

The Witness Service 2004/2005 statistical report

Referrals

Table one shows the total number of referrals to the Witness Service for the Magistrates' Court (MCWS) and Crown Court (CCWS) for the last three years.

Table I. Total referrals to the Witness Service and % change over last three years

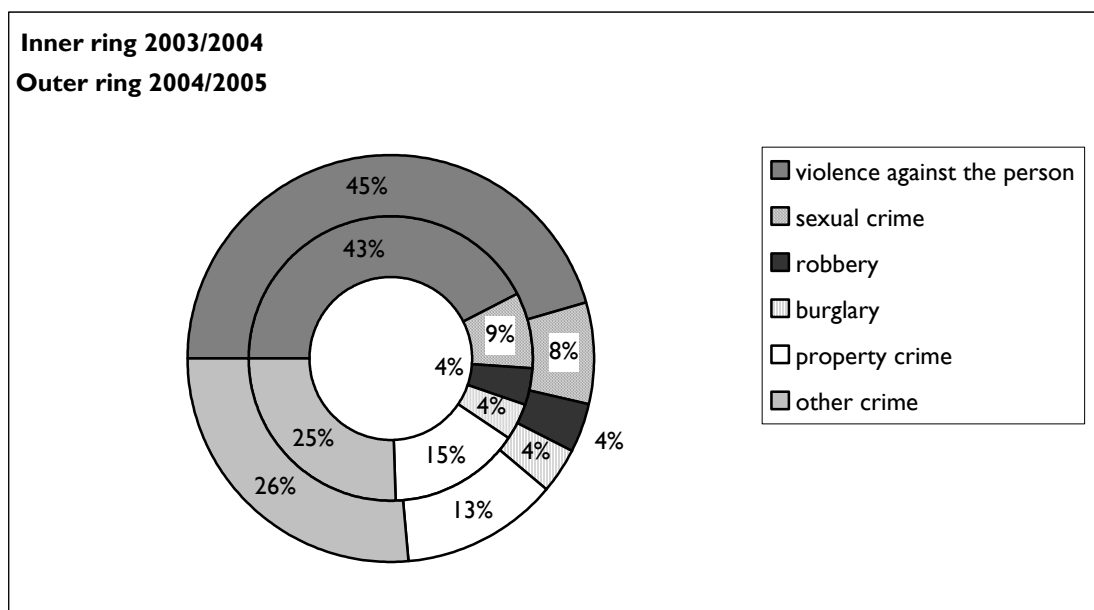
	Referrals			
	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	% Change 2003-2005
MCWS	181,102	229,768	258,122	12.3%
CCWS	151,086	137,940	129,672	-6.0%
Total	332,188	367,708	387,794	5.5%

- In 2004/2005, the Witness Service received 387,794 referrals in total.
- The majority of referrals (70%) were from the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).
- Total referrals to the Witness Service increased by 5.5% (20,086) from 2003/2004. A decrease of 6% in CCWS referrals was offset by an increase of 12.3% (28,354) in referrals to the MCWS.
- The large increase in MCWS referrals between 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 is attributable to the latter being the second year since full rollout.

The Witness Service receives referrals before the trial date and on the day. During 2004/2005:

- 68% of referrals were received before the day of the trial, compared to 63% in 2003/2004
- 93% of people referred before the day of the trial were referred by the police or CPS
- 60% of referrals on the day of the trial were by people who referred themselves directly. Of these, 63% were supported during a violent crime trial.

Proportion of Witness Service referrals by crime type



- In both 2003/2004 and 2004/2004 over half of referrals (57%, 221,263 people) were for people attending violent crime trials.

Support

Table 2. Total and percentage of people receiving pre-trial familiarisation (PTF) and total other support

Service	PTF			% People taking up PTF ¹			'Other' support ²		
	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
MCWS	62,192	90,440	108,086	34%	39%	42%	285,980	351,133	383,338
CCWS	28,251	54,842	61,569	19%	40%	47%	111,136	205,279	202,805
Total	90,443	145,282	169,655	27%	40%	44%	397,116	556,412	586,143

- The proportion of people taking up the offer of a pre-trial familiarisation has increased by 17% (79,212 people) in the last three years.
- People attending violent crime trials are more likely to receive support. In 2004/2005 people attending violent crime trials accounted for 61% of all PTFs, 59% of support provided **before** entering the courtroom, 65% of support **in** the courtroom and 68% of support **after** the trial.

