



**SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY**

Professional Standards

Complaints Statistics

1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016

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Executive Summary

This report presents figures on public complaints relating to Suffolk Constabulary recorded during the period 1 April to 30 September 2016. These complaints are made by members of the public in relation to the conduct of those serving with the Police and are dealt with under the Police Reform Act 2002 (PRA 2002). The PRA 2002 introduced a number of changes with regard to complaints against the Police. These changes came into effect on 1 April 2010 and aimed to improve the way that complaints are handled. Under the PRA 2002, forces are required to record all complaints made by the public in relation to the conduct of those serving in the force. Amendments made to the police complaints system by the Government in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, introduced in November 2012, were designed to streamline and remove unnecessary bureaucracy from the system, ensure that complaints are handled at the lowest appropriate level, and focus more on putting right the complaint made by the member of the public. As a result of the amendments Direction and Control issues are now recorded as Public Complaints and the allegations referred to as Organisational.

Data for the report is extracted from the Professional Standards database on a quarterly basis. The data is sourced from a live case management system and as such is a snap shot of the information as it was at the time therefore it should be noted that there may be variances between the quarterly figures and the accumulative data.

Key Findings

- Public complaint numbers have increased by 1%, from 150 complaints recorded in Q1 to Q2 2015/16 to 152 in 2016/17. Allegations recorded have also increased, by 21% from 277 allegations in the same period in 2015/16 to 336 in 2016/17.

The increase in complaint numbers is modest and may not result in an increase over the financial year.

The main areas of public complaint remain the same as in previous quarters with 'Other neglect or failure in duty' recording the largest percentage of all allegations.

- a) 'Other neglect or failure in duty' represents 32% of all recorded allegations. In the reporting period, 106 allegations were recorded in comparison to 32%, 88 allegations in 2015/16.
- b) 'Incivility, impoliteness and intolerance' represents 8% of all recorded allegations. A total of 26 allegations were recorded under this category in 2016/17, in comparison to 14%, 40 allegations the previous year.
- c) 'Oppressive conduct or harassment' represents 10% of all recorded allegations. In the reporting period, 35 allegations were recorded in comparison to 12%, 33 allegations in 2015/16.
- d) 'Other assault' represents 13% of all recorded allegations. A total of 44 allegations were recorded under this category in 2016/17, in comparison to 8%, 22 allegations the previous year.
- e) Organisational allegations represent 2% of all recorded allegations. In the reporting period 6 allegations were recorded in comparison to 1%, 3 allegations in the same period the previous year.

Complaint Reduction

The Complaint Reduction Strategy was introduced in 2013 in response to a rise in complaints recorded. Work to prevent/reduce complaints and educate staff about their behaviour and how they are perceived by the public has been undertaken in the form of training, focusing on integrity, action and dissemination of lessons learned, development of partnership working and the review of officer and staff complaint histories.

A programme of training was rolled out across the Force to deliver an input on the Code of Ethics, conduct and integrity, focusing on student officers, Specials, Sergeants, newly promoted police officers/staff and Inspectors/managers undertaking investigations and this training is ongoing and evolving.

A Professional Standards Department publication entitled 'Learning Times' is produced on a monthly basis and is disseminated to the Force. This document highlights lessons both within Force and nationally that have been identified and promotes learning.

The Detective Inspector (DI) leading Complaint Reduction has liaised with Victim Support, Citizens Advice Bureau and Autism Anglia with a view to assisting members of the public to feel confident in approaching police and making complaints. The engagement also facilitates the opportunity for training and Autism Anglia have delivered a training package to members of staff with more currently being arranged.

The DI, together with other PSD Managers, attends a number of Community meetings, for example the Independent Advisory Group, the Stop and Search Reference Group and the Strategic Equalities and Inclusion Board where complaints data is discussed and valuable information is shared. The representatives from the community groups at these meetings are able to discuss any specific issues around police contact they or someone from their community may have. This also enables them to have contact with one specific person who can assist with issues such as making complaints when the person's first language is not English, and instilling faith in different communities.

The work streams around Complaint Reduction are regularly reviewed to ensure best practice.

Complaint Trends

The Detective Inspector from the Appeals and Policy unit has instigated visits to different stations and units both in Suffolk and also to collaborated units across Norfolk and Suffolk to discuss the current trends and learning themes with officers and staff, along with the opportunity for officers to discuss any issues they have. This not only ensures that staff are fully aware of the current themes of complaints but gives them an opportunity to feedback and ensure that something is done about it.

The Practitioner Groups incorporate the trends for each unit. For example the DI has recently completed visits to the Roads Policing and Firearms Operation Unit (RPF OU) where she has discussed the current complaints for this unit. The staff are informed of the complaint trends, such as Incivility, impoliteness and intolerance being their highest complaint category. They then discuss the circumstances of the complaints and measures to avoid complaints, such as taking a deep breath before speaking and also ensuring that through other checks that they have the correct information. For example, where a vehicle has no insurance and the driver is stopped, this can often cause conflict however by completing the further checks this could prevent a vehicle being seized and maintains the public confidence in the police.

To date the DI has run 26 Practitioner Groups across the Force and 9 RPF0U sessions. There are 5 sessions planned with the Contact and Control Room in Suffolk which commence in January 2017.

The subjects covered in these groups depends on the current themes for complaints and by highlighting the issues through statistical analysis and through identifying lessons to learn, this forms the topics for the Practitioner Groups.

Current themes are complaints linked to Police Information Notices for Harassment, and the new policy which requires a supervisor to authorise this before it is issued. Social media and examples of previous conduct issues regarding use of this medium. Data protection breaches and conduct and complaint issues relating to this are also discussed and the use of force systems and that this must be for a policing purpose. As a result of the practitioner groups a number of changes have taken place and feedback sought from different departments. This has also resulted in the production of a new information sharing document which has been circulated to officers and staff to assist with a number of different incidents and circumstances where disclosure of information is made to other agencies and members of the public.

