



**Lancashire
Constabulary**

police and communities together

REPORT TO : STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING
REPORT BY: CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT PETER LAWSON
TITLE: UPDATE ON CONTACT MANAGEMENT

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the update on Contact Management Department of the Constabulary for the reporting period April to June 2017.

2. Decision Required

- 2.1 The Commissioner is requested to review the report and make comments as appropriate.

3. Information

- 3.1 This report advises the Commissioner of the quality of service (Contact Management) against the performance indicators agreed.

3.1 OVERVIEW

The report presents measures and commentary about the Force Control Room for the reporting period April to June 2017.

Executive Summary

- **999 Call Measures** – volumes and service levels for the target to answer 90% of 999 calls within 10 seconds are presented. The data shows another challenging quarter when the FCR achieved average time to answer 999 calls in Apr, May, Jun of 11.6, 12.4, and 15.5 seconds respectively. Some dates within the period experienced more 999 calls being presented than was the case on New Year’s Eve. This reflects national media reporting about the number of calls being presented to police control rooms across the country.
- **101 Call Measures** – volumes and service levels for the indicator to answer 80% of 101 calls within 40 seconds are presented. The data shows a very challenging quarter during which the prioritisation of 999 calls has been detrimental to non-emergency service levels. Average time to answer 101 calls for each month in the reporting period (Apr, May, Jun) has been 2:47, 2:42, and 4:39 respectively. 101 was introduced in most police forces in 2011, since which time the public sector has undergone substantial change – reflected in the changing nature of demand now dealt with by the control room. This changing demand is often characterised by complex calls related to mental health, missing persons, and concerns for welfare. Whether the ambition to answer 101 calls within 40 seconds continues to be appropriate or indeed realistic when demand has become so much more complex is something the service may need to consider in the future. Time to answer is quite rightly a matter of public concern and importance, but taken alone for non-emergency incidents it is not necessarily a good measure of our purpose; being to keep people safe.
- **Capacity & Supply** – The paper reports on developments with recruitment and attendance management of our staff. Recruitment into the room has continued, with 23 new recruits currently being trained, and a further similar sized intake expected to start on 18th September.
- **Systems** – IT systems are fundamental to performance in the control room; either enabling or at times of instability inhibiting the ability of staff to deal with calls for service. The report describes recent performance and future developments. A serious system issue impacted severely on room performance during the last week of June and first few days of July.

3.2 CALL MEASURES

Emergency Calls - Context

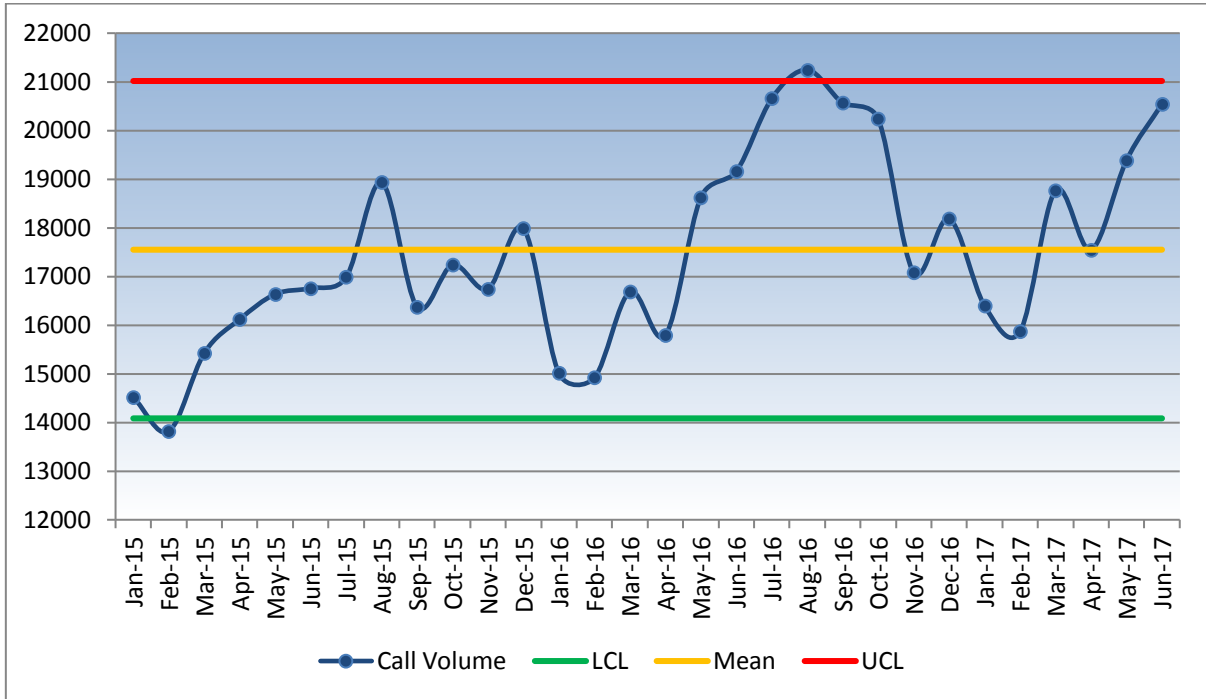
- The average daily volume of emergency calls over the last 3 years has risen to 575.9 calls offered per day.
- The nationally agreed target is to answer 90% of calls within 10 seconds.
- The chart below shows the monthly volumes offered, answered within target (Achieved), service level, average speed to answer and our abandonment rates.

