

# Whistleblower decision making

Richard Wortley

&

Paul Mazerolle

Griffith University

# Overview

- Rationale
- The Study
- Reporting by demographics
- Reporting by attitudes
- Reporting by situational factors
- Summary

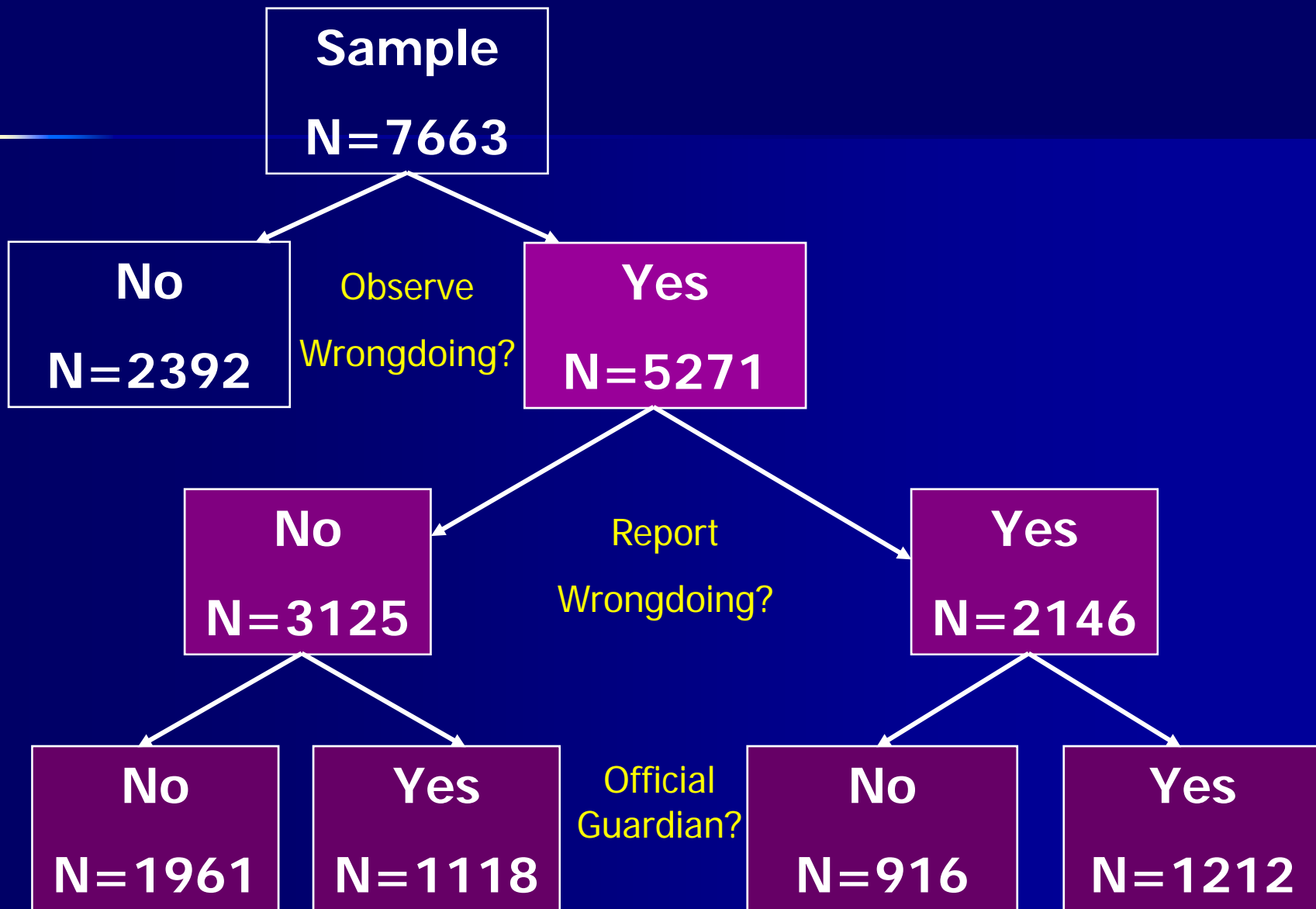
# Rationale

- Rational Choice Theory (Clarke) – offenders perform a cost-benefit analysis before deciding to commit crime
  - Routine Activity Theory (Felson) – crime occurs when there is a likely offender, suitable target and absence of a capable guardian
  - Rational choice applies equally to 'capable guardians'
- ⇒ Why do people decide to/not to intervene when they observe a crime?