COMPLAINT CASES AND ALLEGATIONS**Table A: Key Indicators Relating to Handling of Complaints**

<u>Measure</u>	<u>01.04.16 to 30.09.16</u>	<u>Same period 12 months previously</u>
% of cases recorded within 10 working days	91%	95%
Average number of days to Locally Resolve complaint*	43	46
Average number of days to Investigate complaint*	67	60

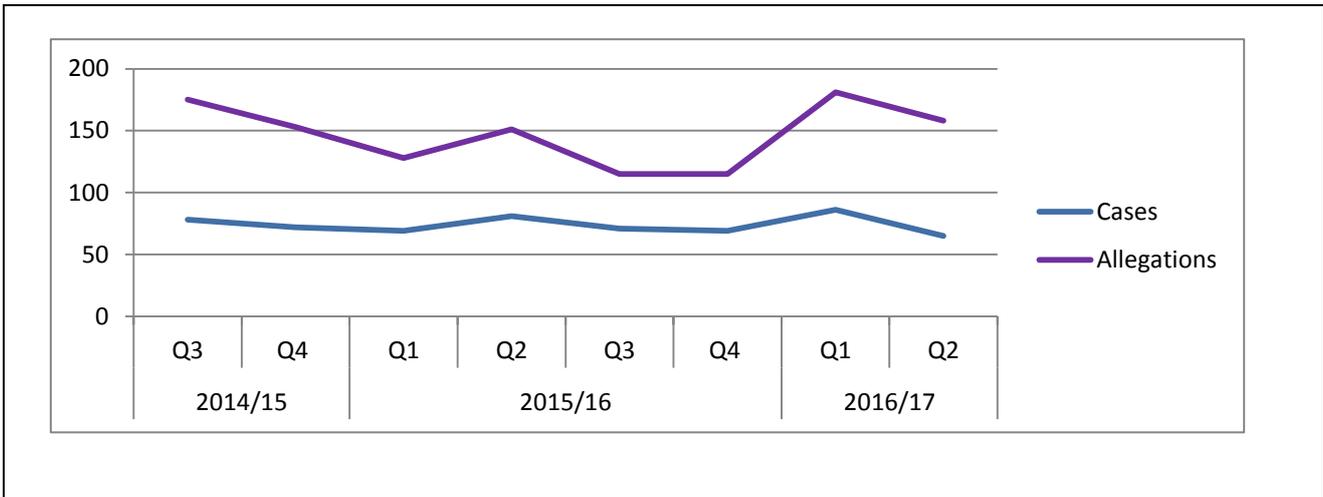
**The data relates to complaint cases, not allegations. The IPCC bulletin provides information regarding the average number of days to resolve/investigate allegations.*

Table B: Contextual Information Relating to Allegations and Outcome

<u>Measure</u>	<u>01.04.16 to 30.09.16</u>	<u>Same period 12 months previously</u>
<u>Recorded allegations</u>		
% of 'incivility, impoliteness and intolerance'	8	14
% of 'other neglect or failure in duty'	32	32
% of 'other assault'	13	8
% of 'oppressive conduct or harassment'	10	12
<u>Outcome of Allegations</u>		
% discontinued/disapplication	3	10
% withdrawn	3	4
% upheld investigations	12	16
% locally resolved	51	35
% special requirements	1	-

The IPCC Statutory Guidance indicates that where a complaint is subject to special requirements (the officer may have committed a criminal offence, or behaved in a manner which would justify the bringing of disciplinary procedures) the investigator should indicate their opinion as to whether there is a case to answer in respect of misconduct or gross misconduct or whether there is no case to answer rather than stating the complaint is upheld or not upheld. Following a court judgment the way in which outcomes are recorded on the database was amended to accurately reflect those cases subject to special requirements.

Public Complaint Cases and Allegations



(Chart 1): The above chart shows the number of public complaint cases and allegations recorded during the reporting period.

Table C: Complaint cases and allegations recorded

<u>Period</u>		<u>Complaint Cases Recorded</u>	<u>Allegations Recorded</u>
2014/15	Q3	78	175
	Q4	72	153
2015/16	Q1	69	128
	Q2	81	151
	Q3	71	115
	Q4	69	115
2016/17	Q1	86	181
	Q2	65	158

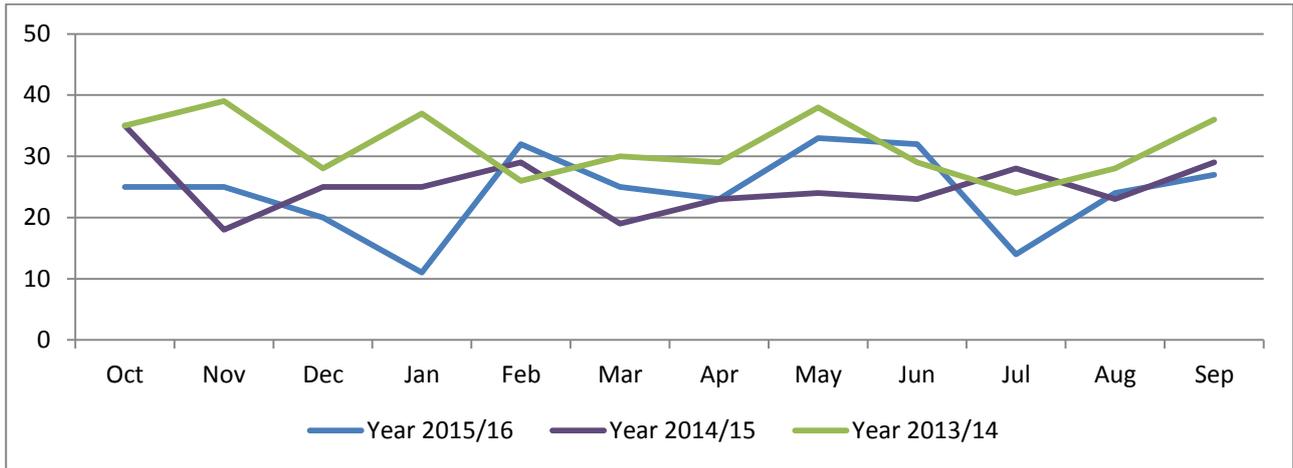
Note: Allegations recorded during specified periods may also include allegations added to existing cases. i.e. 158 allegations have been recorded during Q2. Of those, a proportion may be new allegations added to cases already recorded in Q1.