FIGURE 1: 999 SERVICE LEVELS

	999				
	Offered	Achieved	Service Level	Average Speed to Answer (s)	Abandonment Rate
APR '17	17547	11771	67.08%	11.57	1.4%
MAY '17	19388	12582	64.90%	12.41	1.5%
JUN '17	20546	10701	52.08%	15.45	3.2%
APR '16	15794	13931	88.20%	4.40	0.7%
MAY '16	18623	15105	81.11%	6.33	1.0%
JUN '16	19157	13693	71.48%	10.43	1.8%

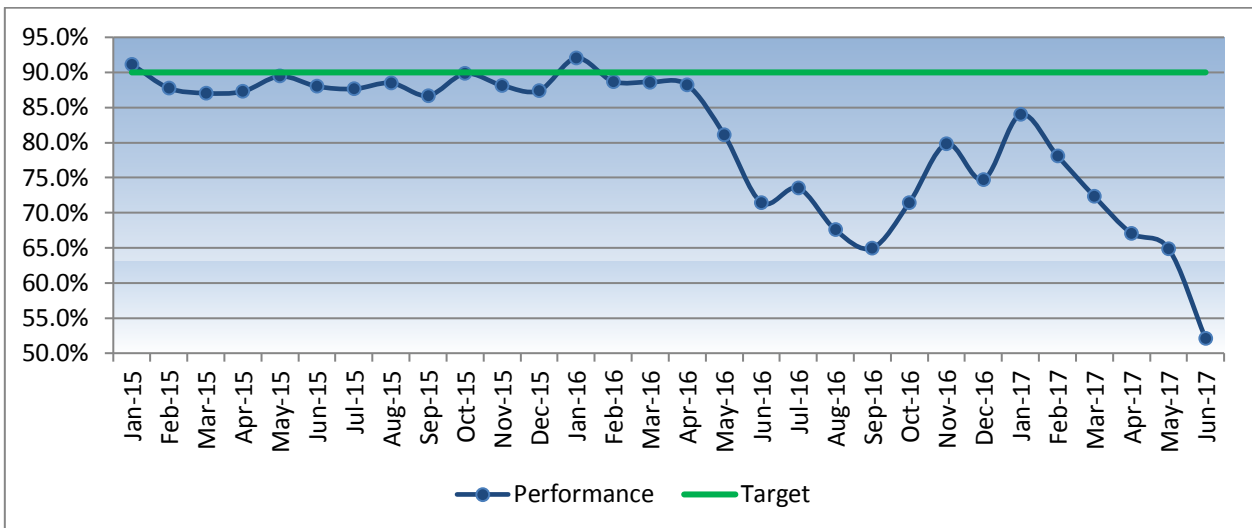
To add context, the total monthly volume of emergency calls offered since 2014 is presented in the control chart in Table 2.

FIGURE 2: 999 VOLUME OVER TIME



The demand offered during the April to June period has risen slightly when compared to the long term pattern. Each month's volume is higher than last year's volume and higher than the previous three yearly average for those particular months. April saw a 5.0% rise on the previous three year average, May a 4.3% rise and June an 11.5% rise.

