

**CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

20 July 2006

Agenda Item No:

**COMPLAINTS BY THE PUBLIC
A Report by the Chief Constable**

1. Overview

The Constabulary was represented at the national, ACPO PSD Conference on 13th and 14th June 2006. The inputs included an update on the Taylor Recommendations (review of police discipline arrangements), Professional Standards Departments in a Strategic Force, Findings and Recommendations from the HMIC Thematic and Counter Corruption issues.

HMIC Thematic “Raising the Standard” was published during June and contains 19 recommendations and 10 suggestions. Cumbria is mentioned twice for best practice – i) management of suspension and welfare and ii) use of the True Vision pack to promote the public complaints system

Internally, we currently have 2 managed and 1 supervised IPCC investigations.

2. Suspensions

There are no police officers currently suspended from duty. An officer who was suspended pending a misconduct hearing, has now been concluded, and another officer suspended in connection with racist comments in an e-mail has been returned to operational duties (with conditions).

3. Trends

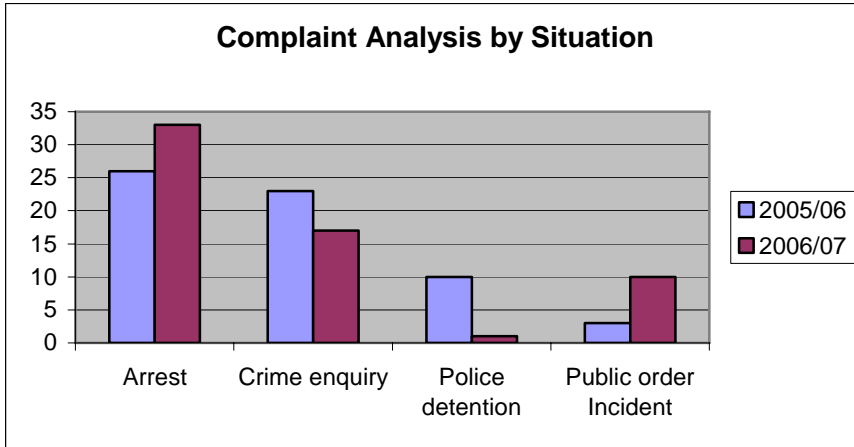
Quarter 1.4.06 to 30.06.06

	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>
2005/06	33	20	28
2006/07	16	36	34

The total number of complaints recorded for this quarter last year was **81** against **86** for the same quarter of this year, had April this year been an average month for recorded number of complaints then the increase would have been higher.

When the complaints are compared **Fig 1**, quarter against previous quarter, **by situation** (in other words what was the situation involving the police and member of the public which resulted in the complaint), it can be seen that there is a definite increase in complaints arising from arrests or public order incidents. This could be as a result of the Respect Campaign or the drive to improve performance in Violent Crime.

Fig 1



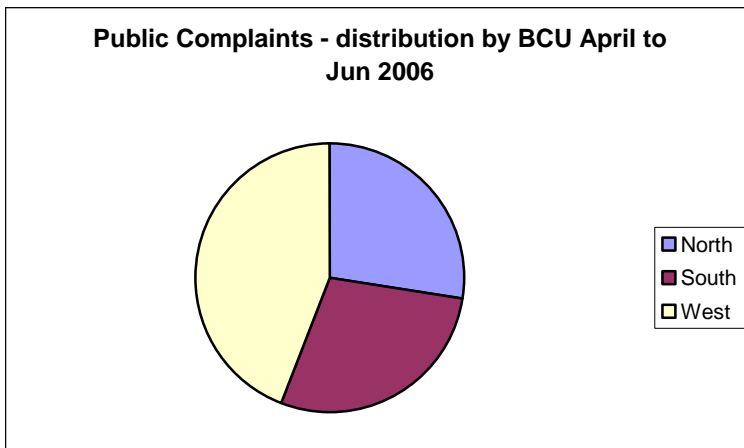
4. Area breakdown for the year

	<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>
Breaches of PACE	3	2	2
Discrimination			1
Incivility	3	11	8
Malpractice	3		2
Oppressive behaviour	8	10	9
Unprofessional conduct	6	1	15

Distribution by BCU **Fig 2** shows West Cumbria to be recording the highest number of complaints, particularly in the area of “Unprofessional Conduct”*.

** Defined as Neglect of duty, Irregularity in procedure, traffic irregularity, lack of fairness and impartiality, improper disclosure of information.

Fig 2



No	Issue	Action
1	Completion of vehicle log books and safety checks	Reminder on Force Orders
2	Police Vehicles displaying England flag during world cup football	Memo to Commanders
3	Provision of "At Risk" suits in all Custody areas.	Addressed through Stores and Procurement
4	Statement writing development need identified in Officer	Through PDR system
5	Requirement to have complainants medically examined in assault cases	Force Orders and Raising the Standard newsletter
6	Failing to comply with policy on Secondary Employment and Business Interest	Reminder on Force Orders

6. Direction and Control

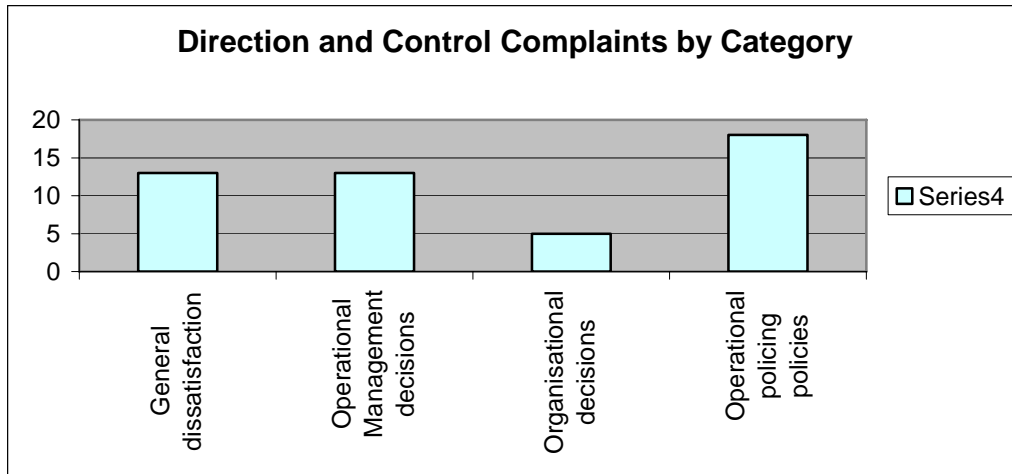
No of cases recorded this Qtr 1 2006/07: 49

Breakdown by Area:

HQ	7
North	16
West	14
South	11
OFA	1

Breakdown by Category:

Fig 3



The complaints are fairly evenly distributed across the three BCUs and the issues complained about vary from traffic issues, crime enquiries, police response/actions, neighbour/domestic disputes and quality of service. The only discernible trend is that 11

of the complaints this quarter related to traffic issues. Further research is to be undertaken.

7. Race and Equality

About 2am on 11th June 2006, when responding to a large-scale disturbance in West Cumbria, a Malaysian couple made complaints that the police response was discriminatory and influenced by race.

The IPCC are managing an investigation by PSD concerning racist comments in an e-mail sent by an Officer outside the organisation in a non-work related capacity.

Guidance for Supervisors on responding to internal hate incidents has been approved and will be incorporated into the Force Hate Crime policy and Force training.

Michael Baxter, QPM
Chief Constable

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