The accumulative quarterly complaint figures above do not take into account those cases which are subsequently de-recorded or that may have been initially recorded against Suffolk Constabulary and then changed to Norfolk Constabulary, or vice versa, following identification of the subjects. Equally, accumulative quarterly allegation figures do not take into account those allegations which are removed or added to complaint cases during investigation and finalisation of the allegations, outside of the reporting quarter.

Public Complaints recorded – three year comparison

Table D: The below table and graph details the public complaints recorded monthly over the last three years

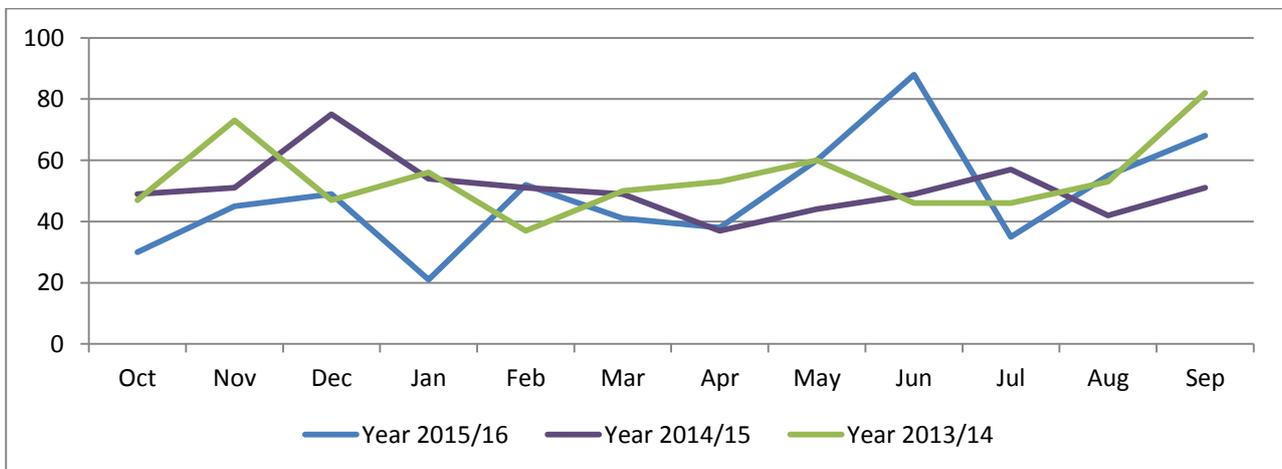
Month	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Year 2015/16	25	25	20	11	32	25	23	33	32	14	24	27
Year 2014/15	35	18	25	25	29	19	23	24	23	28	23	29
Year 2013/14	35	39	28	37	26	30	29	38	29	24	28	36



Allegations recorded – three year comparison

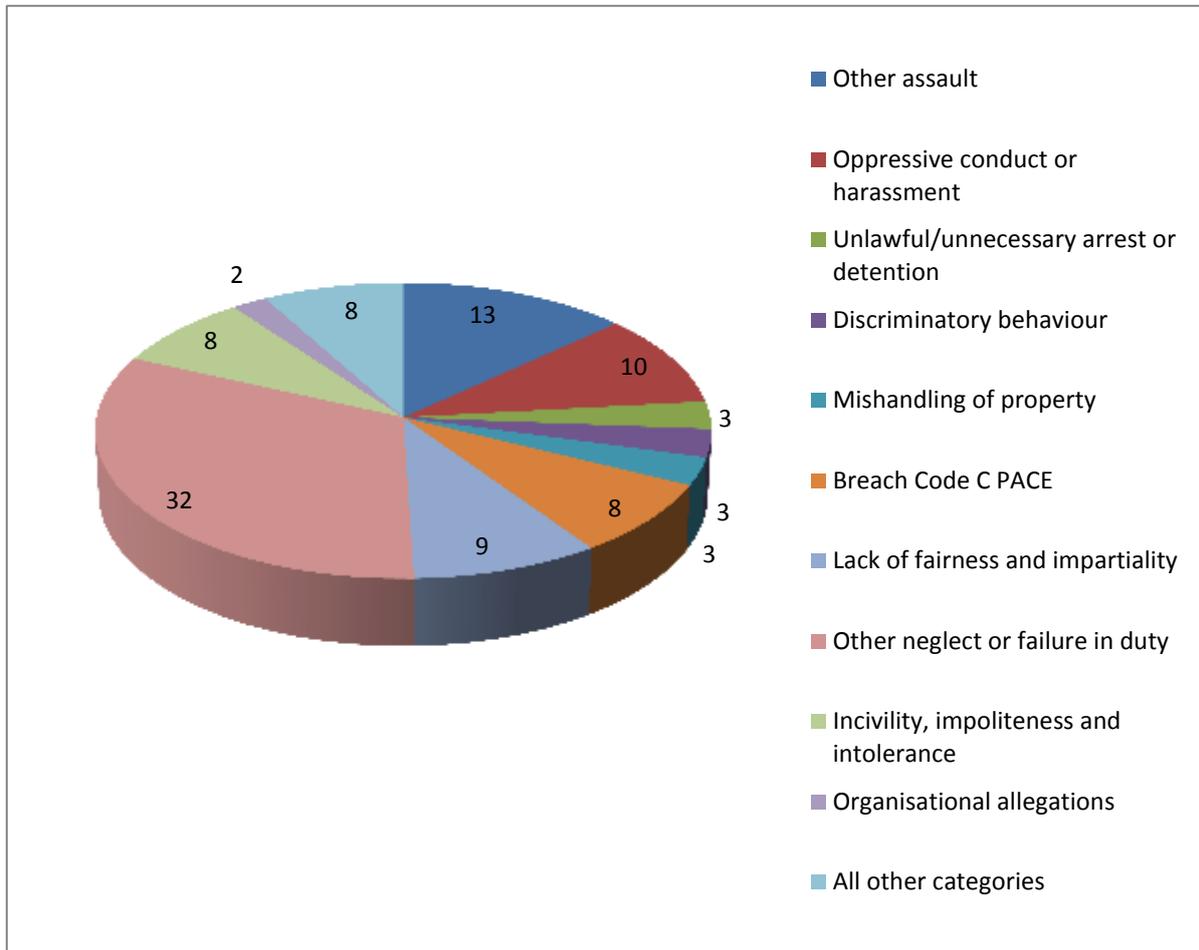
Table E: The below table and graph details the allegations recorded monthly over the last three years