FIGURE 3: 999 PERFORMANCE OVER TIME



Recent media reporting has drawn attention to national experiences with 999 calls for service to the police:

FIGURE 4: EXCERPTS OF RECENT MEDIA REPORTING ABOUT 999 CALLS

Cambridge News
Crime and 999 calls in Cambridgeshire rocket - police under massive pressure
Chief Constable Alec Wood says the force is seeing an 'unprecedented workload' as crime soars

999 emergency: Besieged police are buckling as number of emergency calls soared to highest level ever

- England's biggest forces took more emergency calls than ever before last month
- Soaring rates of violence and theft are feared to be behind the surge in demand
- Across the country, 999 calls are up 11 per cent in the past year

By MARTIN BECKFORD HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY
PUBLISHED: 01:16, 30 July 2017 | UPDATED: 01:17, 30 July 2017

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Police are struggling to cope with the highest numbers of 999 calls ever recorded, force chiefs have revealed to The Mail on Sunday.

England's biggest forces took more emergency calls than ever before last month – with some major cities even busier than they are on New Year's Eve or at Halloween.

26th July

Spiralling 999 calls in North Yorkshire put 101 service under pressure

Humberside Police 'stressed and strained' due to unprecedented number of 999 calls

Humberside Police are experiencing an increase in emergency calls of 20 per cent, leaving the force strained, stressed and services overwhelmed

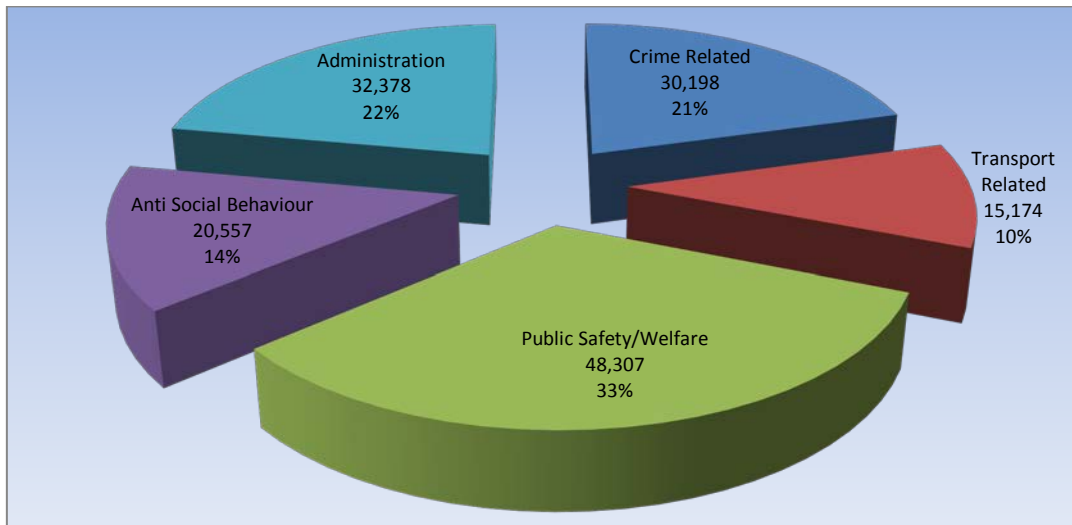
The News
NEWS CRIME POLITICS TRAVEL HEALTH EDUCATION DEFENCE OP
'Unprecedented' spike in 999 calls sparks warning from Hampshire police

Police said they are getting more 999 and 101 calls

Media reporting at the time of preparing this report cited the time spent by paramedics on mental health cases to have increased by 32% over two years. *“Ambulances received 30,000 more of these types of calls in 2016-17 compared with 2014-15”* [Reported in The Times and The Guardian on 13th August 2017]. This type of complex demand related to social and health vulnerability is familiar to frontline officers and Control Room staff in Lancashire and takes much longer to risk assess and deal with than does ‘traditional’ crime.

Figure 5 shows incident volumes by type for the reporting period. The category Public Safety & Welfare includes complex vulnerability and mental health issues.