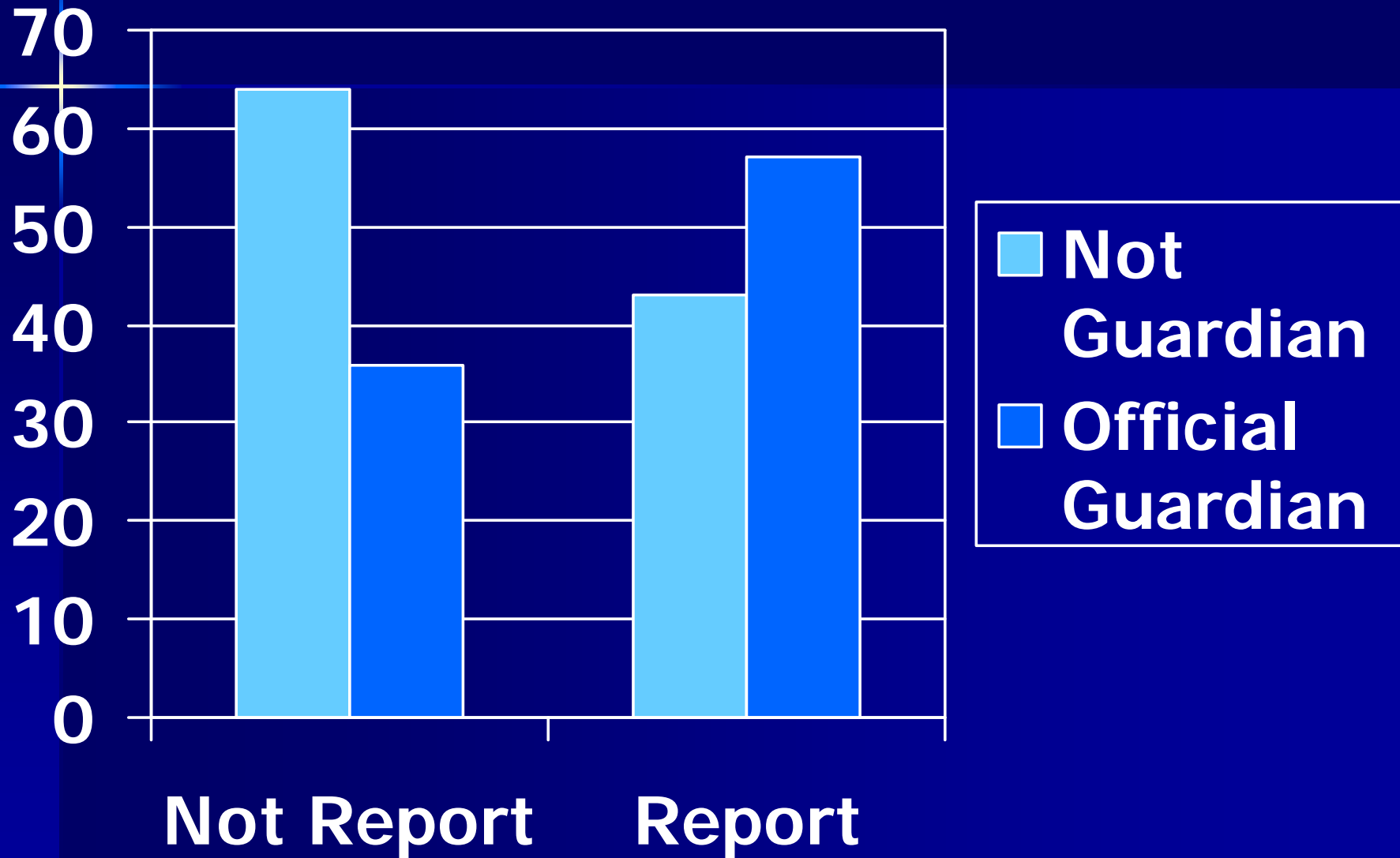
# The Study

- Part of a major national project on whistleblowing in the public sector
- Focus on workplace experiences of wrongdoing and reporting
- 37 agencies in 4 jurisdictions
- c24,000 surveys distributed
- c32% response rate
- Compared intervention by 'official guardians' (managers, investigators etc) with that of other staff