Month	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Year 2015/16	30	45	49	21	52	41	38	60	88	35	55	68
Year 2014/15	49	51	75	54	51	49	37	44	49	57	42	51
Year 2013/14	47	73	47	56	37	50	53	60	46	46	53	82



Allegations

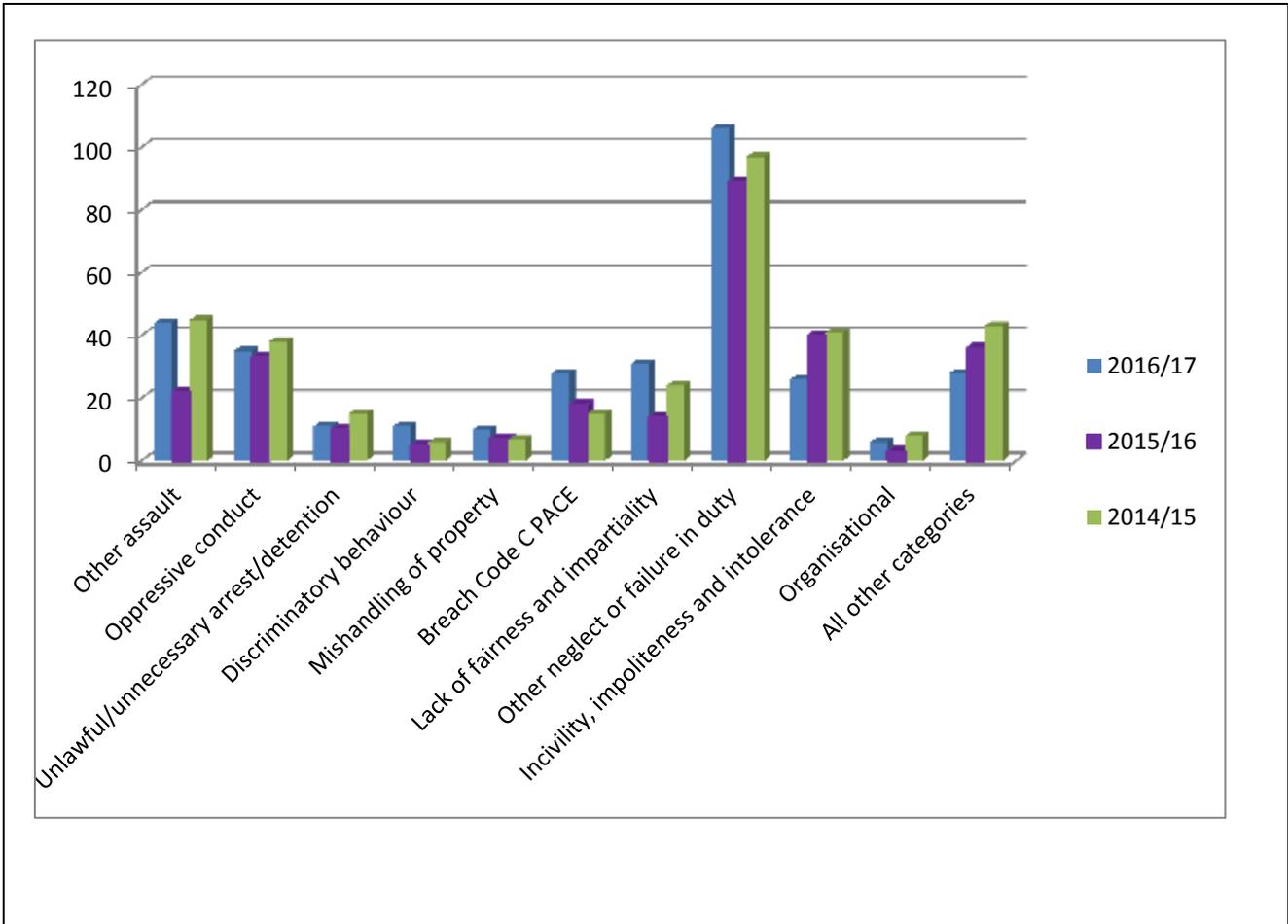
Allegation categories recorded (percentage) between 1 April and 30 September 2016



(Chart 2): The above chart shows the most frequently recorded allegations by type as a percentage of all allegations recorded. The categories which record the largest percentage (3% of the allegations and above) are displayed individually, with all others being grouped together.

