



National Audit Office

**Ministry of Justice**

The cost of a cohort of young  
offenders to the criminal  
justice system

Technical Paper

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**June 2011**

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# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Part One</b>	<b>6</b>
The characteristics of the cohort	6
<b>Part Two</b>	<b>14</b>
The cost of proven offending	14
<b>Part Three</b>	<b>23</b>
How to use our estimates of cost per offender	23
<b>Appendix One</b>	<b>27</b>
Details of unit costs	27
<b>Appendix Two</b>	<b>32</b>
Summary tables	32

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## Summary

1 This paper follows on from our 2010 value for money study on the youth justice system.<sup>1</sup> It examines 83,000 young offenders who committed their first proven offence in 2000, in England and Wales. We analysed the offending behaviour of this cohort for the period 2000 to 2009, based on data from the Police National Computer. Our analysis provides details of sex, age, ethnicity, types of offences and reoffending patterns over time.

2 We also estimated the cost of proven offending to the criminal justice system, including the costs of police, courts, offender management teams, and custody. Our conclusion is that, on average, each young offender costs £8,000, per year, to the criminal justice system. On the same basis, each of the most costly 10 per cent costs £29,000.

### The characteristics of the cohort

3 Seventy two per cent of the young offenders considered in our analysis were male, 84 per cent were perceived to be white by the police, and 37 per cent committed their first proven offence under the category of theft.<sup>2</sup> Their ages in 2000 ranged between ten, the age of criminal responsibility, and 17 years. At the end of the follow-up period, in 2009, all of them were older than 17, with 65 per cent being between 20 and 24 years old.<sup>3</sup>

4 After their first proven offence in 2000, more than a third (36 per cent) of the cohort did not commit any other offence in any of the years up to 2009. In contrast, a minority (5 per cent) were responsible for 32 per cent of all proven offences committed by the cohort by 2009.

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons 663, Session 2010-2011, *The youth justice system in England and Wales: Reducing offending by young people*. This report can be found on the National Audit Office website at <http://www.nao.org.uk/Youth-Justice-2010>

<sup>2</sup> This is in line with previously published information. See Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board, *Youth Justice Statistics 2009/10, England and Wales*, 2011. This report can be found on the Ministry of Justice website at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/docs/yjb-annual-workload-data-0910.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Our analysis, therefore, is relevant for the juvenile, transition-to-adulthood and adult phases of crime. For simplicity, we will use the phrases 'young offenders considered in our analysis', 'first-time entrants in 2000' or 'the cohort' in reference to the offenders, aged 10 to 17, who entered the justice system in 2000, in England and Wales. We reserve the phrase 'young offenders' for the instances where we refer to all the offenders in the youth justice system.

## **The cost of proven offending**

**5** The Home Office estimated the total cost of crime against individuals and households to be £36.2 billion, per year, in 2003-04.<sup>4</sup> This figure referred to a range of crimes committed by both young and adult offenders, and included all offences, not just those that are recorded by the police.

**6** The average cost of £8,000 per young offender presented in this paper refers to the cost of proven offending to the criminal justice system, including the costs of police, courts, offender management teams, and custody. Our estimate excludes the cost of unrecorded crime. It also excludes the societal costs of both recorded and unrecorded crimes, such as the costs of the physical and emotional impact on victims or the costs businesses and individuals incur in anticipation of crime. We did not estimate the total cost of crime committed by young offenders.

**7** In comparison with other estimates of costs to the criminal justice system, ours includes fewer types of costs. We included, as accurately as possible, the cost of staff direct time, which is the time spent on activities that are directly related to crime incidents, such as interviewing suspects, or collecting evidence. We excluded costs that are not directly related to crime incidents, such as overheads.

**8** Since short-term decisions in the area of youth justice typically take saved costs as an estimate of benefits, we consider that our cost estimates, in combination with additional evidence, could be helpful for decision makers, because they attempt to capture marginal costs to the criminal justice system.<sup>5</sup> These are the types of costs that are more likely to change as a result of small variations in the levels of proven offending, although this is not necessarily the case, because freed-up resources may be used for other purposes, and not result in a cashable saving. We excluded fixed costs, such as overheads, as these would only decrease if the reductions in the levels of proven offending were significant.

**9** Whether this paper is an adequate source to inform specific short-term decisions will depend on the concrete aims of the policy. We recommend considering the limitations discussed in Appendix One carefully before undertaking specific projects.

**10** The estimates of cost per young offender in this paper do not reflect the expenditure figures in any single set of financial accounts. Therefore, they should not be used to forecast changes in the financial position, or indeed cashable savings, of any specific organisation.

<sup>4</sup> Home Office Online Report 30/05, *The economic and social costs of crime against individuals and households 2003/04*, 2005. This report can be found on the Home Office website at

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/rdsolr3005.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Our approach is in line with HM Treasury, *The Green Book. Appraisal and evaluation in central government*, 2003, paragraph 5.19: "Appraisals leading to short-term or non strategic decisions are likely to have a smaller set of relevant costs. The relevant costs are likely to be those that are marginal to the organisation's overall activity". This guidance can be found on the HM Treasury website at [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data\\_greenbook\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data_greenbook_index.htm)

# Part One

## The characteristics of the cohort

**1.1** In this chapter, we describe the main characteristics of the young offenders considered in our analysis. We first look at the whole cohort of first-time entrants in 2000, and then focus on those who reoffend, by describing:

- age at first proven offence; and
- number of offences over time.

### First-time entrants

**1.2** According to the Police National Computer, there were a total of 140,350 young offenders, aged 10 to 17, cautioned or convicted in 2000, in England and Wales.<sup>6</sup> Within this group, 88,511 (63 per cent) committed their first proven offence in 2000, and the rest had started to offend in previous years.<sup>7</sup> Our analysis was based on those first-time entrants in 2000 whose records in the Police National Computer are complete: 83,366 out of 88,511 (94 per cent).

**1.3** As shown in **Figure 1**, overleaf, 72 per cent of the young offenders considered in our analysis were male and 84 per cent were perceived to be white by the police. The majority entered the justice system as a result of offences classified under the categories of theft (37 per cent) or summary offence (29 per cent)<sup>8</sup>. Of those cases dealt with at court, only a minority received a custodial sentence (4 per cent), with the majority receiving a community penalty (43 per cent) or conditional discharge (32 per cent).

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Justice extract of Police National Computer.

<sup>7</sup> Proven offences include offences that result in a caution, warning, final warning, or a court case, which in turn can result in a conditional discharge, a community or custody sentence, or a fine.

<sup>8</sup> Summary offences are less serious cases, such as motoring offences and minor assaults, where the defendant is not entitled to trial by jury.

**Figure 1**

The characteristics of first-time entrants at the point when they committed their first proven offence, in 2000

	<b>% of 83,366<sup>(1)</sup></b>
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	72
Female	28
<b>Ethnicity, as perceived by the police</b> (only the two largest categories)	
White – North European	84
Black	7
<b>Type of offence</b> (only the three largest categories)	
Theft and handling stolen goods	37
Summary offences, excluding motoring	29
Violence against the person	9
	<b>% of 9,204<sup>(2)</sup></b>
<b>Type of disposal at court</b> (only the four largest categories)	
Community penalty	43
Conditional discharge	32
Fine	14
Immediate custodial sentence	4

**NOTES**

1. Percentages for sex, ethnicity and type of offence refer to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000.
2. Percentages for type of disposal at court refer to the 9,204 first-time entrants in 2000 who were tried at court, out of a total of 83,366.
3. Percentages do not add up to 100, where only the largest categories are included.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

**1.4** In 2000, the age of the young offenders considered in our analysis ranged from ten, the age of criminal responsibility, to 17 years, as shown in **Figure 2**, below. At the end of the follow-up period, in 2009, all were older than 17 years old, with 65 per cent being between 20 and 24 years old.

**Figure 2**

The age of first-time entrants...