¹ The Witness Service aims to offer everyone they support a pre-trial visit but not everyone will take up this aspect of support.

² 'Other' support includes support before, during and after the trial. This includes phone support.

Table 3. Total and percentage of people, involved in rape and homicide trials receiving PTF and total other support

Service	PTF			% People taking up PTF ³			'Other' support ⁴		
	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
Homicide	2,901	2,971	3,869	32%	37%	41%	9,755	14,186	15,567
Rape	3,634	4,250	4,941	41%	45%	51%	8,203	16,171	17,231
Total	6,535	7,221	8,810	37%	41%	46%	17,958	30,357	32,798

Key information

Table 4. Key Witness Service information

		MCWS		CCWS		Total	
		2003/2004	2004/2005	2003/2004	2004/2005	2003/2004	2004/2005
Person supported as % all people supported ⁵	Victim (witness)	30%	29%	24%	23%	28%	27%
	Victim (not witness)	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%
	Prosecution witness (not victim)	48%	50%	50%	54%	49%	51%
	Family or friend	17%	17%	20%	20%	18%	18%
	Defence witness	2.60%	2.28%	2.65%	2.40%	2.63%	2.34%
	Other ⁶	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Vulnerable and intimidated witnesses ⁷	Identified by referral agency	12,487	16,479	9,065	9,832	21,552	26,311
	Identified by Witness Service	15,186	15,910	4,978	4,787	20,164	20,697
	Total	27,673	32,389	14,043	14,619	41,716	47,008
Trials 'flagged' as:	Domestic violence	11,707	17,092	2,903	3,292	14,610	20,384
	Racially motivated	3,717	5,667	1,954	1,929	5,671	7,596

³ The Witness Service aims to offer everyone they support a pre-trial visit but not everyone will take up this offer of support.

⁴ 'Other' support includes support before, during and after the trial. This includes phone support.

⁵ Where the status of the person supported was known.


⁶ 'Other' relates to police and professional witnesses.

⁷ Both 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 figures include estimations for missing data.

- The majority (78%) of people supported by the Witness Service were witnesses for the prosecution, 2% of people were witnesses for the defence, and the remaining were classed as friends/family or other⁸.

Demographics of people supported C

Table 5. Key demographics⁹

		MCWS	CCWS	Total	
				2003/2004	2004/2005
Gender ¹⁰	Male	55%	53%	56%	55%
	Female	45%	47%	44%	45%
Young people supported ¹¹	Aged under 14	2%		2%	2%
	Aged 14-17	8%	6%	7%	7%
	Total aged under 18	10%	8%	9%	9%
Ethnicity ¹²	White or White British	92%	90%	87%	91%
	Black or minority ethnic	8%	10%	13%	9%
Number of people who consider themselves to have disability		4,962	2,477	6,278	7,439

- During 2004/2005, the Witness Service supported 25,189 young people (under 18 years old). This is a 12% increase (2,786 more people) compared to 2003/2004, when 22,403 young people were supported.
- Of the young people supported this year, 23% (5,811) were aged 13 or under.

Courts martial

We have some limited information on the courts martial.

In 2004/2004, there were 33 cases in which 92 people were supported.

⁸ Other includes people such as professional witnesses or police officers.

⁹ Does not include missing data.

¹⁰ Information was missing relating to 33,550 people (26%) in CCWS and 72,943 (28%) in the MCWS.

¹¹ Information was missing relating to 35,269 people (27%) in CCWS and 80,117 (31%) in the MCWS.

¹² Information was missing relating to 32,620 people (25%) in CCWS and 74,969 (29%) in the MCWS.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA)

SSAFA supports soldiers, sailors, airmen and families and is based in Germany. During 2004/2005, they received 47 referrals. The majority of these referrals were for violent crimes, 94% (44).