# Breakdown of reporting



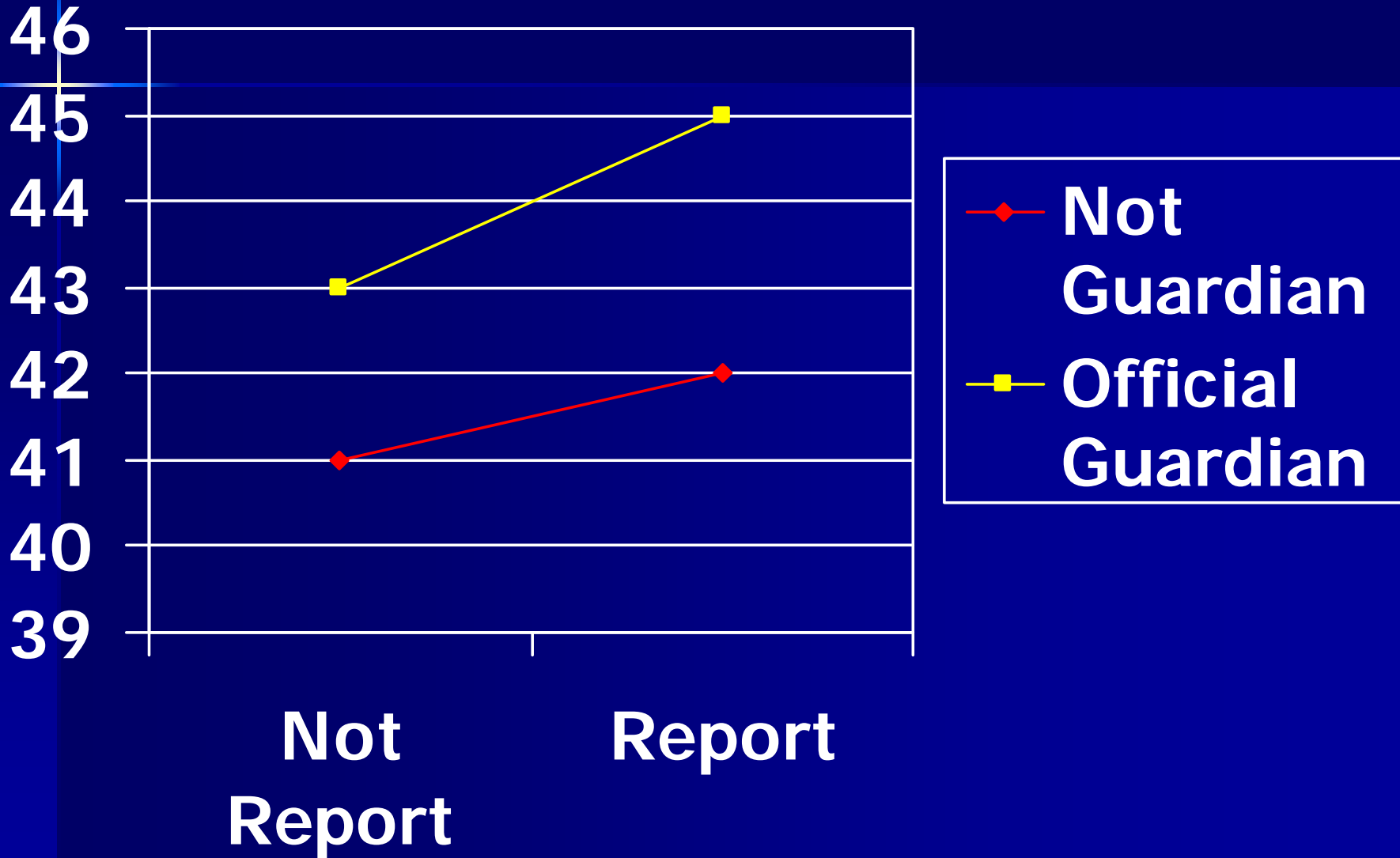
# Reporting by Official Guardianship (%)



