



Lancashire Constabulary

General Analysis of Public Complaints: Strategic Scrutiny Meeting V1.0

December 2014

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Dissemination	Professional Standards Department Strategic Scrutiny Meeting
Document Description	The content of this document provides a brief analysis of public complaints focussing on the past 12 months. Featuring a comparison against the MSF group and a brief input on Neglect of Duty.
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Complaint Cases and Allegations

Both Complaint Cases and Complaint Allegations have seen a substantial increase over the past 12 months, rising by 34% and 28% respectively when compared to the previous 12 month period¹. (Figure 1 & Table 1 within the Appendices).

Increases have been noted across all geographic areas, indicating that issues are not limited to any particular areas of the Constabulary. Increases have also been observed in more than half of the 26 possible allegation categories.

(Table 3 within the Appendices).

Other Neglect or Failure in Duty remains the most common allegation type levelled against Officers and Staff and has seen an increase of 47% over the past 12 months (594 allegations between Dec 13 and Nov 14 compared to 404 allegations between Dec 12 and Nov 13). Incivility, Impoliteness and Intolerance was the second most common allegation type with 261 allegations over the past 12 months (an increase of 18% on the previous 12 months).

There is no evidence to suggest that the force restructure (consolidation of divisions) has had an impact on levels of complaints².

Comparison against Most Similar Force Group and National Data

A brief analysis has been conducted³ to establish how Lancashire Constabulary compares against others in the Most Similar Force Group and also against the overall situation for UK Police Forces. It was found that by the end of the current financial year all forces within the Most Similar Force Group are anticipating similar increases in complaint allegations per 1000 officers, this is also true for the national picture. This suggests that the causation behind the identified increase in complaints (referred to above) is not solely as a result of issues specific to Lancashire, as similar results expected to be seen across the country.

(Figure 2 within the Appendices).

There is some moderately strong supporting evidence to indicate that the increase in complaints is inversely proportionate with total headcount⁴ signalling that reducing staff levels could have an impact on Lancashire Constabulary's ability to satisfy public expectation therefore causing a rise in levels of complaints. It should be noted that the correlation in the data does not provide evidence of causality although further work on a national level could well support the hypothesis that reducing headcounts have *caused* an increase in complaints. These findings have been passed to the Analytical Services Dept within the IPCC who may be able to provide more context at a later date although one common factor likely to have been experienced by police forces across the UK at present is a reduction in work force population. (Figure 3 within the Appendices).

¹ Lancashire Constabulary, PSD Complaint Allegations Performance File. (December 14).

² "Constabulary Structure Change : Complaints Analysis". M Cogley (December 2014).

³ "Constabulary Structure Change : Complaints Analysis". M Cogley (December 2014).

⁴ Correlation co-efficient of -0.64 where -1 would indicate a perfectly inverse correlation and 0 would indicate no correlation at all.

Allegation Outcomes

Although the number of complaints has increased it is noted that there has also been a change in allegation outcomes, with a 38% increase (n = 353) in allegations that have been finalised as Locally Resolved. The number of allegations being upheld has reduced by 51% (from 47 in the period of Nov 12 – Dec 13 to 23 over the past 12 months)⁵. These two results suggest that the recent increase in complaints is likely to be at the lower end of the severity scale as recently finalised allegations have been suitable for some sort of ‘service recovery’ by way of local resolution between the officer/staff member and the complainant.

(Table 2 within the Appendices).

Other Neglect or Failure in Duty⁶

A recent dip sample of allegations relating to Other Neglect or Failure in Duty identified that this particular allegation category contains a wide ranging variety of complaints from members of the public; so much so that it is often problematic to determine whether complaints are justified due to the sheer amount of factors at play. For instance, some complaints refer to a failure to investigate reported incidents and these are most commonly associated with low level domestic disputes and thefts between family members. It is clear that certain members of the public have high expectations about the police and what role they should undertake following the report of a crime or incident and sometimes these expectations may be unrealistic based on resource availability or legislation. The increase in numbers of Locally Resolved allegations tends to support the fact that ‘service recovery’ is becoming increasingly possible with low level complaints.

A recent HMIC report entitled ‘*Core Business: an inspection into crime prevention, police attendance and the use of police time*’ highlights the difficulty in accurately judging public expectation with regards to how officers are able to deal effectively with apparently minor matters. The difficulties associated with delivering a quality service tailored to individuals when expectations can vary so widely about what service the police should provide are clear. However, the HMIC recognised that the National Decision Making model was a central factor in decisions around deployment utilised by Lancashire Constabulary.

⁵ Lancashire Constabulary, PSD Complaint Allegations Performance File. (December 14).

⁶ “Other Neglect or Failure in Duty Analysis V1.0”. M Cogley (September 2014)

Appendices

Figure 1: Graph to show the number of recorded Complaint Cases and Complaint Allegations recorded per month between April 2012 and November 2014.