	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-24	25-29
... at first proven offence, in 2000 (% of 83,366)	7	23	37	32	-	-	-
... at the end of the follow-up, in 2009 (% of 83,366)	-	-	-	-	2	65	33

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000.
2. Dash (-) denotes 'nobody'.
3. The 20-24 and 25-29 bands are wider than the rest.
4. Rows add up to 100 (plus minus one unit, due to rounding).

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

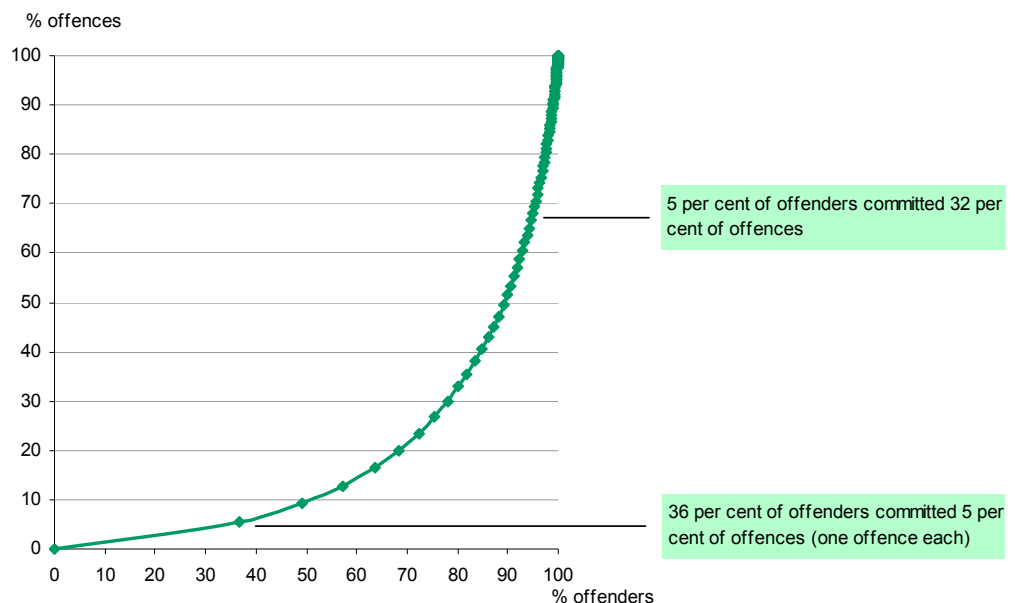


**1.5** The young offenders considered in our analysis committed 560,742 proven offences between 2000 and 2009. As shown in **Figure 3**, below, more than a third of the cohort (36 per cent) offended only once in 2000, and never again in the period up to 2009. This made up 5 per cent of all proven offences. In contrast, a minority (5 per cent) of offenders were responsible for almost a third (32 per cent) of all proven offences committed by the cohort by 2009.

**1.6** Those who committed their first proven offence in 2000, and at least one other offence in any of the years up to 2009, made up the group of reoffenders who will be examined in the next section.

**Figure 3**

A minority of first-time entrants in 2000 committed almost a third of all the offences



**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000, and the 560,742 proven offences that they committed between 2000 and 2009.
2. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
3. By following the line in the graph, readers can see what percentage of offenders committed what percentage of offences.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

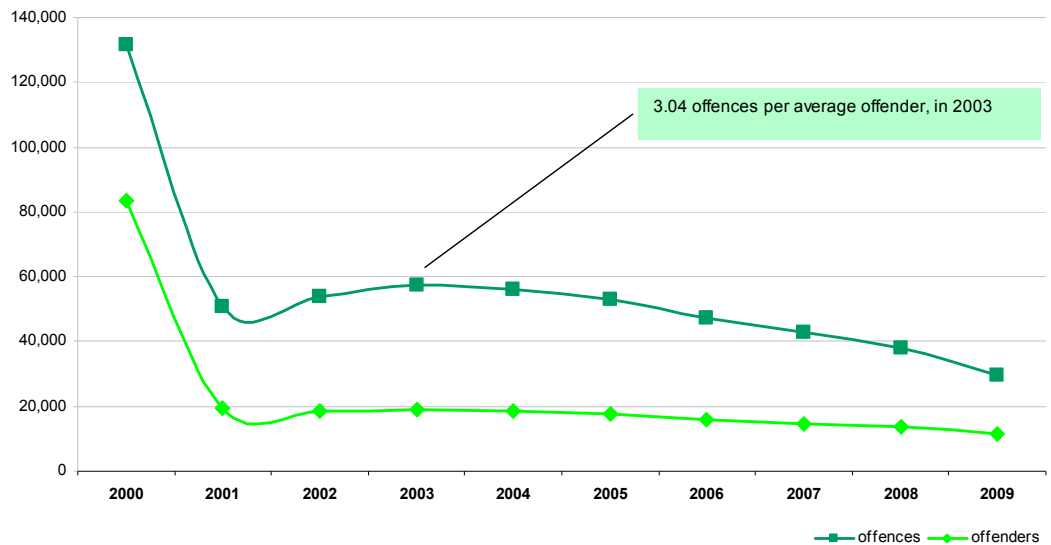
## Reoffenders

1.7 Both the total number of offences and the total number of offenders decreased over time. **Figure 4**, below, shows again that more than a third (36 per cent) of the young offenders considered in our analysis did not commit any other proven offence after their first one, and so the yearly number of offences decreased sharply to 50,987, in 2001.

1.8 After this point in time, both offences and reoffenders increased slightly and then decreased up to 2009. The average number of proven offences per reoffender peaked at 3.04, in 2003.

**Figure 4**

The total number of proven offences and offenders decreased over time



### NOTES

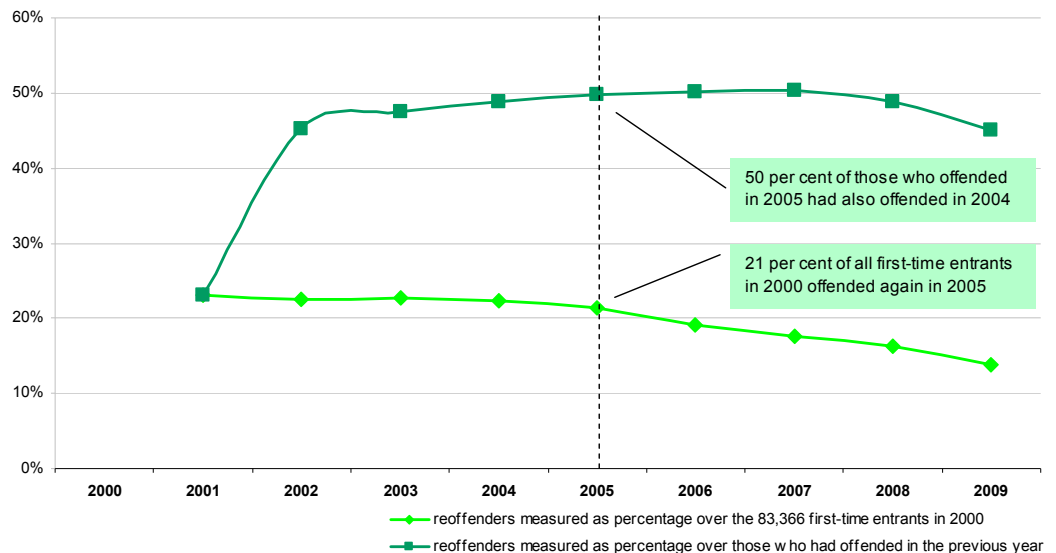
1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000, and the 560,742 proven offences that they committed between 2000 and 2009.
2. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
3. The corresponding summary table can be found in Figure 13 of **Appendix Two**.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

**1.9** As shown in **Figure 5**, below, the proportion of first-time entrants in 2000 who offended again in any of the following years decreased over time, up to 2009. For example, only 17,826 out of 83,366 (21 per cent) offended again in 2005. However, the decrease is less marked if we look at those who offended in two consecutive years. For example, 9,272 out of the 17,826 who offended in 2005 (50 per cent) had also offended in 2004.

