to jurisdictions in October 2013. Final responses were received in January 2014.

Of the 5 jurisdictions that measure offence severity, the most common methods were :

- using the National Offence Index (NOI) to determine offence severity, and supplementing this with sentence length where the offences had an equal rank (Victoria noted that the courts use a sentencing hierarchy, so sentence length may not necessarily correlate with offence severity)
- using sentence length, and supplementing the NOI where the offences had a sentence of equal length.

Where offence data are available, they are generally available in 4-digit ASCO format.

Milestones

Activity/milestone	Expected completion	Status	Completion date
Establish reference group and confirm scope	October 2013	Completed	September 2013
Review existing classification systems	December 2013	Completed	February 2013
<i>Analyse existing offence data and develop classification of offence severity in consultation with reference group</i>	<i>April 2014</i>		
<i>Develop recommendations in consultation with reference group</i>	<i>July 2014</i>		
<i>Final report to project control group, AJJA and SCCDSAC</i>	<i>October 2014</i>		

Summary of responses to information request

State	Method for seriousness	offence data availability
NSW	NOI	4-digit ASOC from 2009
Vic	NOI used to determine MSO (NB sentence length may not correlate with severity)	Offence date, 4-digit ASOC
Qld	NOI, with length of sentence if required as 'tie-breaker'	Offence date and AOSC code
WA	Sentence type and length, with ANCO used as 'tie-breaker'	Custodial no data available for community
SA	Nil	Non-ASOC format incomplete coverage
Tas	Nil	Not currently available
ACT	Nil	Not available in JOIST
NT	Sentence length with NOI as tie-breaker	Not available

References

AIHW 2013. Using the Juvenile Justice NMDS to measure juvenile recidivism. Juvenile justice series. Canberra: AIHW.

Richards K 2011. Technical and background paper: measuring juvenile recidivism in Australia. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.