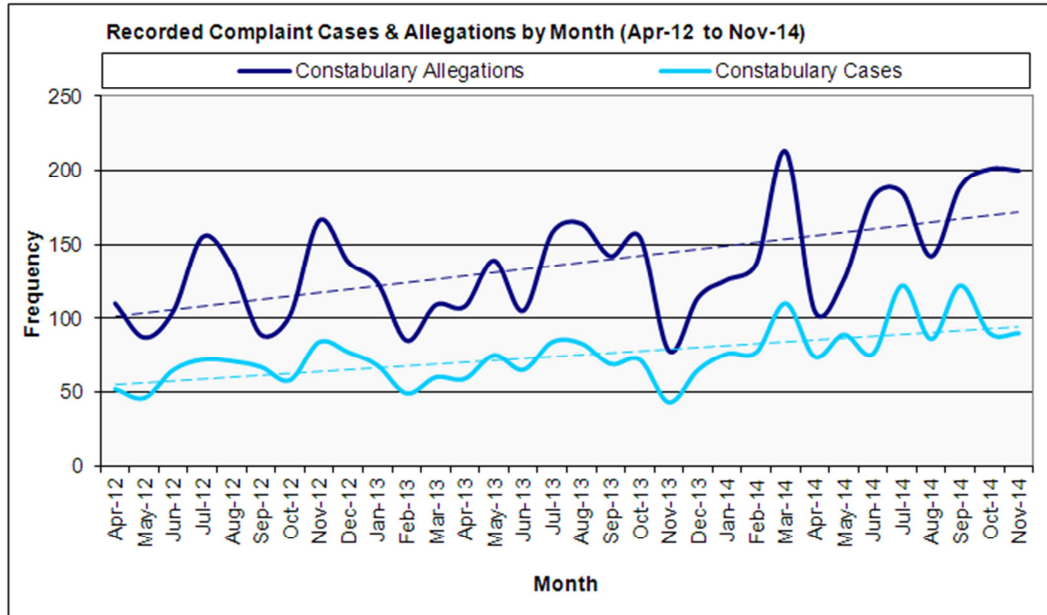


Table 1: Complaint Cases and Allegations Year-On-Year.

Division	Dec-12 - Nov-13	Dec-13 - Nov-14	Percentage Change
Complaint Cases	804	1077	34%
Complaint Allegations	1505	1920	28%

Figure 2: Graph to show the number of Complaint Allegations per 1000 Employees in Lancashire, the Lancashire MSF Group and the National Average. Including the projected end of year results based on extrapolated data.

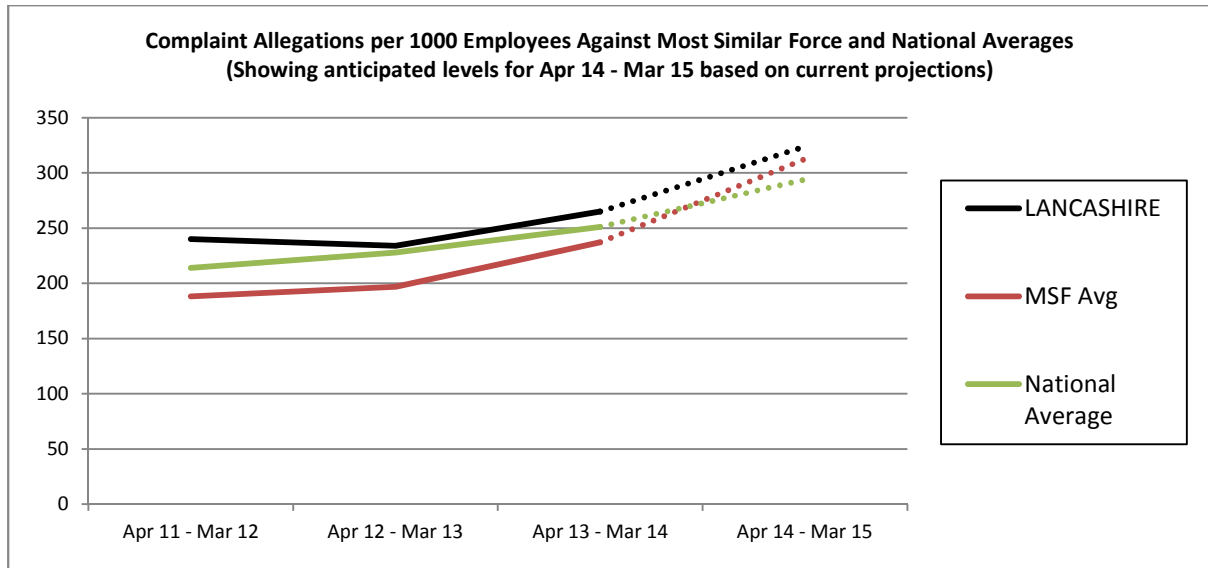


Figure 3: Graph to show the number of Complaint Cases & Allegations (left axis) along with Total Constabulary Headcount (right axis).