**Figure 5**

Half of the reoffenders offended in two consecutive years



**NOTES**

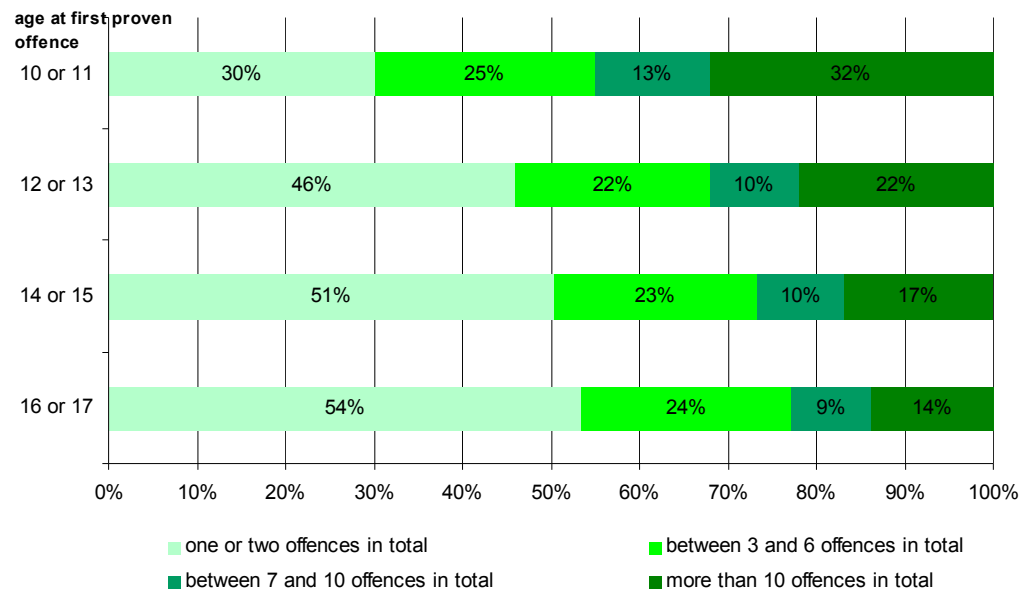
1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000.
2. A minority of offenders, 2,832 (or 3.4 per cent of 83,366), committed their first offence, and reoffended in 2000, and did not commit any other offence in any of the years up to 2009. We excluded these offenders from this figure.
3. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
4. The corresponding summary table can be found in Figure 13 of **Appendix Two**. The proportion of reoffenders, measured as percentage over those who had offended in the previous year, takes 83,366 as a basis for 2001, and 19,297 for 2002, hence the sharp increase in 2002.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

**1.10** We classified the young offenders considered in our analysis into four categories, according to the total number of proven offences they committed between 2000 and 2009. **Figure 6**, below, shows that age is linked with number of offences. Thirty two per cent of those who committed their first proven offence when they were 10 or 11 years old had committed 10 or more proven offences by 2009. This compares with 14 per cent of those who committed their first proven offence when they were 16 or 17 years old.

**Figure 6**

The earlier the first proven offence, the more proven offences in total in 2000-2009



**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000, and the 560,742 proven offences that they committed between 2000 and 2009.
2. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
3. Horizontal bars add up to 100 (plus or minus 1 unit, due to rounding).

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

**1.11** The number of past proven offences is also linked with current proven offending behaviour. **Figure 7**, below, shows that the higher the number of past offences, the higher the average number of offences in the current year. This figure refers to 2005, but the pattern applies to every year under analysis.

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**Figure 7**

The higher the number of proven offences in 2000-2004, the higher the number of proven offences in 2005

Total offences in 2000-2004	average number of offences in 2005	reoffenders in 2005
One or 2	1.86	4,758
Between 3 and 6	2.45	5,650
Between 7 and 10	3.18	2,684
More than 10	4.62	4,734
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>17,826</b>

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 17,826 first-time entrants in 2000, who reoffended in 2005.
2. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

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**1.12** Types of proven offences changed over time. The young offenders considered in our analysis became increasingly more likely to commit breach offences. These are typically the result of failing to meet the requirements of a community penalty. The proportion of breach offences increased to 15 per cent in 2009, from 1 per cent in 2000. In contrast, the proportion of theft offences decreased to 15 per cent in 2009, from 35 per cent in 2000.<sup>9</sup> More details on the types of offences can be found in Figure 13 of **Appendix Two**.

<sup>9</sup> This is the percentage that theft offences represented over all offences, including first-time and subsequent offences in 2000. The percentages reported in paragraphs 3 and 1.3 were for theft offences over first-time offences in 2000.

## Part Two

### The cost of proven offending

**2.1** In this chapter, we explain our approach to estimating unit costs of proven offending, and our conclusions based on applying those unit costs to the data examined in the previous chapter.

**2.2** Our unit costs include:

- police work related to investigating crime incidents;
- courts;
- offender management teams; and
- custody.

**2.3** Our aim when estimating unit costs of proving offending was to include staff direct time. This is the time spent on activities that are directly related to crime incidents, such as interviewing suspects, or collecting evidence. Staff direct time is a significant proportion of the marginal costs to the criminal justice system.<sup>10</sup> These are the types of costs that are more likely to change as a result of small variations in the levels of proven offending.<sup>11</sup> The cost of staff direct time is likely to change, if the levels and type of proven offending vary, although this is not necessarily the case, because freed-up time may be used for other purposes, and not result in a cashable saving.

**2.4** It was not always possible to separate out the data, which means that some of our unit costs include some fixed costs. These are the types of costs that are less likely to change as a result of small variations in the levels of proven offending, such as overheads. In this chapter, we flag up the unit costs that include some fixed costs. For more detailed explanations, see **Appendix One**.

<sup>10</sup> Our unit costs exclude the cost of unrecorded crime. They also exclude the societal costs of both recorded and unrecorded crimes, such as the costs of the physical and emotional impact on victims or the costs businesses and individuals incur in anticipation of crime.

<sup>11</sup> Our approach is in line with HM Treasury, *The Green Book. Appraisal and evaluation in central government*, 2003, paragraph 5.19: "Appraisals leading to short-term or non strategic decisions are likely to have a smaller set of relevant costs. The relevant costs are likely to be those that are marginal to the organisation's overall activity". This guidance can be found on the HM Treasury website at [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data\\_greenbook\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data_greenbook_index.htm)

## Police

**2.5** The unit cost of police that we used in our analysis was derived from the CIPFA police service statistics<sup>12</sup>, and the Home Office's activity-based costing work<sup>13</sup>, and crime statistics.<sup>14</sup> It includes staff direct time spent on crime incidents, and excludes operational and business support activities, such as training and recruitment, as well as sustaining overheads.

**2.6** We used the Home Office's activity-based costing work to estimate the proportion of staff direct costs, in the CIPFA police service statistics, which relates to investigating crime incidents. We then divided the cost of investigating crime incidents by the number of recorded crimes in the Home Office's crime statistics, in order to produce a unit cost of police staff direct time related to investigating crime.

**2.7** Our unit cost of police, therefore, was estimated on the basis of average cost per recorded crime, committed by both under- and over-18s. We applied this unit cost to each of the proven offences that were recorded in the Police National Computer for the young offenders considered in our analysis. Since not all recorded crimes become proven offences, our unit costs of police may be underestimated. The information available did not allow us to estimate average cost per proven offence for young offenders.

## Courts

**2.8** The Ministry of Justice provided us with unit costs of courts that included the costs of the Crown Prosecution Service, magistrates' courts, and Crown Court, as well as legal aid support.<sup>15</sup> These were estimates of the expected marginal costs of court events. For the Crown Prosecution Service the estimates were likely to include some fixed costs for operation. It was not possible to establish the proportion that these fixed costs represented over the total.