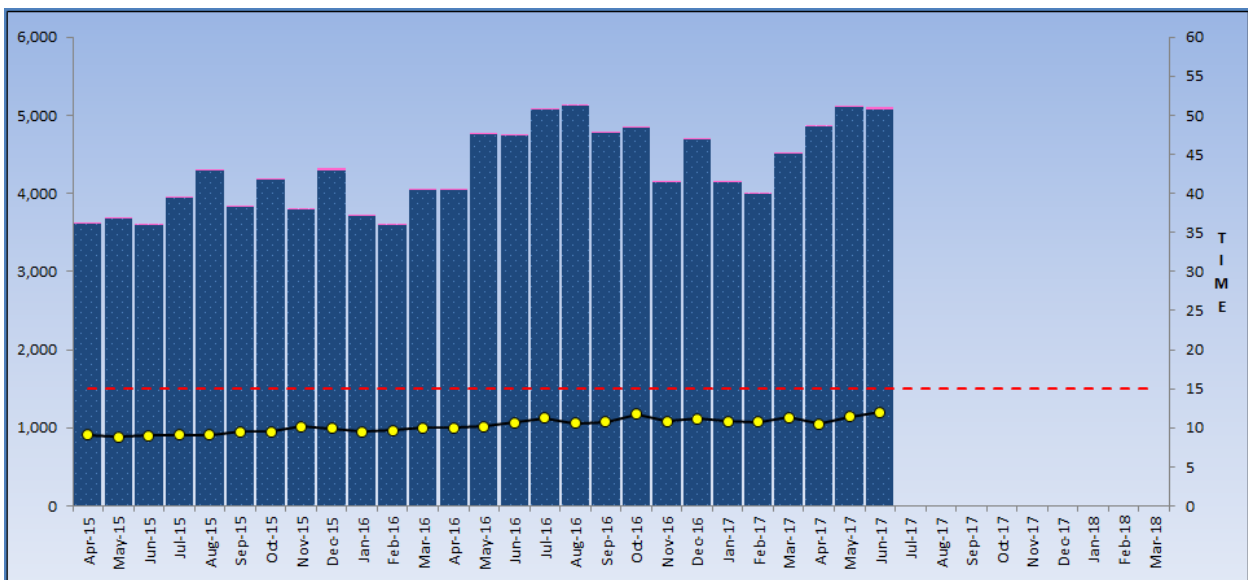
FIGURE 5: INCIDENT VOLUMES BY TYPE APRIL TO JUNE 2017



Emergency Response Times

The Constabulary has continued to respond to emergency incidents within the 15 minute desired performance level.

FIGURE 6: EMERGENCY CALLS: RESPONSE TIMES



Non-Emergency Calls - Context

- The average daily volume of non-emergency calls over the last 3 years is 2197.5 calls offered per day.
- There is no nationally agreed target for non-emergency calls, but call handling is measured against a desired level of 80% of calls being answered within 40 seconds. This measure has remained unchanged since the introduction of the 101 number in 2011.
- The chart below shows the monthly volumes offered, answered within target (Achieved), service level, average speed to answer and our abandonment rate.

FIGURE 7: NON-EMERGENCY SERVICE LEVELS (40 SECOND TARGET)

	101				
	Offered	Achieved	Service Level	Average Speed to Answer (s)	Abandonment Rate
APR '17	64283	24948	38.81%	202.85	44.5%
MAY '17	81145	35431	43.66%	196.55	50.0%
JUN '17	77309	18488	23.91%	255.41	42.0%
APR '16	60710	46029	75.82%	30.01	9.1%
MAY '16	68044	43415	63.80%	49.86	14.7%
JUN '16	72984	40988	56.16%	71.67	20.3%

To add context, the total monthly volume of emergency calls offered since 2014 is presented in the control chart in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8: NON-EMERGENCY VOLUME OVER TIME

