

# SUCCESS STORY

## SCOTTISH NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD

Bespoke management  
information system



The Scottish National Criminal Justice Board was established to help tackle the important issue of re-offending in Scotland. Sopra Steria was chosen to deliver a scorecard-based management information system to Scotland's National Criminal Justice Board and the 11 Local Boards which make up the partnership.

### Background

In 2003 a report by Sheriff Andrew Normand was published on how to achieve a more effective integration of aims and targets across the Scottish criminal justice system. The report suggested that no single agency could tackle the complexities involved in reducing the levels of re-offending and recommended that an effective framework of cross-system mechanisms and better joined-up working needed to be implemented. This led to the creation of the Scottish National Criminal Justice Board in 2003, which collaborates with 11 Local Boards including: the Sheriff Principal; the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service; the local police force and the Scottish Court Service.

The establishment of the Scottish National Criminal Justice Board highlights the necessity of national and local coordination and cooperation in helping to reduce levels of re-offending. Sopra Steria was chosen to build a bespoke scorecard-based Management Information (MI) system for the Scottish National Criminal Justice Board and its 11 partners to help facilitate true partnership working.

### Key requirements of the new system

The original management information system had a number of limitations:

- Many of the Local Boards had trouble accessing the key cross-system MI in a way that was simple and easy to understand.
- For Boards without a dedicated statistical resource the information could be difficult to interpret.

- A range of datasets was being accessed in different areas, which could lead to duplication of efforts on behalf of some Boards.
- There was very little comparison between areas and courts, with little consistency between areas.
- The methods used to present and analyse the data were also very basic.

It had become clear that the collaboration needed a more flexible, efficient and integrated system to simplify information sharing and help facilitate joined-up working to ensure there was a clear link between national and local priorities. The new system also needed to be able to pull together useful and timely data (from a variety of sources) on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that were relevant to all the Boards. Sopra Steria's challenge was to design and build a new MI system that would provide a single source of information that could be presented in a simple and graphical way.

### Solution

From the outset of the project it was agreed that the design of the front-end interface would be driven by user needs and preferences, and both local and national end users were involved in every stage of the project's development. The new bespoke MI system is based on a password-protected, web-based, front-end tool

that is supported by an SQL database which holds the background data. Datasets are submitted by the various partners to a statistician within the Scottish Government and then transferred onto the database which supports the front-end MI tool.

Users can access the data via two routes:

- They can see the monthly figures on a national, local or court-level scorecard which contains a green, amber or red marking for the key targets.
- They can also drill down below the scorecards to interrogate the data over different time periods and for different geographic areas.

Using a drop-down list of options allows the user greater flexibility to define the required time period, chart and indicator combinations. Charts can also be downloaded into alternative formats (e.g. excel, PDF) which local users can use to build their own performance reports.

## Benefits

The new scorecard-based MI system delivers a number of benefits:

### Simple Presentation of Meaningful Information

- New simple scorecards and charts enable Boards without a dedicated statistical resource to access, monitor and report on performance information.
- Simple, graphical presentation methods can be deployed - e.g. the trend over time charts and area comparisons - to build on and improve the presentation methods that Board members were accustomed to using within their organisations.
- The presentation of court-level with Local Board-level and national-level information ensures there is a link between national and local priorities.

### Value for Money

- The system provides one process for gathering and analysing Criminal Justice Board KPIs.
- The simple, graphical presentation method helps to cut down on the multiple effort required by the Boards to build their own complex charts and graphs for their KPIs.

### Increased Efficiency

- The system adds value to the work of the Boards by helping to address the risk of unnecessary duplication of effort in different local areas, and by pulling together a set of consistent measures for the Local and National Boards to monitor.
- The majority of the indicators contained within the system cover the speed of cases through the criminal justice system and efforts to monitor and manage the flow of business.

## Additional information

The project team was drawn from the Scottish Government and a wide range of organisations were involved as members of the project board. They contributed to the Local Board consultation group as data providers and as end users. The list of partners included the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service; Scottish Court Service; Scottish Legal Aid Board; Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland, plus the eight Scottish police forces; the Scottish Prison Service; and the Sheriff's Principal, who chairs the Local Boards.

“With Sopra Steria as our chosen contractor, we delivered a high-quality web-based solution on time and to specification. The product has been very well received by our partners in the National and Local Criminal Justice Boards.”

Irene Magill  
Performance Analyst



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