**2.9** Our unit costs of courts were estimated on the basis of average cost per court event. We applied these unit costs to each of the primary offences that was proven for the young offenders considered in our analysis, and was dealt with at court. A primary offence is the most serious offence tried at one single court event, among all the offences committed by the same defendant.

<sup>12</sup> Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, *Police Service Statistics 2008-09 Actuals*, 2009. This report can be found on the CIPFA website at <http://secure.cipfa.org.uk/cgi-bin/cipfa.storefront/4dd4d7670320f3f627403efdf40706a5/Catalog/1001>

<sup>13</sup> This is unpublished material.

<sup>14</sup> Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2009-10*, 2010. This report can be found on the Home Office website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb1210/hosb1210-chap2tabs?view=Binary>

<sup>15</sup> This is unpublished material.

## Offender management teams

**2.10** The unit cost of youth offending teams that we used in our analysis was derived from the Ministry of Justice's calculations of average practitioner costs<sup>16</sup>, and the Youth Justice Board's workload statistics.<sup>17</sup> In our estimate, we included the cost of practitioner direct time, and excluded overheads, such as maintenance of office buildings.

**2.11** Our unit cost of probation teams, for over-18s, was derived from financial information produced by the National Offender Management Service<sup>18</sup>, and the Ministry of Justice's sentencing statistics.<sup>19</sup> This unit cost includes practitioner direct time, and excludes overheads.

**2.12** Our unit costs of both youth offending and probation teams were estimated on the basis of average cost per offender, per year. We applied these unit costs to each of the young offenders considered in our analysis, depending on their age. We used youth offending team estimates for under-18s and national offender management team estimates for over-18s.

**2.13** Offender management teams are responsible for supervising community sentences. We did not use specific unit costs of community sentences in our analysis. However, we calculated the average cost of offender management teams, per offender, by dividing the total cost of practitioners by the number of offenders with whom offender management teams deal. Since offender management teams deal with all offenders serving community sentences, our unit costs of offender management teams include the time that practitioners spend on supervising community sentences.

## Custody

**2.14** The unit cost of custody that we used in our analysis, for under-18s, was derived from financial information produced by the National Offender Management Service<sup>20</sup>, the Youth Justice Board's annual workload statistics, and the Ministry of Justice's sentencing statistics. This estimate includes staff direct time, and excludes overheads. It is also likely to include some fixed costs for operation, but it was not possible to establish the proportion that these costs represented over the total.

<sup>16</sup> This is unpublished material.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board, *Youth justice annual workload statistics 2008/09*, 2010. This report can be found on the Ministry of Justice website at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/publications/statistics-and-data/mojstats/yjb-workload-data-2008-09.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> This is unpublished material.

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Justice, *Sentencing statistics: England and Wales 2008*, 2009. This report can be found on the Ministry of Justice website at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/docs/sentencing-stats-2008.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> This is unpublished material.



**2.15** In the case of those older than 18 years, our unit cost of custody was derived from financial information produced by the National Offender Management Service<sup>21</sup>, and the Ministry of Justice's sentencing statistics. This estimate includes staff direct time, and excludes overheads. It is also likely to include some fixed costs for operation, but it was not possible to establish the proportion that these costs represented over the total.

**2.16** Our unit costs of custody for both under- and over-18s were calculated on the basis of average cost per month served in custody. Since the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences, we assumed that the average length of time served in custody in the Ministry of Justice's sentencing statistics was applicable to the young offenders considered in our analysis. We multiplied average cost per month by average length of time served in custody, depending on the type of primary offence for which the young offender received a custodial sentence.

**2.17 Figure 8**, overleaf, shows the average unit costs of proven offending that we used in our analysis. Estimating the cost of proven offending is difficult, and therefore our estimates are inevitably uncertain. In Part Three of this paper we discuss how certain variations in the unit costs that we used would affect our conclusions.

<sup>21</sup> This is unpublished material.

**Figure 8**

## Average unit costs of proven offending

	under 18	over 18	paragraph in Appendix One
<b>Unit cost of police</b> (per recorded crime)	£492	£492	(1)
<b>Unit costs of courts</b> (per court event, depending on type of offence)			
Violence against the person	£6,837	£12,716	(12)
Sexual offences	£4,061	£10,887	(12)
Burglary	£1,650	£3,448	(12)
Robbery	£4,800	£9,428	(5)
Theft and handling stolen goods	£2,645	£4,012	(12)
Fraud and forgery	£1,300	£3,104	(5)
Criminal damage	£840	£445	(13)
Drug offences	£1,400	£2,500	(5)
Other indictable offences	£2,400	£2,112	(5)
Indictable motoring offences	£2,400	£2,112	(13)
Summary offences, excluding motoring	£1,000	£650	(13)
Summary motoring offences	£400	£344	(5)
Breach offences	£400	£272	(13)
<b>Unit cost of offender management teams</b> (per offender, per year)	£1,469	£357	(14)
<b>Unit cost of custody</b> (per month served in prison)	£4,898	£2,367	(19)

**NOTES**

1. **Appendix One** includes detailed explanations of how these unit cost estimates were derived.
2. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB).

Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

## The cost of a first-time entrant in 2000, 2000-2009

**2.18** We applied the unit costs of proven offending discussed in the previous section to the records kept in the Police National Computer for each of the first-time entrants in 2000. **Figure 9**, below, uses a fictitious example, not representative of the average young offender, to illustrate our approach.

**Figure 9**

### The cost of Individual One, 2000-2009

Year	proven offence	calculation	cost
2000	Individual One is a white male. In 2000, he was 14 years old and committed his first proven offence, under the category of violence against the person. This offence involved knives and resulted in a reprimand at the police station.	$£492 \times 1 =$	£492
	Individual One was referred to his local youth offending team, where he was assessed for needs and risks, and further referred to an intervention, if appropriate.	$£1,469 \times 1 =$	£1,469
<b>Total in 2000</b>			<b>£1,961</b>
2001	No proven offence for Individual One on the Police National Computer in 2001.		
<b>Total in 2001</b>			<b>£0</b>
2002	Individual One committed six proven offences between April and November 2002: one burglary and five thefts. The police dealt with these offences.	$£492 \times 6 =$	£2,952
	Courts also dealt with these six offences, in two court events, and issued a community penalty for each of them. The cost of the community penalty is not estimated here.	$£1,650 \times 1 +$ $£2,645 \times 1 =$	£4,295
	Individual One was referred to his local youth offending team.	$£1,469 \times 1 =$	£1,469
<b>Total in 2002</b>			<b>£8,716</b>
2003	No proven offence for Individual One on the Police National Computer in 2003.		
<b>Total in 2003</b>			<b>£0</b>
2004	Individual One turned 18. He committed one theft, two breach offences, three summary motoring offences, one other summary offence (non motoring) and one 'other indictable' offence. The police dealt with all these offences.	$£492 \times 8 =$	£3,936
	Courts also dealt with these offences, in two court events.	$£4,012 \times 1 =$ $£650 \times 1 =$	£4,662
	Courts issued a custodial sentence for the theft offence. Individual One served 2.4 months in prison.	$£2,367 \times 2.4 =$	£5,680
	A probation team supervised the case.	$£357 \times 1 =$	£357
	<b>Total in 2004</b>		

**Figure 9 (continued)**

## The cost of Individual One, 2000-2009

<b>Year</b>	<b>proven offence</b>	<b>calculation</b>	<b>cost</b>
<b>2005</b>	Individual One committed two theft offences and one criminal damage offence. The police dealt with all these offences.	$£492 \times 3 =$	£1,476
	Courts also dealt with these offences, in two court events.	$£4,012 \times 1 +$ $£445 \times 1 =$	£4,457
	Courts issued one custodial sentence for theft, and another for criminal damage. Individual One served 10.9 months in prison.	$£2,367 \times 10.9 =$	£25,800
	A probation team supervised the case.	$£357 \times 1 =$	£357
		<b>Total in 2005</b>	<b>32,090</b>
<b>2006</b>	No proven offence for Individual One on the Police National Computer in 2006.		
		<b>Total in 2006</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>2007</b>	No proven offence for Individual One on the Police National Computer in 2007.		
		<b>Total in 2007</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>2008</b>	At the age of 22, Individual One committed one offence under the category of violence against the person, two summary offences (non motoring), one burglary, and one drug offence. The police dealt with all these offences.	$£492 \times 5 =$	£2,460
	Courts also dealt with these offences, in three court events.	$£12,716 \times 1 +$ $£3,448 \times 1 +$ $£2,500 \times 1 =$	£18,664
	Courts issued three custodial sentences. Individual One served 37 months in prison.	$£2,367 \times 37 =$	£87,579
	A probation team supervised the case.	$£357 \times 1 =$	£357
		<b>Total in 2008</b>	<b>£109,060</b>
<b>2009</b>	No proven offence for Individual One on the Police National Computer in 2009.		
		<b>Total in 2009</b>	<b>£0</b>

**NOTES**

1. The costs in this figure can be cross-referenced with Figure 8.
2. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB).