Due to calculation rounding, total percentage may not always equal 100%

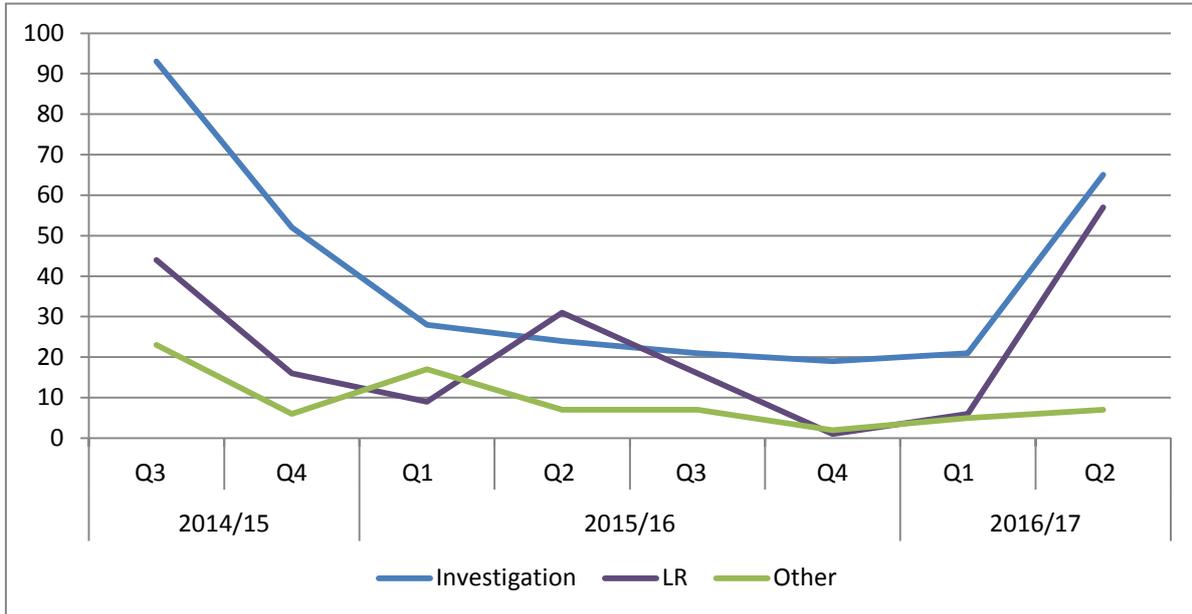
Allegations Recorded – Three year allegation comparison



(Chart 3): The above chart details the number of allegations recorded under each category. The categories which have the largest number of allegations recorded under them are represented, with all other categories being grouped together.

Allegations finalised by means

Number of allegations finalised by means



(Chart 4): Shows the means by which allegations have been finalised. The means by which an allegation can be finalised are 'Investigation' (local, supervised, managed and independent), 'Local Resolution' and 'Other' (discontinuance, disapplication and withdrawal).

<u>Period</u>	<u>Investigation</u>	<u>Local Resolution</u>	<u>Other</u>
2014/15 Q3	93	44	23
2014/15 Q4	52	16	6
2015/16 Q1	28	9	17
2015/16 Q2	24	31	7
2015/16 Q3	21	16	7
2015/16 Q4	19	1	2
2016/17 Q1	21	6	5
2016/17 Q2	65	57	7

Allegations resulted as 'Special Requirements' have been investigated and are therefore included in the investigations

Finalisation of Allegations**Table F: Outcome of allegations finalised by investigation (recorded against complaint cases post-April 2010)**

<u>Period</u>		<u>Upheld</u>	<u>Not Upheld</u>	<u>Special Requirements</u>
2014/15	Q3	8	85	-
	Q4	10	42	-
2015/16	Q1	6	22	-
	Q2	3	21	-
	Q3	2	19	-
	Q4	0	19	-
2016/17	Q1	1	20	-
	Q2	8	54	3

The above table details the outcome of investigated allegations that were recorded against public complaint cases. The complaint is upheld where there has been an unreasonable breakdown in service or failure in service which has adversely affected the complainant. This does not imply that there is a case to answer for misconduct/unsatisfactory performance by a police employee.

Table G: Allegations finalised by other means

<u>Period</u>		<u>Local Resolution</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Withdrawn</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Dispensed/ Discontinued/ Disapplication</u>	<u>%</u>
2014/15	Q3	44	28	6	4	17	11
	Q4	16	22	5	7	1	1
2015/16	Q1	9	17	1	2	16	30
	Q2	31	50	4	6	3	5
	Q3	16	36	2	5	5	11
	Q4	1	5	0	0	2	9
2016/17	Q1	6	19	2	6	3	9
	Q2	57	44	4	3	3	2

The percentage totals are against all allegations finalised during the reporting quarter.

Force Appeals

The appeal body for complaints changed with the introduction of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 on 22 November 2012. This places the responsibility on the individual Force for dealing with the majority of appeals. The IPCC will remain the appropriate authority for all formal investigations, those cases which were referred to the IPCC and cases where a non-recording decision was made. An assessment of the complaint is conducted on receipt to determine the relevant appeal body (RAB). An additional RAB test is completed in respect of each appeal received to ensure that correct appeal body has been identified.

Within the reporting period, 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016, 22 appeals against all categories were received by the Force.

Of the 22 appeals recorded within the reporting period, 18 have been reviewed.

Table H: The table below details the categories under which the appeal was made and details the outcome and a percentage of valid appeals upheld:

	Live	Upheld	Not upheld	Not Valid	% Upheld
Outcome of police investigation	1	0	3	0	0%
Outcome of local resolution process	3	4	7	1	36%
Application of Disapplication	0	0	3	0	0%
Application of Discontinuance	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	4	4	13	1	23.5%

The percentage of valid appeals upheld across all categories is 23.5%

The average number of working days taken to finalise valid appeals within the reporting period is 28 days.