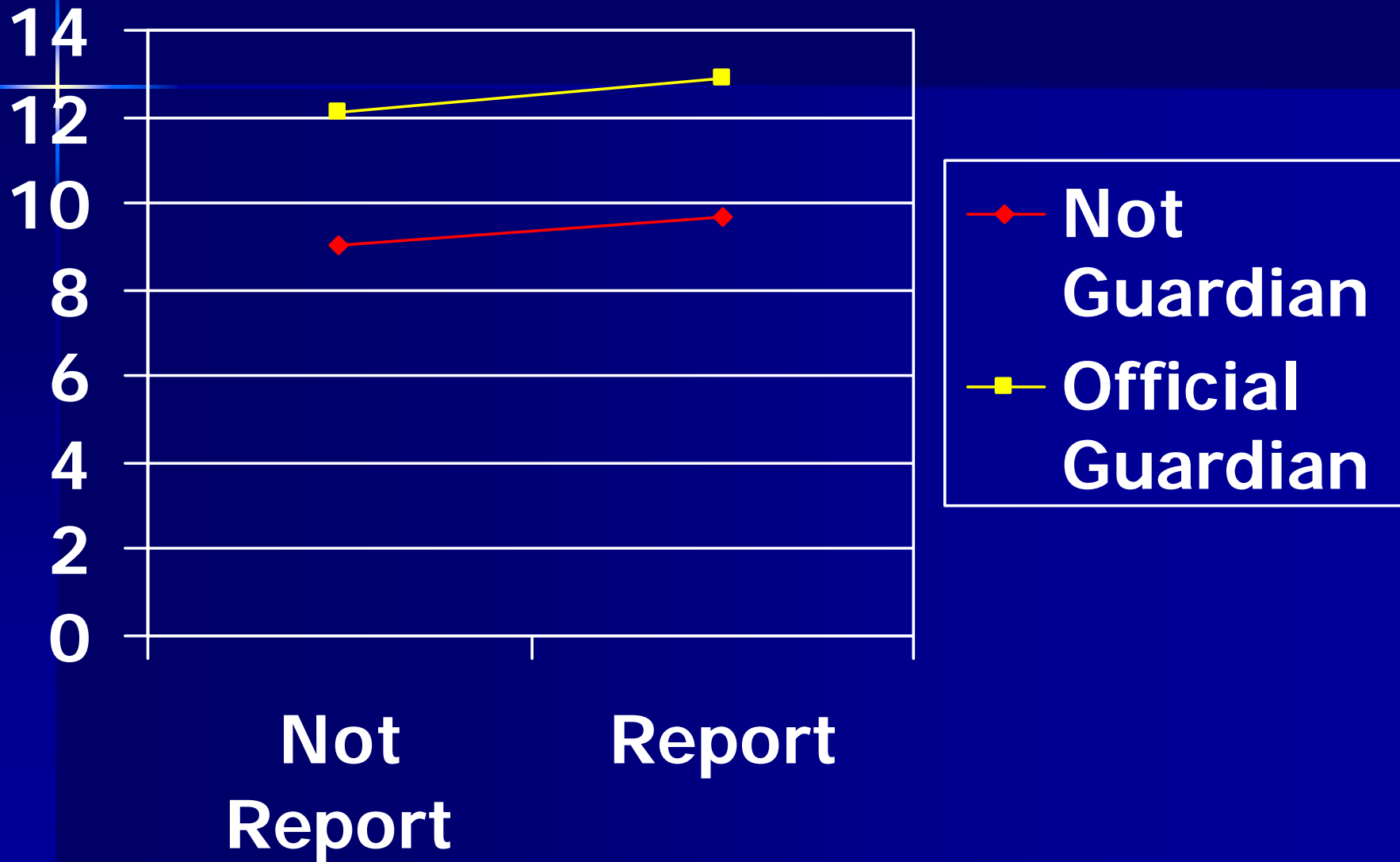
# Reporting by Demographics

- Age
- Tenure in Organisation
- Gender

# Age



# Tenure in Organisation



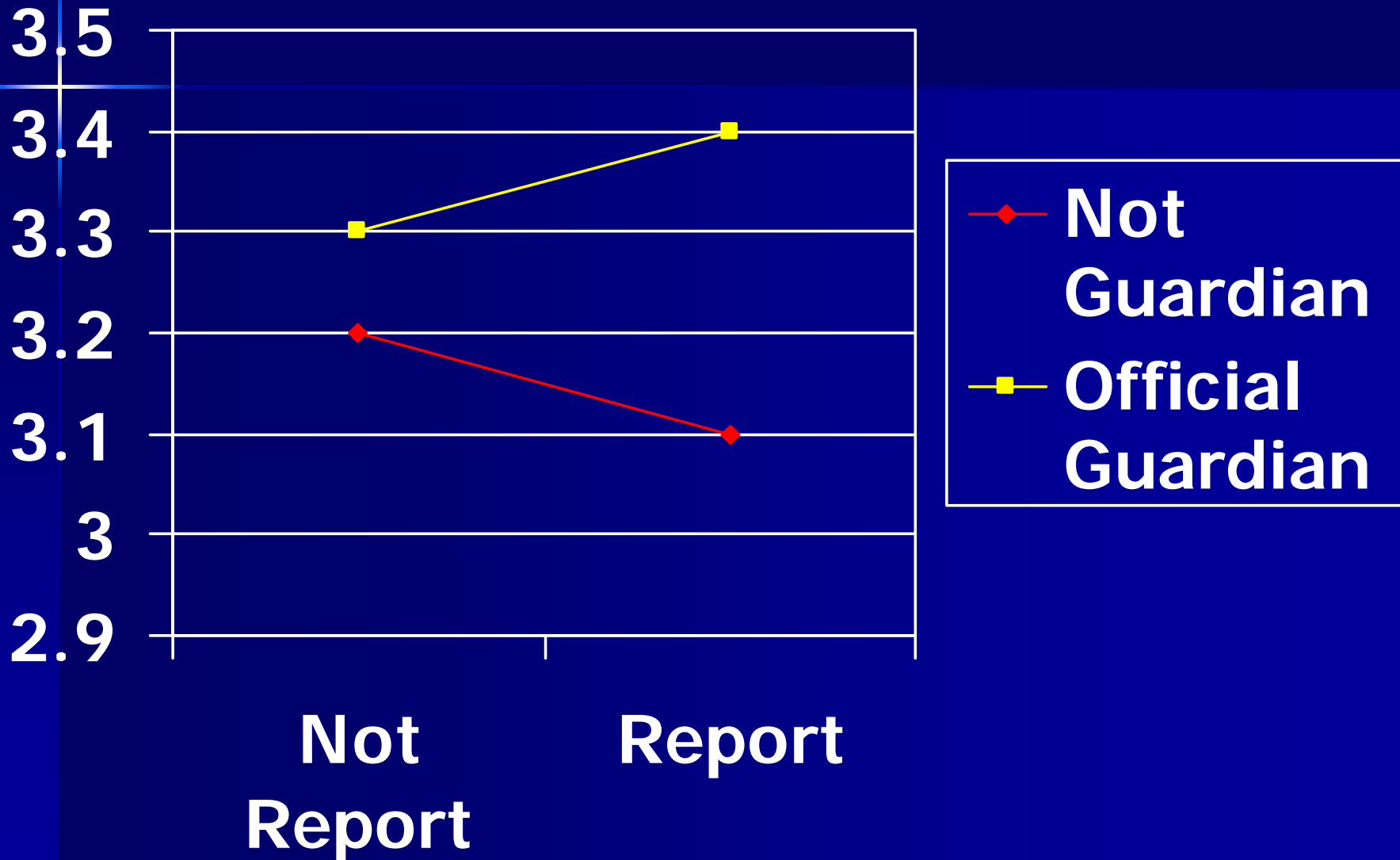
# Gender

	<b>Not Report</b>	<b>Report</b>
<b>Not Guardian</b>	M=69% F=63%	M=31% F=37%
<b>Guardian</b>	M=51% F=47%	M=49% F=53%