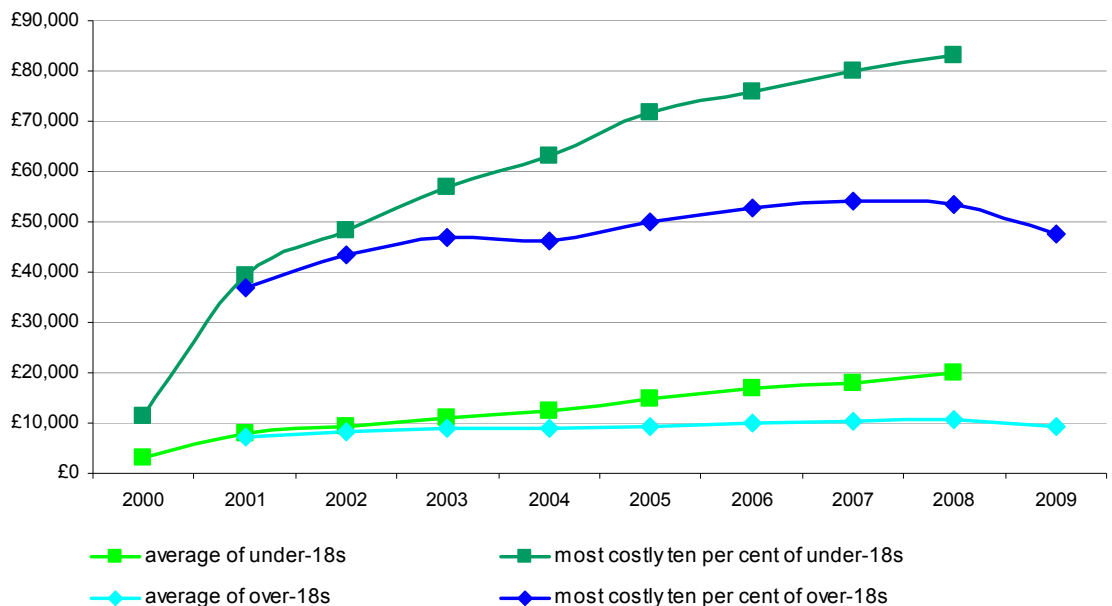
Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

**2.19** We followed this approach with all the 83,366 young offenders considered in our analysis. As shown in **Figure 10**, below, the average costs that we obtained vary, depending on the year, from approximately £3,000 to £20,000, per offender aged under 18, at 2008-09 prices. On the same basis, the average for the most costly ten per cent varies from approximately £11,000 to £83,000.

**2.20** The average costs for earlier years are lower because those who did not reoffend, after their first proven offence, were many and their costs were relatively low. The average cost increases over time, despite the fact that the total number of offenders and offences decreases, as discussed in Part One of this paper.

**Figure 10**

The average yearly cost of a first-time entrant in 2000 varies from £3,000 to £20,000



**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000, and the 560,742 proven offences that they committed between 2000 and 2009.
2. Averages for 2001-2009 were calculated in reference to those who committed at least one proven offence in each year, not the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000. None of the averages is representative of all the young offenders who were part of the justice system in any given year.
3. The decrease in 2009 may be due to the exclusion from our analysis of offences that were committed in 2009, and solved in 2010.
4. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
5. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using the Treasury's GDP deflator series (YCGB).
6. The corresponding summary table can be found in Figure 14 of **Appendix Two**.

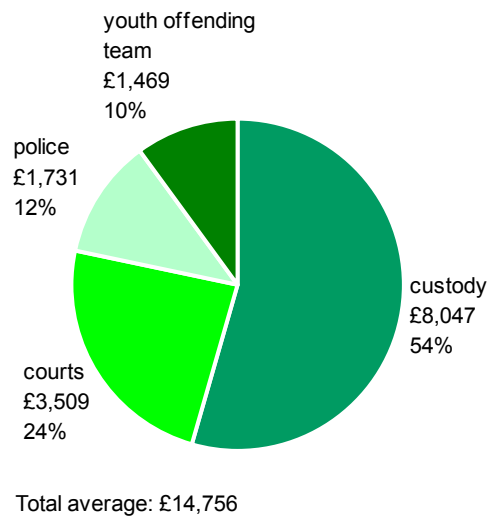
Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on Police National Computer, CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

**2.21** The main element in the average cost of the young offenders considered in our analysis was custody. **Figure 11**, below, shows that 54 per cent of the average cost of under-18s who reoffended in 2005 corresponded to the cost of custody.

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**Figure 11**

Breakdown of the yearly average cost of a first-time entrant in 2000, 2005



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**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 5,650 first-time entrants in 2000, who were under 18 and reoffended in 2005. Of these cases, 4,936 were dealt with at court and 1,201 received a custodial sentence.
2. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
3. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB)

Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on Police National Computer, CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

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**2.22** Analysts and decision makers may also find it helpful to see how the average cost per offender varies depending on the types of offences that they commit. Figures 15 and 16 of **Appendix Two** include details of this.

## Part Three

### How to use our estimates of cost per offender

**3.1** In this chapter, we explain the limitations of our analysis, and provide guidance on how our estimates of cost per offender should be used. Full details on limitations can be found in **Appendix One**.

#### **Types of costs included in the analysis**

**3.2** The estimates of cost per offender presented in this paper refer to the cost of proven offending by the first-time entrants in 2000, in England and Wales. They include costs to the criminal justice system and exclude the cost of unrecorded crime. They also exclude the societal costs of both recorded and unrecorded crimes, such as the costs of the physical and emotional impact on victims or the costs businesses and individuals incur in anticipation of crime. We did not estimate the total cost of crime committed by young offenders.

**3.3** Our aim when estimating unit costs was to include staff direct time, which is a significant proportion of the marginal costs to the criminal justice system. However, it was not always possible to separate out the data, as a result of which some of our unit costs include some fixed costs.

**3.4** We used averages in our analysis. This means that we did not use the true cost of each specific offender, which varies depending on type of offence, point in time, geographic area, and general justice system behaviour.

#### **Sensitivity analysis**

**3.5** The estimates of cost per offender presented in this paper are not sensitive to assumptions on the average number of proven offences per offender, because we used the actual number of proven offences, for each of the first-time entrants in 2000, according to the Police National Computer. Offenders who committed their first proven offence in years other than 2000 may follow different offending patterns; however, these offenders are outside the scope of this paper, and therefore we did not perform any sensitivity analysis on their data. Our estimates of cost per offender are sensitive to the unit costs of proven offending that we applied to the analysis.

**3.6** Our unit costs of police included staff direct costs, as explained in paragraph 2.5. The main limitation affecting these unit costs is that they refer to recorded crime, committed by both under- and over-18s, but we applied them to proven offences committed by the young offenders considered in our analysis. Since not all recorded crimes become proven offences, our unit costs of police may be underestimated. The information available did not allow us to estimate average cost per proven offence committed by a young offender.