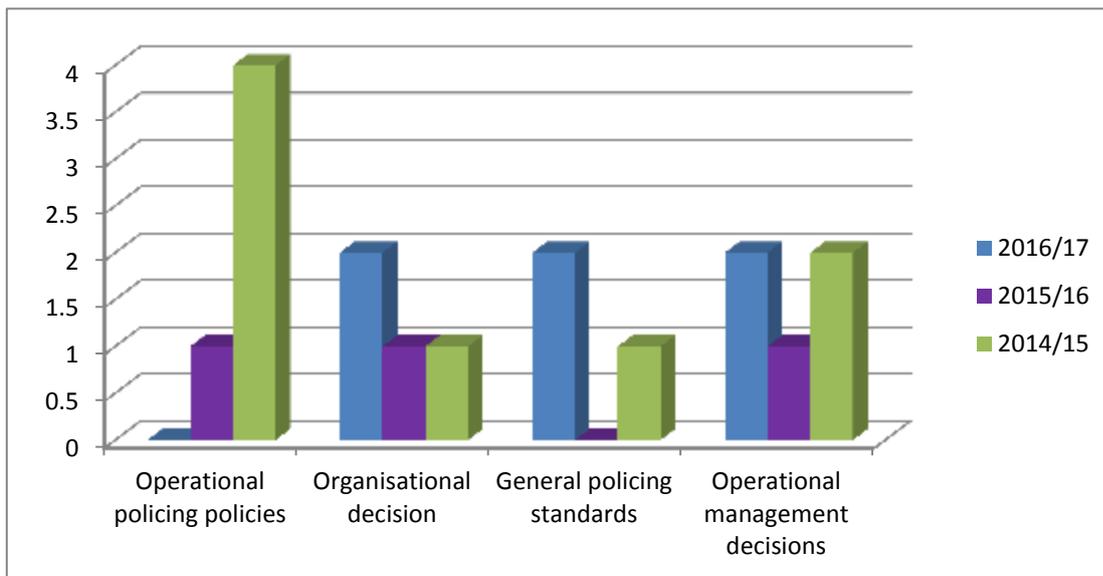
Direction and Control Complaints

On 22 November 2012, new legislation was introduced in the form of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 which changed the way that Direction and Control Complaints are recorded. All complaints of this nature are now recorded as Public Complaints and the allegations relate to Organisational issues and are categorised in the following way:

1. Operational policing policies
2. Organisational decisions
3. General policing standards
4. Operational management decisions

In the reporting period 3 Direction and Control Complaints were recorded. Organisational allegations can also be linked to public complaints regarding the conduct of officers. In addition to the 3 Direction and Control complaints a further 3 Organisational allegations have been linked to public complaints.

The graph below details the all the Organisational allegations recorded in Q1 and Q2 2016/17 in comparison to the same period the previous two years:



Examples of each category of complaint received within the reporting period is listed below:

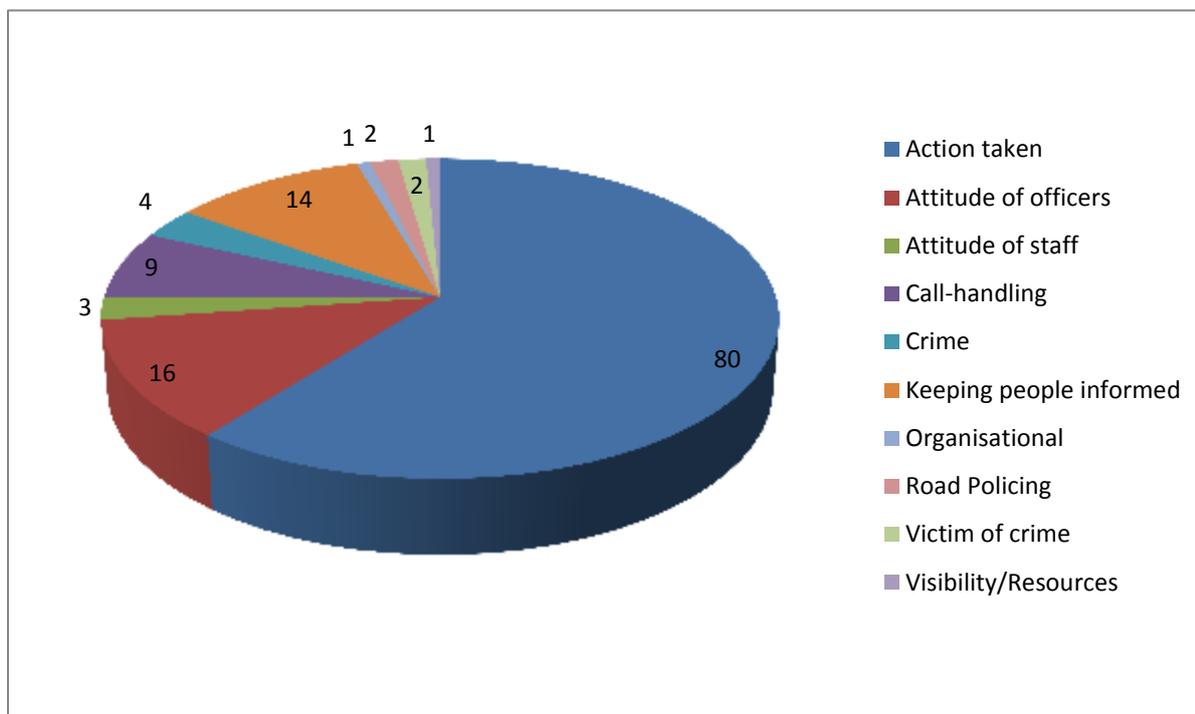
- **Organisational decisions** – Complaint received regarding detail released by the Force to the media (*locally resolved – policy not reviewed*)
- **General policing standards** – Complaint regarding the taking of DNA when arrested (*not upheld – policy not reviewed*)
- **Operational management decisions** – Complaint regarding the Force’s policy around lost and found property (*not upheld – policy not reviewed*)

Service Recovery

On 7 July 2014, Service Recovery was introduced to replace the Dissatisfaction process in order to deal with low level matters, where there is no complaint, quickly and to the satisfaction of the member of public. This process is managed by Professional Standards which allows a consistent approach to dealing with all issues raised by the public concerning the service they receive.

During the period, 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016, 132 Service Recovery issues have been recorded. Each issue is categorised into the reasons for the matter being raised.

(Chart 5): The below chart details those categories and the numbers recorded under each:



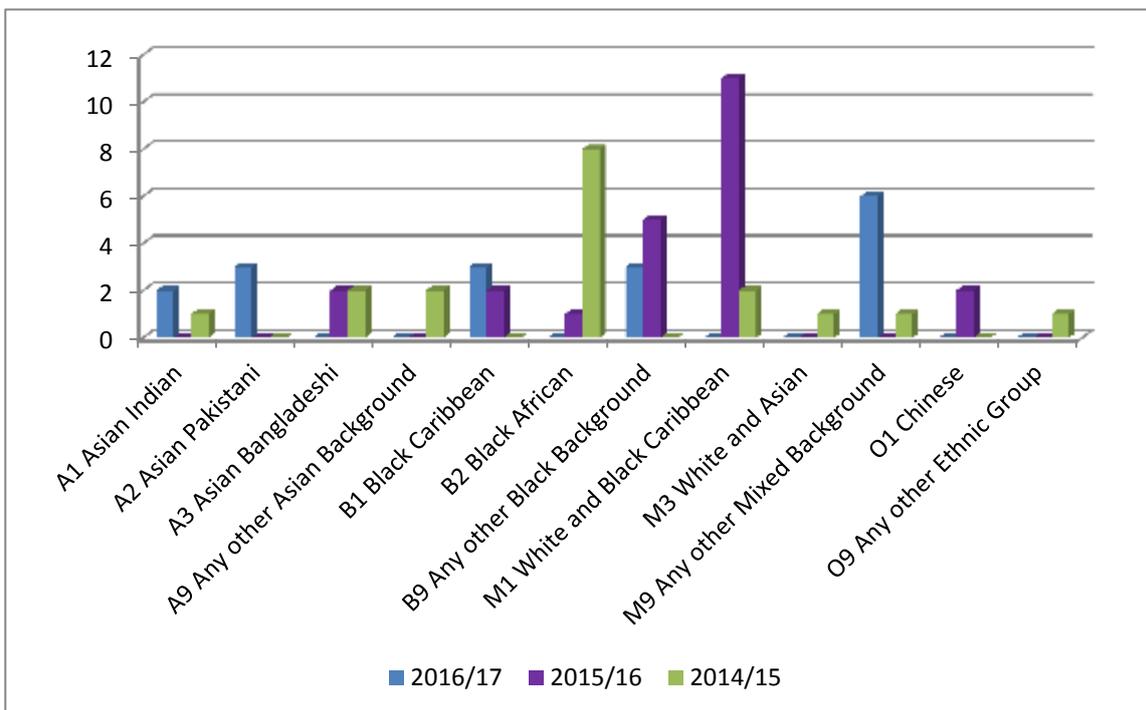
Once the Service Recovery process is entered, the member of public is still able to make a formal complaint if they wish to do so. Of those issues recorded as Service Recovery, 3 (2%) were unable to be resolved under this process, were recorded as public complaints and dealt with under the Police Reform Act 2002 (PRA 2002).

Complaints made by Black or Minority Ethnic Groups

In the reporting period, 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016, 6 public complaint cases were recorded where the complainant is self-declared as Black or Minority Ethnic.

A total of 6 complainants are linked to the complaint cases and 12 separate allegations have been recorded. In addition to those 12, a further 5 allegations have been recorded against complaint cases recorded prior to the reporting period.

Of the 336 total allegations recorded for the period, 5% were made by a complainant from a BME group. This compares to 23 allegations in 2015/16 (8%) and 18 allegations in 2014/15 (5%).



(Chart 6): The above chart displays the 17 allegations recorded within the reporting period for 2016/17 in comparison to the same period the previous two years, against the self-classification of the complainant, provided at the time the complaint was reported or during the investigation.

The most common allegations made by the complainants are ‘Discriminatory behaviour’ and ‘Breach Code C PACE’. A total of 5 allegations were recorded under each category which is 29% each. This was followed by 2 allegations each of ‘Other neglect or failure in duty’, ‘Oppressive conduct or harassment’ and ‘Unlawful/unnecessary arrest or detention’. The remaining category of allegation was ‘Other irregularity in procedure’.

Examples of some of the allegations recorded between 1 April and 30 September 2016 are detailed as follows;

A1 – Asian Indian	Allegation that officers have failed to investigate the complainant's reports of crime due to the Force being homophobic
A2 – Asian Pakistani	Allegation the officer grabbed the complainant round the throat from behind and pulled back
B1 – Black Caribbean	Allegation that the complainant was held in custody for 20 hours without legal advice
B9 – Any other Black Background	Allegation officers failed to investigate crime due to the colour of the complainant's skin
M9 – Any other Mixed Background	Allegation that the officer administered a caution despite the complainant not admitting the offence

PCC Case Sampling

Professional Standards Department and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have agreed a protocol for the process of case sampling public complaint files which have been finalised. The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that complaints are being dealt with proportionately and fairly in accordance with the IPCC Statutory Guidance to the Police service on handling of complaints (2013) and the Force's Policy documents and processes. For example, that cases and related allegations are recorded appropriately and stages of the process of dealing with the complaint are consistently in line with expectations of the guidance.

Case sampling takes place on a quarterly basis. The member of the OPCC randomly selects a number of cases for inspection from a list of those finalised in the period. It is not practical to inspect all files and therefore the following types and quantities were agreed as a suggested guide:

Local resolution – 4 or a percentage (5%)
Local investigation – 4 or a percentage (5%)
Direction and Control – 2 or a percentage (5%)
Appeal files (Force appeals) – 3 or a percentage (10%)
Disapplication/Discontinuance – 2 or a percentage (10%)

This process allows issues to be raised and fed back to Professional Standards to assist with future learning on an individual and/or department basis.

Due to staff changes within the Suffolk OPCC no complaint cases have been sampled during the last quarter. Processes are in place to conduct further case sampling in the near future and data will be available for the next report.

Discipline Outcomes

GROSS MISCONDUCT MEETINGS 1 APRIL 2016 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016		
1	A member of police staff attended a disciplinary hearing in respect of Discreditable conduct Inappropriate behaviour within a police building	Final Written Warning
2	A member of police staff attended a disciplinary hearing in respect of Fitness for duty Attended work whilst unfit	Dismissed without notice
3	A police officer attended a misconduct hearing in respect of Authority, respect and courtesy Relationship with vulnerable person whilst on duty	Dismissed without notice
4	A member of police staff attended a disciplinary hearing in respect of Honesty and integrity Accessed Force systems for non-policing purpose	Written Warning
MISCONDUCT MEETINGS 1 APRIL 2016 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016		
1	A Special Constable attended a misconduct meeting in respect of Confidentiality Disclosure of information	Management advice

Lessons Learned

Below is a selection of the Lessons Learned which have been recorded as a result of Public Complaints made in Suffolk. All lessons identified during the investigation are collated, actioned and tracked to ensure a suitable conclusion. The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) publish their own 'Learning the Lessons' bulletin focusing on national lessons identified and each bulletin is reviewed within Professional Standards and issues disseminated for awareness.