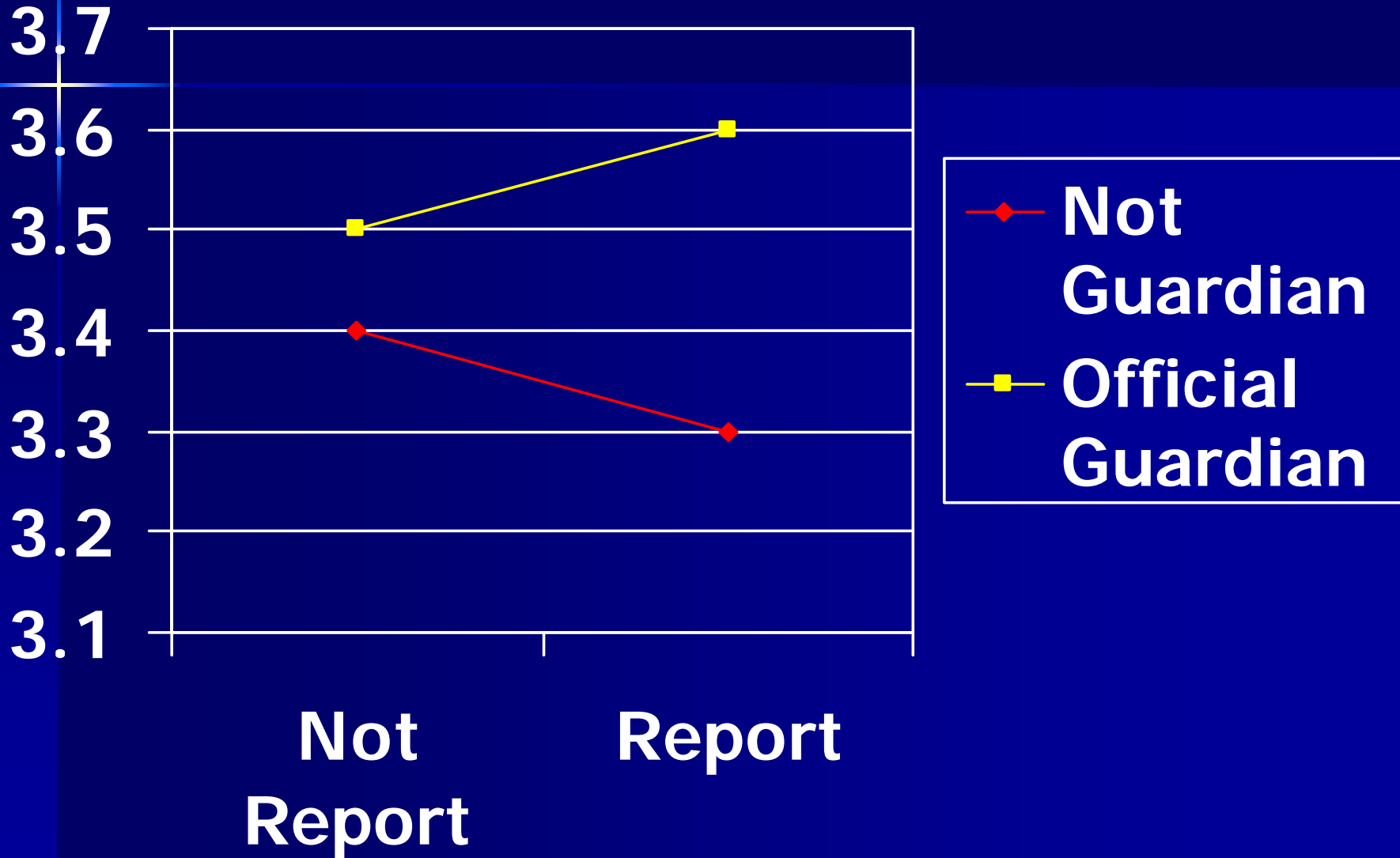
# Reporting by Attitude Scales

- Trust in Management
- Job Satisfaction
- Organisational Citizenship

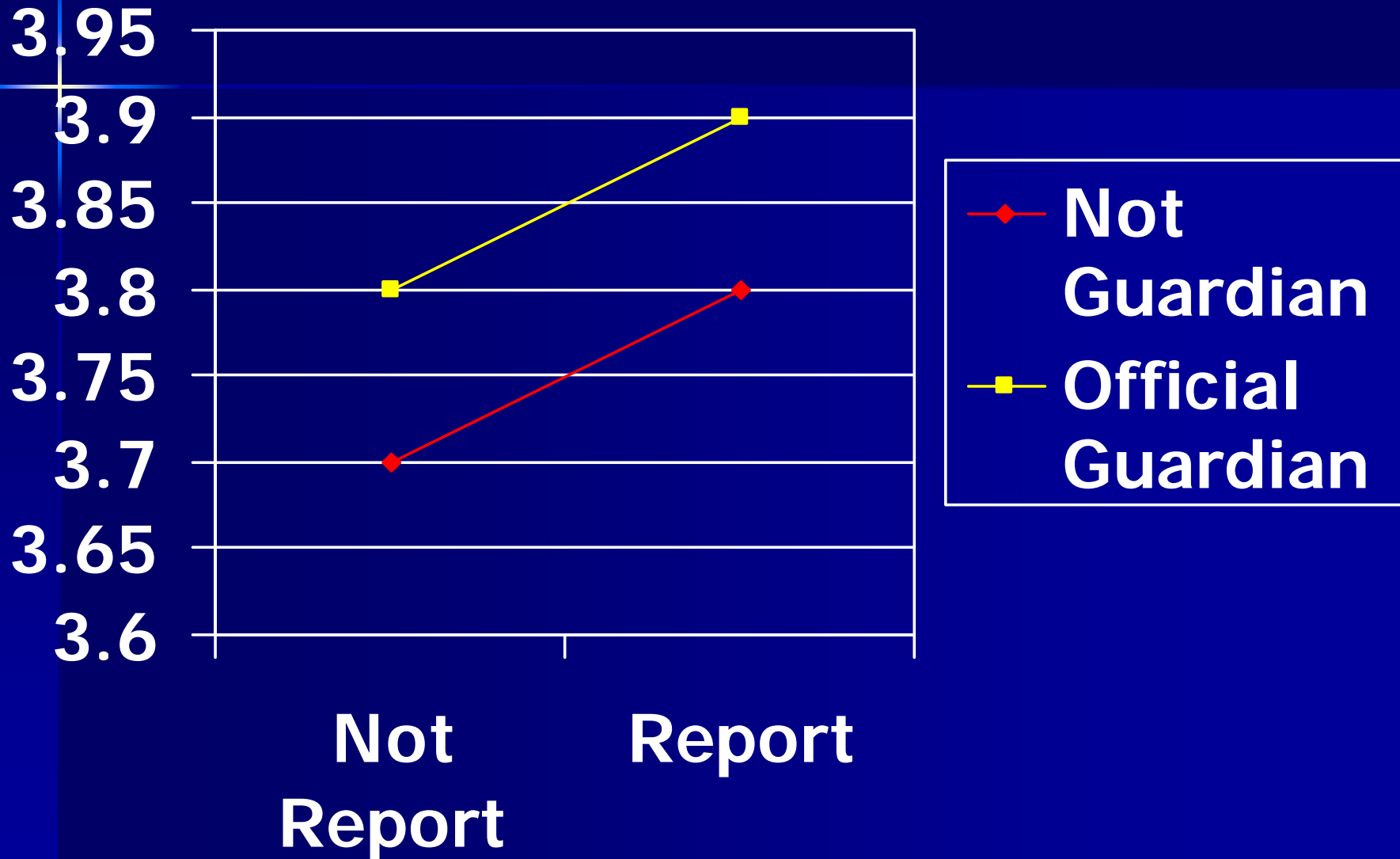
# Trust in Management (1-5)



# Job Satisfaction (1-5)



# Organisational Citizenship (1-5)



# Reporting by Situational Variables

- Misconduct category?
- More than one perpetrator?
- Perpetrator more senior than you?
- Wrongdoing directed at you?
- How serious was the wrongdoing?
- How frequent was the wrongdoing?
- Organisation has formal policies?
- Why did you report?
- What was the outcome of report?
- Why didn't you report?
- What could be done to get you to report?

## Misconduct category? (n)

	Not report		Report	
	NG	G	NG	G
<b>Material gain</b>	458	259	168	289
<b>Conflict of interest</b>	22	15	7	26
<b>Improper behaviour</b>	224	141	107	220
<b>Defective admin</b>	179	103	114	118
<b>Waste</b>	109	80	37	49
<b>Pervert justice</b>	131	81	79	94
<b>Grievance</b>	718	375	340	323
<b>Reprisal</b>	7	5	12	11

# Misconduct category? (%)

	Not report		Report	
	NG	G	NG	G
<b>Material gain</b>	39	22	14	25
<b>Conflict of interest</b>	31	21	10	37
<b>Improper behaviour</b>	32	20	15	32
<b>Defective admin</b>	35	20	22	23
<b>Waste</b>	40	29	13	18
<b>Pervert justice</b>	34	21	21	24
<b>Grievance</b>	41	21	19	18
<b>Reprisal</b>	20	14	34	31

# More than one perpetrator?

	<b>Not Report</b>	<b>Report</b>
<b>Not Guardian</b>	Y=68% N=61%	Y=32% N=39%
<b>Guardian</b>	Y=55% N=43%	Y=45% N=57%