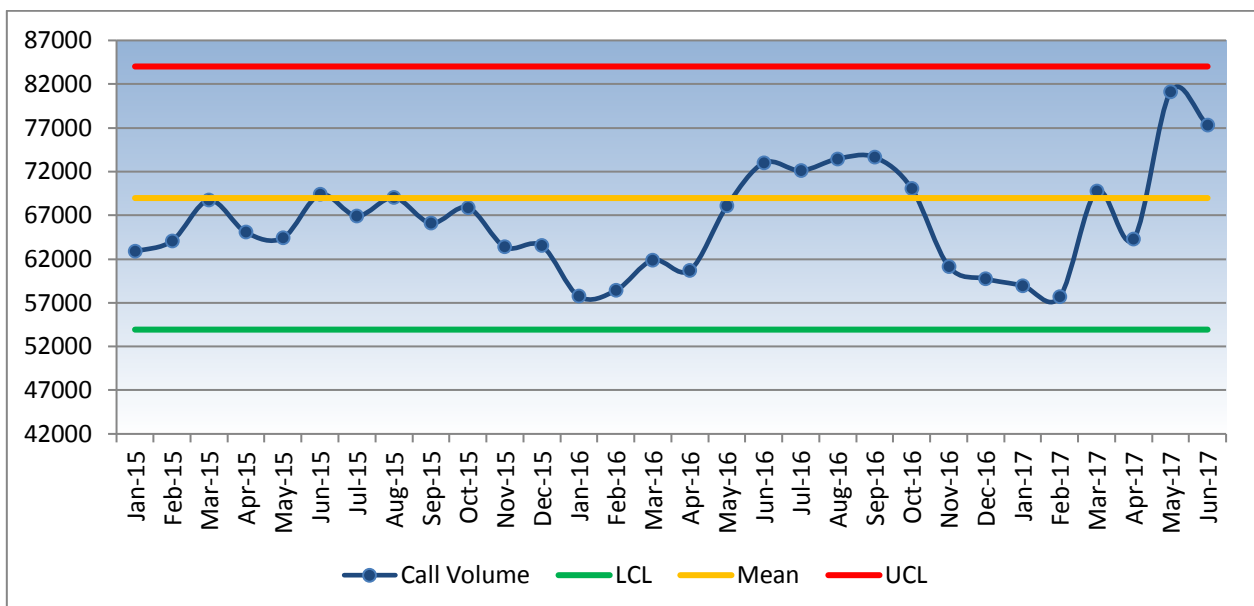
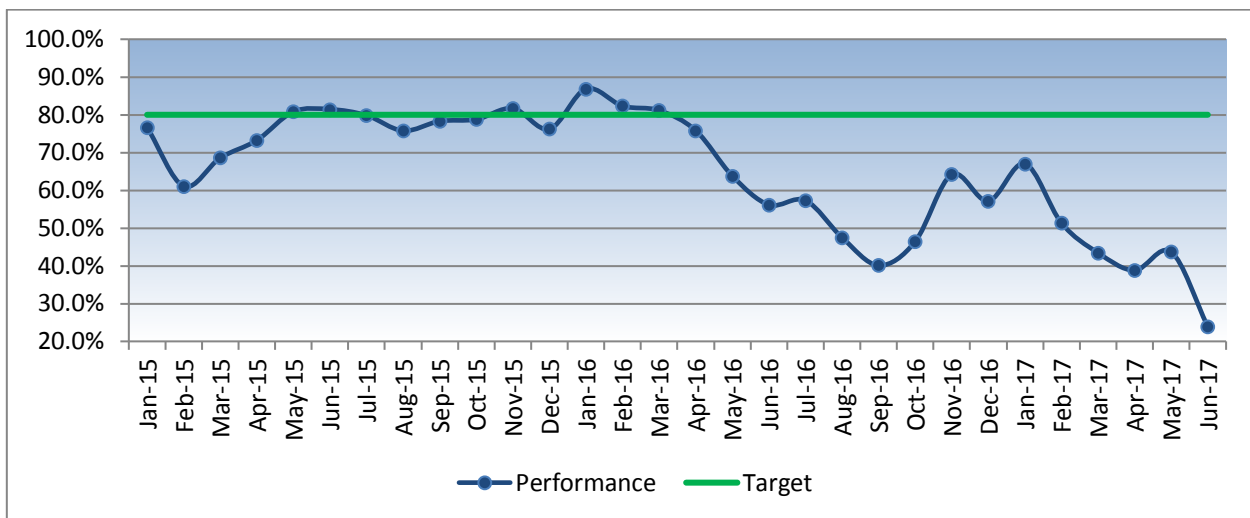


FIGURE 9: NON-EMERGENCY PERFORMANCE OVER TIME (40 SECOND TARGET)