<u>Origin of Lesson</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Lessons identified</u>	<u>Action</u>
Public Complaint	The complainant was handcuffed and compliant. When the handcuffs were removed in custody it was noticed they were damaged and the plastic caused a scratch.	Officers should be reminded to check their handcuffs and other equipment each time they come on duty to ensure they are serviceable and not damaged.	Lesson forwarded to County Policing Command for circulation and Learning and Development to include in training.
Public Complaint	The complainant's vehicle was parked and unattended when it was damaged in a fail to stop collision. The complainant made calls which were not returned and was told to wait for an update.	The officer should have made contact with the complainant to discuss and make them aware of the process involved.	Lesson for the individual officer concerned and also forwarded to the County Policing Command for circulation.
Public Complaint	The complainant was speaking to the Control Room to make a complaint and was told to write in. The complainant had already advised the call taker that they have dyslexia.	A reminder to staff is required that when dealing with members of the public who have dyslexia, asking them to write in with their complaint is unlikely to be the most appropriate response.	Lesson disseminated to all Control Room staff and officers to take on board the potential impact of disclosed dyslexia.
Public Complaint	The complainant admitted an offence which was crimed and then finalised. After taking advice the complainant raised a complaint about the way the incident was handled.	Verbal advice was given at the scene to the complainant. The crime was recorded however it was identified the officer did not obtain the complainant's signature in their pocket note book.	The lesson was included in the Sergeants Briefing document for dissemination to officers and the Learning Times publication in June.

General file	Officers are to ensure that when a child or young person is in their protection under a Police Protection Order (PPO) they have a responsibility to ensure the safety of that person.	Officers to consider the gender of the individual and to ensure that the same gender officers remain with the young person to carry out necessary searches to minimise risk	Lesson forwarded to the County Policing Command for circulation to officers. Included in the Learning Times publication
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Glossary

Complaint Case – A single complaint case may contain one or more linked allegations, made by one or more complainants, against one or more persons serving with the Police.

Allegation – Describes the type of behaviour complained about. A single complaint case can have one or more attached allegations. For example, a person may allege that they were pushed by an officer and that the officer was then rude to them. This would be recorded as two separate allegations forming one complaint cases. An allegation is recorded against an allegation category.

Local Resolution – For less serious cases, such as rudeness or incivility, a complainant may agree to Local Resolution. This usually involves a local police supervisor handling the complaint and agreeing with the complainant a mutually acceptable way of addressing the issue. This may be through a more thorough explanation, an apology or an outline of what actions will be taken in order to prevent future complaints of a similar nature.

Investigation – In other circumstances (or if complainant declines local resolution) a thorough investigation of circumstances may be necessary. This involves the appointment of an investigating officer which will examine allegations and report upon whether each allegation is 'Upheld' or 'Not Upheld'. A complaint will be recorded as 'Upheld' if the service or conduct complained about does not reach the standard a reasonable person would expect. The outcome, therefore, is not solely linked to proving misconduct.

Local Investigations – Investigations carried out entirely by the Police. Complainants have a right of appeal to the IPCC following a local investigation.

Supervised Investigations – Investigations carried out by the Police under their own direction and control. IPCC sets out what the investigation should examine (terms of reference) and will receive the investigation report upon completion. Complainants have a right of appeal to the IPCC following a supervised investigation.

Managed Investigations – Investigations carried out by Police under the direction and control of the IPCC.

Independent investigations – Investigations carried out by IPCC investigators and are overseen by IPCC Commissioners.

Discontinuance – Forces may find it impractical, on occasion, to conclude an investigation. This could occur if a complainant fails to cooperate, if the complaint is repetitious or refers to an abuse of procedure. In such cases, an application can be made to the Appropriate Authority to discontinue the investigation.

Disapplication – Introduced in the new Statutory Guidance, to replace Dispensation, an application can be made to the Appropriate Authority to disapply a complaint on the grounds that the complaint is over 12 months old, already subject of a complaint, remains anonymous, is vexatious or repetitious.

Withdrawn – No further action may be taken with regard to a complaint if the complainant retracts the allegation(s).

Subjudice – Subsequent to recording, the start of any work on a complaint may be postponed due to the matter being considered 'sub judice'. This is when a person linked to a complaint case is associated with separate criminal proceedings. The view of the Crown Prosecution Service is sought regarding any prejudice in investigating the complaint.

Investigation appeal - This applies to all complaints investigated by the force itself or where the investigation has been supervised by the IPCC. There is no avenue of appeal from independent or managed investigations.

Local resolution appeal – Complainants are entitled to appeal to the Appropriate Authority against the local resolution outcome.

Complainants - Under the PRA 2002, a complaint about the conduct of someone serving with the Police can be made by the following types of people:

- a) Any member of the public who alleges that police misconduct was directed at them
- b) Any member of the public who alleges that they have been 'adversely affected' by police misconduct, even if it was not directed at them
- c) Any member of the public who claims that they witnessed misconduct by the police
- d) A person acting on behalf of someone who falls within any three of the categories above. This category of person is classed as an 'agent' or 'representative', not as a complainant in their own right, and must have the written permission of the complainant.

Being 'adversely affected' is broadly interpreted in the legislation and includes distress, inconvenience, loss or damage, or being put in danger or at risk. This might apply, for example, to other people present at the incident, or to the parent of a child or young person, or a friend of the person directly affected. It does not include someone distressed by watching an incident on television. A witness is defined in the PRA 2002 as someone who 'acquired his knowledge of that conduct in a manner which would make him a competent witness capable of giving admissible evidence of that conduct in criminal proceeding'. This includes, for example, someone in control of CCTV cameras or in possession of material evidence. One complaint case can have multiple complainants attached and one individual can make more than one complaint within the reporting year.

Subjects – The PRA 2002 broadened the range of people who could be subject to a complaint. Complaints can be made against the following police personnel;

- a) Police officers of any rank
- b) Police staff, including Community Support Officers and Traffic Wardens
- c) Special constables
- d) Contracted-out staff designated under section 39 of the PRA 2002 – for example, escort or custody officers employed by another company.