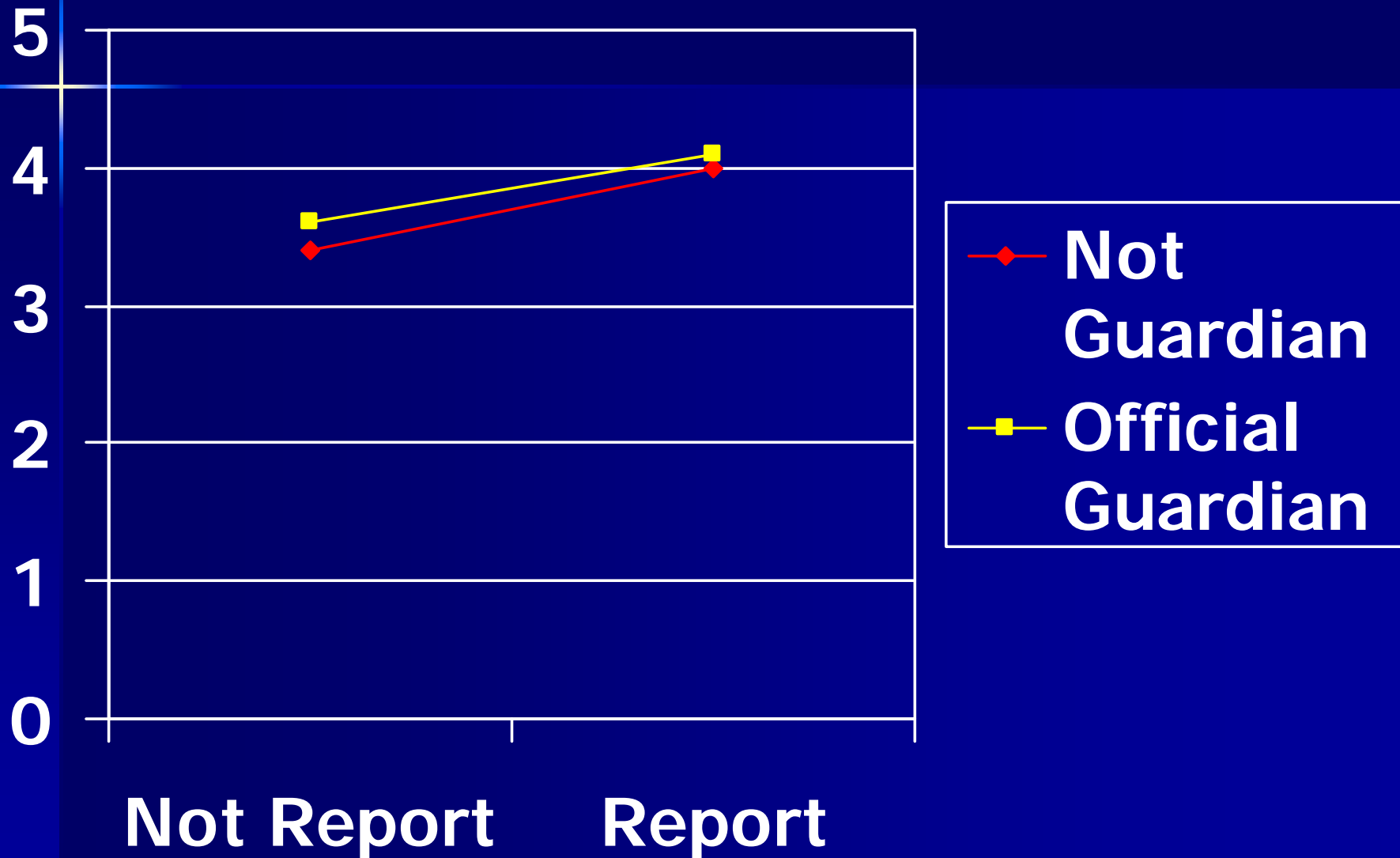
# Perpetrators more senior?

	<b>Not Report</b>	<b>Report</b>
<b>Not Guardian</b>	Y=70% N=60%	Y=30% N=40%
<b>Guardian</b>	Y=62% N=41%	Y=38% N=59%