**3.7** We reviewed the police and court cost estimates available in the public domain. For example, we reviewed the estimates published in the Home Office Online Report 30/05.<sup>22</sup> Our conclusion was that other sources use unit costs of crime that can be 50 to 75 per cent higher than the ones we used in our analysis. The difference is due to the approach taken in those sources, which is broader than ours in most of the cases, including for example all overheads or societal costs.

**3.8** The cost estimates of offender management teams and custody that we used in our analysis exclude overheads. There is no consensus as to what proportion of overall costs should be attributed to overheads.

**3.9** We tested how our results vary if we used unit costs of police 75 per cent higher, unit costs of courts 50 per cent higher, and unit costs of offender management teams and custody 25 per cent higher than the ones in our original approach. We did this to illustrate how alternative approaches could produce different estimates of cost per offender. The result of the test was that, in 2005, the average cost per offender aged under 18 increased to £20,184, from £14,756 in our original approach. This is a 37 per cent increase. More details on the results of our sensitivity analysis can be found in Figure 14 of **Appendix Two**.

## **Practical applications**

**3.10** Short-term decisions in the area of youth justice typically take saved costs as an estimate of benefits. We consider that the estimates of cost per offender in our original approach could be helpful for decision makers, in combination with additional evidence, because they attempt to capture marginal costs to the criminal justice system.<sup>23</sup> These are the types of costs that are more likely to change as a result of small variations in the levels of proven offending, although this is not necessarily the

<sup>22</sup> Home Office Online Report 30/05, *The economic and social costs against individuals and households 2003/04*, 2005. This report can be found on the Home Office website at <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/rdsolr3005.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Our approach is in line with HM Treasury, *The Green Book. Appraisal and evaluation in central government*, 2003, paragraph 5.19: "Appraisals leading to short-term or non strategic decisions are likely to have a smaller set of relevant costs. The relevant costs are likely to be those that are marginal to the organisation's overall activity". This guidance can be found on the HM Treasury website at [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data\\_greenbook\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data_greenbook_index.htm)



case, because freed-up resources may be used for other purposes, and not result in a cashable saving. We excluded fixed costs, such as overheads, as these would only decrease if the reductions in the levels of proven offending were significant.

**3.11** Whether the estimates of cost per offender in this paper are suitable to inform specific short-term decisions will vary on a case by case basis. For example, analysts who have evidence on the effects of certain interventions on proven offending might take our yearly estimates to calculate the net present value of avoided costs to the criminal justice system. However, the concrete aims of the policy and the specific purpose of the calculations will ultimately determine whether this paper is an adequate source to inform the decision-making process. We recommend considering the limitations discussed in **Appendix One** carefully before undertaking specific projects.

**3.12** The estimates of cost per offender in this paper do not reflect the expenditure figures in any single set of financial accounts. Therefore, they should not be used to forecast changes in the financial position, or indeed cashable savings, of any specific organisation. This is because, for example, reductions in proven offending leading to reductions in demand for custody would only deliver significant cashable savings when the reduction is sufficiently large, and appropriately placed geographically, for parts of the estate to be decommissioned.

### **The cost of a young offender in the current year**

**3.13** The estimates of cost per offender presented in this paper refer to a specific cohort of young offenders, who committed their first proven offence in 2000. We analysed their offending behaviour over time, up to 2009, and estimated their cost to the criminal justice system in each year. However, they were only one part of the whole picture. The youth justice system was simultaneously dealing with other young offenders, who committed their first proven offence either before or after 2000, and who were not considered in our analysis.

**3.14** In **Figure 12**, overleaf, we propose one way of using our estimates to calculate the cost of a young offender in the current year. When we compiled this report, the latest official statistics available were for 2009. We concluded that, in 2009, the average cost of the young offenders who were part of the criminal justice system was approximately £8,000, independently from the year when they committed their first proven offence. On the same basis, we estimated that the average cost of the most costly ten per cent was £29,000 and the cost of all young offenders was £1 billion.

**Figure 12****Model to calculate the cost of a young offender to the criminal justice system, 2009**

<b>Group</b>	<b>number of offenders in each group</b>	<b>cost per offender, by group</b>	<b>total cost</b>	<b>note</b>
first-time entrant	79,260	£3,152	£249,827,520	(1, 2)
most costly ten per cent	12,719	£29,234	£371,827,246	(3)
neither first-time entrant, nor most costly ten per cent	35,218	£10,738	£378,170,884	(4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>127,197</b>		<b>£999,825,650</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b>Average</b>			<b>£7,860</b>	
(total cost divided by total number of offenders)				

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 127,197 young offenders who were part of the justice system in 2009, in England and Wales. Of these, 79,260 were first-time entrants. The source for these statistics is *Youth Justice Annual Workload data 2008/09*, 2010, pp. 8, 35.
2. We assume that the cost of a first time entrant in 2009 is equivalent to that of a first-time entrant in 2000, as in Figure 10.
3. We assume that the cost of the most costly ten per cent of young offenders in 2009 is equivalent to the weighted average of the most costly ten per cent of the young offenders considered in our analysis in 2001-2008. This average can be calculated with the information included in Figure 14 of **Appendix Two**.
4. We assume that the cost of those young offenders who are neither first-time entrants, nor most costly ten per cent in 2009, is equivalent to the weighted average of those young offenders considered in our analysis who reoffended in 2001-2008. This average can be calculated with the information included in Figure 14 of **Appendix Two**.
5. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
6. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB).

Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on Police National Computer, CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

**3.15** We used historical data to calculate the average of £8,000 per young offender and therefore recent changes in the justice system, such as the introduction of the Youth Rehabilitation Order or the decrease in the use of custody, may be misrepresented in our analysis. The average of £8,000 per young offender is not an estimate of the year-on-year cost of specific offenders, because specific offenders are not necessarily part of the criminal justice system every year.

**3.16** We would be keen to provide advice to anyone who would like to use the estimates presented in this paper. Please contact the Decision Analytical Modelling network at the NAO through [enquiries@nao.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@nao.gsi.gov.uk)

# Appendix One

## Details of unit costs

### Unit cost of police

**1** In 2004-2008, the Home Office carried out activity-based costing exercises. These resulted in estimates of the time police staff spent on 'crime-related, incident-linked activities'. Then, the Home Office allocated the time spent on 'non-incident linked' and 'operational support' activities to each 'crime-related, incident-linked activity', according to the proportion of police time spent on all incident linked activities (crime and non crime) attributable to each crime. This resulted in estimates of the proportion of time police staff spent investigating crime related incidents, including some non-incident linked and operational support activities, such as call handling, dealing with informants and meetings.

**2** The activity-based costing figures on which the proportions of costs were based excluded data from Essex, Staffordshire, Suffolk and Thames Valley for 2007-08 and Cambridgeshire for 2004-05, which were not available.

**3** We analysed the Home Office's activity-based costing data, and concluded that the proportion of police staff direct costs that can be attributed to investigating criminal cases was 19 per cent. We applied this proportion to the police service budget for 2008-09, according to CIPFA police service statistics. We then divided the result by the number of recorded crimes in 2008-09, in order to produce a unit cost of police: £492 per recorded crime.

**4** Our unit cost of police, therefore, was estimated on the basis of average cost per recorded crime, committed by both under- and over-18s. We applied these unit costs to each of the proven offences that were recorded in the Police National Computer for the young offenders considered in our analysis. Since not all recorded crimes become proven offences, our unit costs of police may be underestimated. Whether this is actually the case depends on the severity of crimes committed by the cohort of young offenders, and the relative proportion of police time spent investigating proven offences, as opposed to offences that are recorded but not proven, and offences committed by under-18s, as opposed to over-18s. The information available did not allow us to estimate average costs per proven offence for young offenders.

### **Unit costs of courts**

**5** The Ministry of Justice produced estimates of the expected long-run marginal costs of a court conviction by age, gender and type of offence. Costs were estimated using existing information on unit costs linked to specific criminal justice outputs, e.g. use of magistrates' courts and Crown Court time. These unit costs were weighted by the relative frequency that each output is realised in relation to a specific offence type, with a further breakdown by age and gender. This resulted in an 'expected cost' per primary offence convicted at court.

