

New Police Database Revolutionises Statistical Analysis



PNLD and their Software Development Partner PDMS Deliver Solution to make Crucial Information Accessible to all the Police Forces of England and Wales

A new database revolutionises access to crime and user satisfaction data from each Police Force in England and Wales.

The system, called the Police National Statistics Database (PNSD), began running on a trial basis last December and was launched on June 4. Out of the 43 police forces in England and Wales, 40 have already signed up to it. PNSD is the brainchild of the PNL D team, who are also responsible for www.pnld.co.uk and the national Police FAQ database (www.askthe.police.uk).

'Our police forces are famously time poor and their resources are always under pressure,' said Chris Gledhill, Managing Director at PDMS, the company who designed and developed the PNSD. 'This database tool will alleviate a huge administrative burden for forces when analysing crime and user satisfaction statistics, and as such is a great example of a very beneficial application of information technology.'

Previously, all of the police forces submitted monthly statistics spreadsheets to the UK Home Office, including data on crime and user satisfaction results taken from surveys of victims of crimes including burglary, road traffic collisions etc. This data was then collated and published by the Home Office's crime statistics data base called iQuanta. However, this was in pre-formatted PDF reports, making any additional or ad hoc analysis difficult and time consuming.

The PNSD system allows each force to upload a copy of their monthly and quarterly spreadsheets directly to the PNSD system, where it is validated and stored. Spreadsheets are processed, automatically, as they arrive.

The PNSD system is based on Foundations TM , PDMS's own Net-based software development framework which allows high performance applications to be customised to meet specific needs faster, cheaper and better than bespoke or off-the-shelf solutions. There are three key functional areas to the system: submission; parsing and querying.

Police forces can download any spreadsheet, or select specific aspects of the data, for analysis over time and geographically. This information is downloaded in a spreadsheet format very similar to the original spreadsheet for ease of use in analysis.

'Comparing and contrasting statistics quickly – particularly with another comparable force - is a real boon,' said Nigel Hughes, Head of the Police National Legal Database. 'For example, information such as offences related to incidents of domestic violence can be assessed; it will facilitate the monitoring of the time and place of violent crime and track the success and customer satisfaction with police operations. The police use statistics about crime to help make sense of any trends and this will help them do that quickly and accurately. It frees them up to get on with the job of policing and gives them the opportunity to enhance future service delivery.'