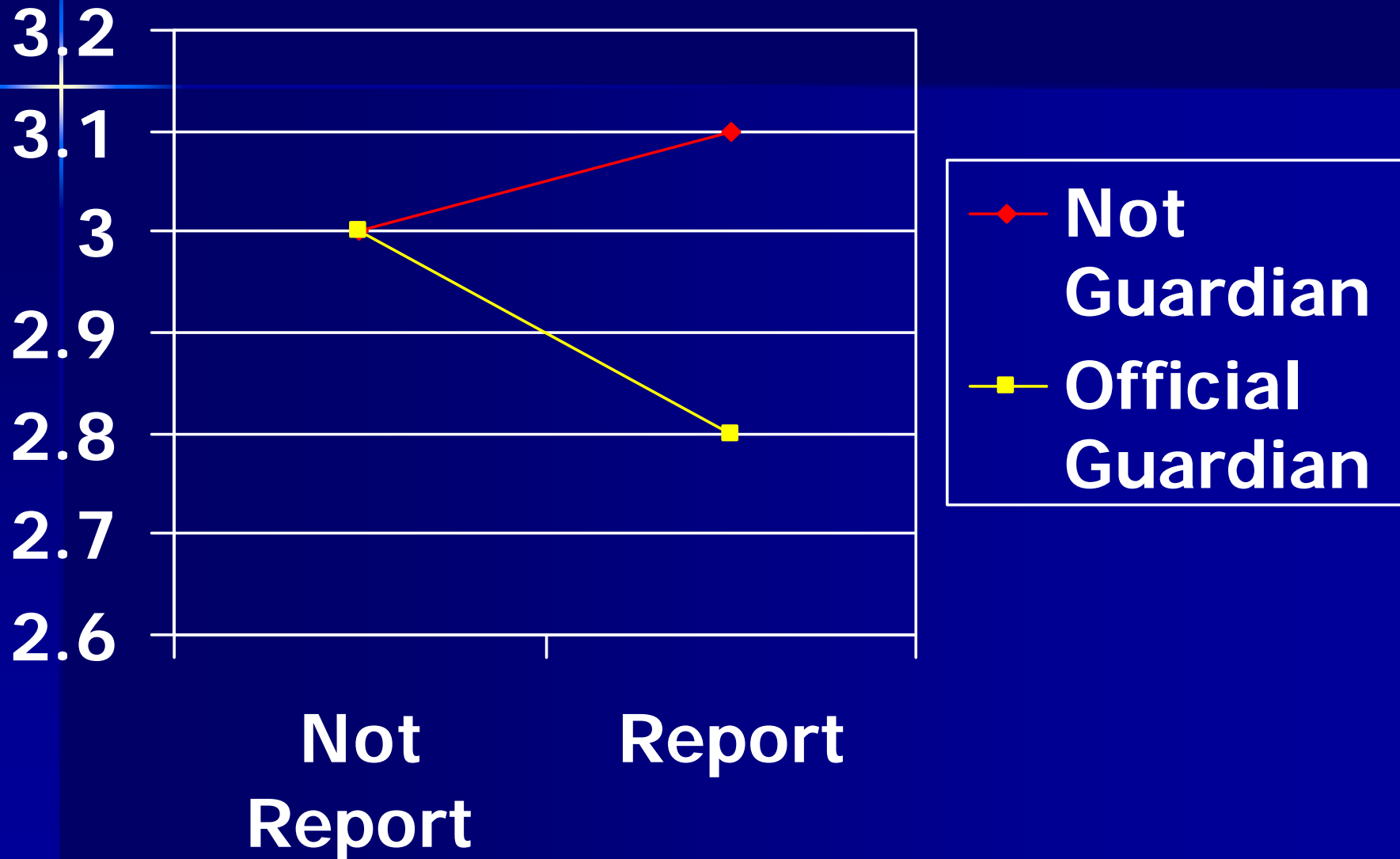
# Directed at you?

	<b>Not Report</b>	<b>Report</b>
<b>Not Guardian</b>	Y=44% N=71%	Y=56% N=29%
<b>Guardian</b>	Y=41% N=51%	Y=59% N=49%

# How serious was the wrongdoing? (1-5)



# How frequent was the wrongdoing? (1-5)



# Agency has written policies?

	Not Report	Report
Not Guardian	Y=62% N=75%	Y=38% N=26%
Guardian	Y=47% N=60%	Y=53% N=40%

## Reasons for reporting (1-4)

Reason	Not Guard.	Guard.
Ethical responsibility	3.1	3.3
Serious enough	3.0	3.2
Correct a wrong	3.1	3.1
Enough evidence	2.9	3.1
Trust person reporting to	2.9	3.0
Knew who to report to	2.8	3.0
Supported by management	2.8	2.9
Supported by coworkers	2.7	2.6

## Outcome of reporting (1-5)

	<b>Not Guard.</b>	<b>Guard.</b>
Treated well by management	3.1	3.7
Treated well by coworkers	3.4	3.6
Things became better	3.6	4.0
Would do it again	4.0	4.4

## Reasons for not reporting (%)

Reason	Not Guard.	Guard.
Nothing would be done	36%	31%
Afraid of wrongdoer	19%	15%
Didn't trust superior	15%	14%
Too stressful	15%	13%
Identity not protected	14%	7%
Would not be protected	13%	12%
Afraid of management	8%	7%
Afraid of coworkers	8%	6%

## What could be done? (1-4)

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Not Guard.</b>	<b>Guard.</b>
Support from coworkers	2.2	2.1
Training managers	2.1	2.1
Clear policies on protection	2.1	2.1
Active support program	2.1	2.1
Training staff	2.0	2.0
Support from management	2.0	1.9
Clear polices on reporting	1.9	1.9
Name kept secret	1.9	1.8

# Summary

- Attitude measures weak predictors
- No evidence of reporters as 'crackpots'
- Official role as guardian most important factor in reporting
- Other factors involve cost-benefit calculations, especially reprisals
- Reporting can be increased by strengthening protection