**6** As these costs relate to long-run marginal changes in resource use through achieving an additional conviction they are unsuitable for estimating short-run cashable savings through the prevention of a conviction.

**7** Sentencing, costs and general justice system behaviour could change and reduce the accuracy of the model underpinning the cost estimates. The data for the model are extracted from large administrative data systems which may contain some inaccuracies.

**8** The estimates of the cost of a court conviction do not hold for individual offenders, as they are based upon average long-run unit costs and estimates of the average frequency with which different criminal justice outputs will be realised for different offence types for youth offenders. For example, some offenders may give a guilty plea that would reduce their sentence and the associated court, legal aid and disposal costs. A different mix of cases and outcomes would lead to material changes in the average unit costs.

**9** The model excludes costs relating remand and bail due to lack of relevant data on bail and remand for different types of offence. For the Crown Prosecution Service the figures used in the model are likely to include some fixed costs for operation. It was not possible to establish the proportion that these fixed costs represent over the total.

**10** The Ministry of Justice made a number of assumptions around the unit costs of criminal outputs relating to young offenders due to lack of appropriate data. For example, court time and legal aid costs were assumed to be the same as those that apply to over-18s. In the modelling underpinning the costs reported in this paper much of the difference in the overall expected costs per conviction between under- and over-18s is due to differences in the average frequency with which different criminal justice outputs are likely to be realised.

**11** These are other limitations that affect the cost estimates: i) it was assumed that a convicted offender will not appeal; this could underestimate court costs by the probability of appeal multiplied by the court cost; ii) it was assumed that the likelihood of a guilty plea is the same in the magistrates court as for the Crown Court; no magistrates' court plea data is available; and iii) it was assumed that gender does not affect court route.

**12** In some cases the National Audit Office calculated a weighted average of the unit costs of court convictions produced by the Ministry of Justice, based on Police National Computer data for the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000. For example, the category of violence against the person comprises two sub-categories: homicide and wounding. We weighted the estimate for homicide by 0.005 and the estimate for wounding by 0.995, because the number of homicides in the Police National Computer dataset for the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000 is extremely low.

**13** Where the Ministry of Justice did not have a unit cost estimate, the National Audit Office made an informed assumption. For example, we assumed that the unit cost of courts for offences under the category of 'summary offence excluding motoring' is equivalent to 50 per cent of the average of the unit costs for criminal damage and common assault. We made this assumption because most of the 'summary offences excluding motoring' in the Police National Computer dataset for the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000 correspond to criminal damage and common assault. More specifically, most of the criminal damage offences belong to the subtype 'under £5,000', which was the basis for our 50 per cent adjustment.

### **Unit cost of offender management teams**

**14** We calculated the unit cost of youth offending teams, based on the total cost of practitioners in 2008-09, adjusted to exclude indirect time, such as training, and divided by the number of offenders with whom youth offending teams dealt in 2008-09. This resulted in £1,469, per offender. We did not include the cost of interventions that youth offending teams outsource to external providers, because this information was not available.

**15** We calculated the unit cost of offender management teams, for over-18s, based on the total expenditure of probation staff in 2008-09, adjusted to exclude indirect time, such as training, and divided by the number of over-18s convicted in court in 2008. This resulted in £357, per offender.

**16** Our unit costs of offender management teams were estimated on the basis of average cost per proven offender, per year, in the case of under-18s, and of average cost per offender convicted at court, per year, in the case of over-18s. We applied these unit costs to each of the young offenders considered in our analysis, depending on their age. We used youth offending team estimates for under-18s and national offender management team estimates for over-18s.

**17** In those years when the offender did not commit any proven offence, we did not apply any unit cost. For under-18s, we assumed that all proven offences required a service from youth offending teams, because the number of instances where this is not the case is very small and it was not possible to identify these instances in the Police National Computer dataset for first-time entrants in 2000. For over-18s, we applied the unit cost of offender management team to all offenders convicted at court, and therefore excluded those cautioned. Not all offenders convicted at court require a service from the offender management team, but it was not possible to identify the offenders who did require this service in the Police National Computer dataset.

**18** Offender management teams are responsible for supervising community sentences. We did not use specific unit costs of community sentences in our analysis. However, we calculated the average cost of offender management teams, per offender, by dividing the total cost of practitioners by the number of offenders with whom offender management teams deal. Since offender management teams deal with all offenders serving community sentences, our unit costs of offender management teams include the time that practitioners spend on supervising community sentences.

### **Unit costs of custody**

**19** We identified the direct resource expenditure, which excludes significant overhead costs, for public and private prisons in 2008-09 from financial information produced by the National Offending Management Service. Based on the Ministry of Justice's sentencing statistics and the Youth Justice Board's workload statistics for 2008, we estimated the average number of young offenders serving sentences at Youth Offending Institutions, mixed Youth Offending Institutions, and adult facilities, per year.

**20** We conducted a similar exercise for young offenders in Secure Training Centres and Local Authority Secure Children's Homes, although for these we did not have data on direct resource expenditure. We assumed that 25 per cent of their expenditure represented overheads and deducted this from total expenditure on these facilities. We then estimated the number of young offenders serving sentences in these facilities, based on Youth Justice Board's workload statistics, per year.

**21** Our unit costs of custody for both under- and over-18s were calculated on the basis of average cost per month served in custody: £4,898 for under-18s, and £2,367 for over-18s. We calculated the monthly average by dividing the yearly average by 12. Since the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences, we assumed that the average length of time served in custody in the Ministry of Justice's sentencing statistics was applicable to the young offenders considered in our analysis. We multiplied average cost per month by average length of time served in custody, depending on the type of primary offence for which the young offender received a custodial sentence.

# Appendix Two

## Summary tables

**Figure 13**

Types of offences by first-time entrants in 2000, 2000-2009

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total number of offenders	83,366	19,297	18,758	18,945	18,649	17,826	15,921	14,729	13,592	11,495
Under-18 offenders	83,366	17,871	14,427	11,654	8,617	5,650	3,306	1,479	344	-
Over-18 offenders	-	1,426	4,331	7,291	10,032	12,176	12,615	13,250	13,248	11,495
Offences	131,575	50,987	53,842	57,625	56,044	53,100	47,061	42,960	37,798	29,750
Average number of offences per offender	1.58	2.64	2.87	3.04	3.01	2.98	2.96	2.92	2.78	2.59
Reoffenders: offended in 2000, and also in any of the subsequent years	-	19,297	18,758	18,945	18,649	17,826	15,921	14,729	13,592	11,495
% reoffenders over the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000	-	23.15	22.50	22.73	22.37	21.38	19.10	17.67	16.30	13.79
Reoffenders: offended in one year, and also in the previous year	-	19,297	8,739	8,897	9,245	9,272	8,956	8,010	7,185	6,117
% reoffenders over previous year's total	-	23.15	45.29	47.43	48.80	49.72	50.24	50.31	48.78	45.00



**Figure 13 (continued)**

Types of offences by first-time entrants in 2000, 2000-2009

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Type of offence (%)</b>										
Violence against the person	6.95	5.74	5.37	5.46	6.09	6.65	6.69	5.50	5.45	4.65
Sexual offences	.48	.41	.35	.27	.24	.31	.30	.22	.25	.18
Burglary	5.34	4.83	4.28	3.73	3.35	3.20	3.01	3.10	2.94	2.74
Robbery	1.10	1.77	1.79	1.41	1.35	1.19	1.27	0.99	1.05	.74
Theft and handling stolen goods	35.40	21.14	16.93	14.22	13.01	12.57	12.39	12.60	14.18	14.92
Fraud and forgery	1.95	1.96	1.94	1.51	1.85	1.83	1.30	1.41	1.81	1.38
Criminal damage	6.28	3.90	2.78	2.48	2.03	2.03	2.04	1.47	1.41	1.26
Drug offences	5.58	5.90	7.79	7.89	6.43	6.75	6.68	7.81	9.41	10.08
Other indictable offences	2.76	6.31	7.83	8.86	8.70	8.42	8.03	8.03	7.70	7.11
Indictable motoring offences	.21	.42	.61	.73	.70	.55	0.56	.50	.42	.35
Summary offences excluding motoring	27.62	29.26	27.79	27.02	29.13	29.71	30.87	30.91	30.11	31.06
Summary motoring offences	5.12	12.08	15.41	17.86	17.05	15.77	14.12	12.92	10.86	10.37
Breach offences	1.17	6.23	7.09	8.55	10.06	10.99	12.73	14.51	14.36	15.13
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000, and the 560,742 proven offences that they committed between 2000 and 2009.

2. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Police National Computer data.

**Figure 14****Average yearly cost of a first-time entrant in 2000, 2000-2009**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Under-18 average	£3,152	£7,775	£9,243	£10,915	£12,563	£14,756	£16,822	£18,002	£20,024	-
95% confidence interval: lower bound	£3,117	£7,853	£8,996	£10,600	£12,147	£14,166	£15,999	£16,721	£17,230	-
95% confidence interval: upper bound	£3,187	£7,967	£9,490	£11,230	£12,978	£15,345	£17,646	£19,283	£22,817	-
Over-18 average	-	£7,253	£8,348	£8,804	£8,848	£9,405	£10,164	£10,340	£10,736	£9,190
95% confidence interval: lower bound	-	£6,644	£7,946	£8,467	£8,565	£9,129	£9,875	£10,044	£10,446	£8,914
95% confidence interval: upper bound	-	£7,862	£8,749	£9,140	£9,131	£9,681	£10,454	£10,635	£11,026	£9,465
Under-18 average for most costly ten per cent	£11,427	£39,231	£48,444	£56,748	£63,182	£71,847	£75,995	£80,160	£83,081	-
Over-18 average for most costly ten per cent	-	£36,830	£43,356	£46,807	£46,263	£49,925	£52,714	£54,079	£53,428	£47,604
Under-18 average with sensitivity analysis increase	£4,458	£10,951	£12,918	£15,134	£17,299	£20,184	£22,840	£24,367	£26,981	-
Over-18 average with sensitivity analysis increase	-	£10,441	£11,939	£12,509	£12,538	£13,256	£14,251	£14,453	£14,980	£12,937

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the 83,366 first-time entrants in 2000, and the 560,742 proven offences that they committed between 2000 and 2009.
2. The sensitivity analysis increase is 75 per cent for police costs, 50 per cent for court costs, and 25 per cent for offender management teams and custody costs, over those in the original approach we set out in Part Two.
3. Dash (-) denotes nobody.
4. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.
5. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB).

Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on Police National Computer, CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

**Figure 15**

Average yearly cost per offender who did not receive any custodial sentence in 2000-2009, broken down by type of offence

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Type of offence</b>										
Violence against the person	£3,176	£5,116	£5,288	£5,318	£5,224	£5,771	£5,890	£6,256	£5,435	-
Sexual offences	£3,090	£4,711	£4,861	£4,942	£5,241	£5,856	£5,089	£5,707*	£4,299*	-
Burglary	£2,850	£4,664	£4,907	£5,035	£4,898	£5,173	£5,352	£5,758	£5,225	-
Robbery	£4,327	£6,334	£6,395	£6,159	£6,579	£6,412	£6,154	£6,594	£7,328*	-
Theft and handling stolen goods	£2,621	£4,324	£4,513	£4,613	£4,608	£4,867	£5,055	£5,302	£4,897	-
Fraud and forgery	£3,078	£4,911	£4,878	£5,112	£5,050	£5,536	£5,242	£6,133	£5,157*	-
Criminal damage	£2,656	£4,316	£4,560	£4,626	£4,742	£5,014	£5,238	£5,494	£5,230	-
Drug offences	£2,719	£4,198	£4,387	£4,469	£4,658	£5,098	£5,282	£5,611	£5,677	-
Other indictable offences	£3,303	£5,038	£5,217	£5,357	£5,431	£5,924	£5,987	£5,820	£6,980	-
Indictable motoring offences	£3,331	£4,980	£5,219	£5,879	£5,414	£5,356	£5,367	£8,291*	£6,560*	-
Summary offences excluding motoring	£2,682	£4,175	£4,349	£4,427	£4,438	£4,707	£4,849	£5,027	£4,808	-
Summary motoring offences	£3,094	£4,522	£4,789	£4,943	£5,015	£5,391	£5,309	£5,687	£4,779	-

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the first-time entrants in 2000, who did not receive any custodial sentence, and committed the offences listed in the left column at least once, in the period 2000-2009. For example, the average cost for violence against the person in 2001 refers to those offenders who did not receive any custodial sentence in the period 2000-2009, committed at least one offence under the category of violence against the person in the period 2000-2009, and also committed at least one proven offence in 2001. All the costs refer to under-18s.

2. Asterisk (\*) denotes that the number of cases on which the average was calculated was smaller than 30.

3. Dash (-) denotes nobody aged under 18.

4. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.

5. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB).

Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on Police National Computer, CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.

**Figure 16**

Average yearly cost per offender who received at least one custodial sentence in 2000-2009, broken down by type of offence

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Type of offence</b>										
Violence against the person	£6,588	£14,158	£17,558	£20,364	£24,300	£28,867	£32,073	£34,530	£37,884	-
Sexual offences	£8,810	£16,957	£19,011	£26,507	£28,917	£33,987	£42,380	£34,386*	£54,349	-
Burglary	£6,274	£14,573	£17,560	£20,949	£24,602	£28,700	£32,538	£34,458	£34,229	-
Robbery	£9,330	£19,445	£23,210	£26,500	£29,501	£35,578	£36,091	£38,866	£39,659	-
Theft and handling stolen goods	£6,030	£13,918	£16,541	£19,586	£22,827	£26,685	£30,090	£31,668	£35,017	-
Fraud and forgery	£6,775	£15,201	£17,713	£20,105	£23,087	£30,699	£35,788	£35,467	£42,511*	-
Criminal damage	£5,859	£13,147	£16,348	£18,878	£23,171	£26,634	£30,750	£31,816	£37,506	-
Drug offences	£6,358	£13,958	£16,455	£19,315	£23,171	£26,843	£30,107	£32,866	£39,112	-
Other indictable offences	£6,454	£14,403	£16,928	£20,153	£23,512	£27,847	£31,836	£33,270	£36,224	-
Indictable motoring offences	£7,057	£15,724	£19,897	£25,079	£27,572	£30,687	£33,852	£38,176	£38,241*	-
Summary offences excluding motoring	£6,187	£13,600	£16,201	£19,216	£22,389	£25,870	£29,588	£31,375	£34,404	-
Summary motoring offences	£6,298	£14,041	£16,981	£20,635	£23,594	£28,008	£32,167	£33,348	£34,443	-

**NOTES**

1. This figure refers to the first-time entrants in 2000, who received at least one custodial sentence, and committed the offences listed in the left column at least once, in the period 2000-2009. For example, the average cost for violence against the person in 2001 refers to those offenders who received at least one custodial sentence in the period 2000-2009, committed at least one offence under the category of violence against the person in the period 2000-2009, and also committed at least one proven offence in 2001. All the costs refer to under-18s.

2. Asterisk (\*) denotes that the number of cases on which the average was calculated was smaller than 30.

3. Dash (-) denotes nobody aged under 18.

4. The data in this figure are not adjusted by the time that a minority of offenders spend in custody, and therefore are not at risk of offending in the community. This is because the Police National Computer does not include information on the discharge date from custodial sentences.

5. All the costs in this figure are expressed in 2008-09 prices. As necessary, we adjusted costs to 2008-09 price levels, by using GDP deflator (YCGB).

Source: National Audit Office analysis, based on Police National Computer, CIPFA, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board data.