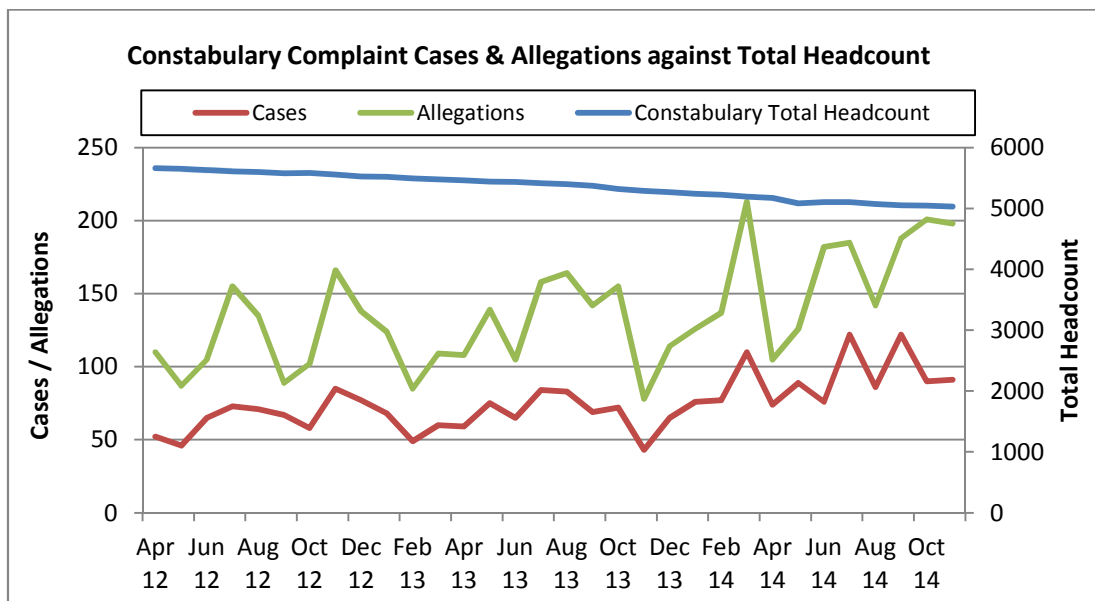


Table 2: Outcomes of allegations based on Finalised Date.

Outcome	Dec-12 - Nov-13	Dec-13 - Nov-14	Percentage Change
Local Resolution	923	1276	38%
Upheld	47	23	-51%
Not Upheld	217	63	-71%
Discontinuance	2	5	150%
Dispensation	25	0	-100%
Disapplied or Withdrawn	286	308	8%
Total	1500	1675	12%

Table 3: Allegations by Division and Category over the past 12 months (Dec 13 – Nov 14).

Allegation Category	West	South	East	HQ Divisions / H / Other	HQ Crime	HQ Contact Management	HQ Operations	Headquarters	H	Other	Constabulary	Constabulary	Year on Year Change
											Dec-13 to Nov-14	Dec-12 to Nov-13	
A Serious Non-Sexual	7	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	15	-13%
B Sexual Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
C Other Assault	63	44	69	15	3	0	11	0	1	0	191	146	31%
D Oppressive Conduct or Harassment	62	53	44	13	6	0	4	2	1	0	172	145	19%
E Unlawful/Unnecessary Arrest or Detention	24	29	15	10	5	0	5	0	0	0	78	59	32%
F Discriminatory Behaviour	8	13	13	10	4	3	3	0	0	0	44	27	63%
G Irregularity in Evidence/Perjury	6	9	5	4	2	0	1	1	0	0	24	52	-54%
H Corruption or Malpractice	14	5	6	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	27	14	93%
J Mishandling of Property	8	10	7	9	2	2	5	0	0	0	34	21	62%
K Breach of Code A PACE (Stop and Search)	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	14%
L Breach of Code B PACE (Premises Search and Property Seizure)	13	20	19	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	57	58	-2%
M Breach of Code C PACE (Detention, Treatment and Questioning)	28	23	22	18	2	0	16	0	0	0	91	60	52%
N Breach of Code D PACE (Identification Procedures)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	-100%
P Breach of Code E PACE (Tape Recording)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Q Lack of Fairness and Impartiality	30	25	20	6	2	1	1	2	0	0	81	75	8%
S Other Neglect or Failure in Duty	160	153	229	52	23	16	6	5	2	0	594	404	47%
T Other Irregularity in Procedure	9	30	17	17	7	0	3	5	2	0	73	39	87%
U Incivility, Impoliteness and Intolerance	78	54	88	41	8	18	9	3	3	0	261	221	18%
V Traffic Irregularity	8	8	4	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	23	17	35%
W Other	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	-33%
X Improper Access/Disclosure of Information	14	20	12	10	3	2	1	3	1	0	56	35	60%
Y Other Sexual Conduct	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0%
Operational (direction and control)	6	9	5	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	23	34	-32%
Policies and Procedures (direction and control)	7	14	17	9	0	6	1	1	1	0	47	59	-20%
General policing standards (direction and control)	4	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	8	3	167%
Organisational (direction and control)	2	1	0	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	8	3	167%
Grand Total	558	527	600	235	76	51	66	31	11	0	1920	1505	28%
Percentage of Allegations by Division	29%	27%	31%	12%	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%		