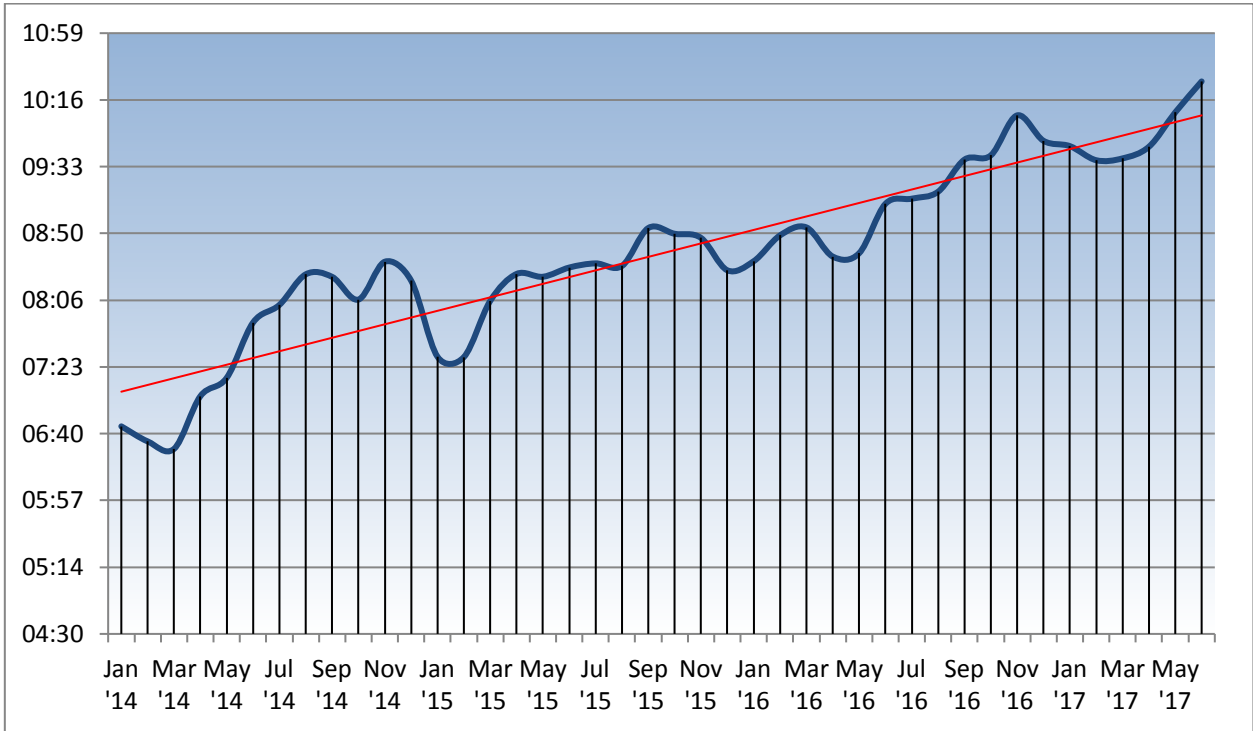
In a similar pattern to the emergency call figures, the demand offered during the April to June period has risen when viewed against the long term pattern. April to June’s figures are higher than last year and all but April are higher than the three year averages. April saw a 9.5% reduction on the average but May saw an 8.6% increase and June a 5.0% rise.

Average Handle Time

Figure 10 below shows the Average Handle Time (a combination of talk time and wrap-up time). As has been previously been reported to the Committee, this time has been steadily increasing. When looked at in detail it is the wrap-up time element (or the time an operator takes after each call) which has risen most when compared to the time spent on the phone. This is due to several factors:

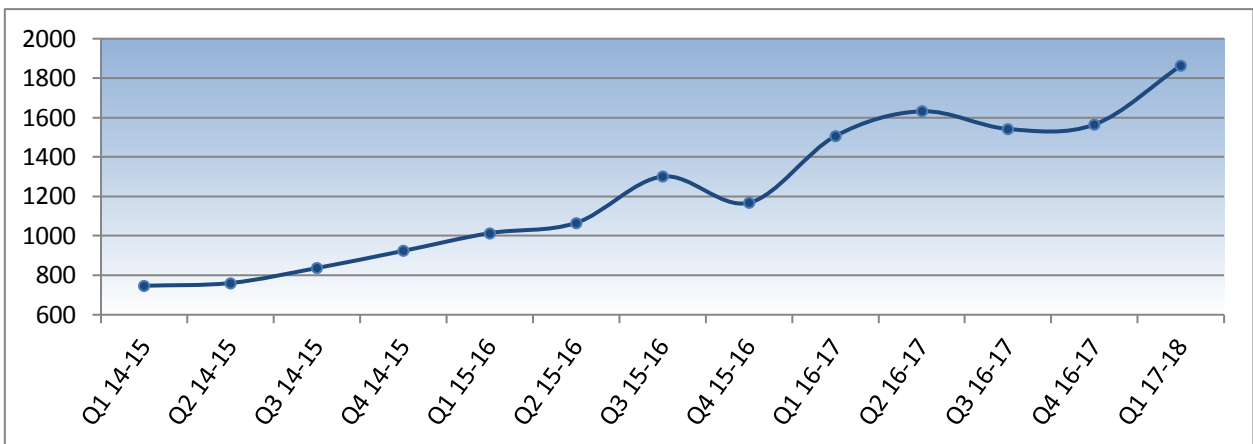
- Balance between quality verses quantity – i.e. do we choose to deal with lots of calls very quickly but in doing so obtain poor quality information and resolve relatively few at the first contact. Alternatively we can take a little longer on the call to obtain information that is capable of making a better quality decision and resolving more at first contact. Recent external inspections (Peer review and HMIC) have commended the quality of call handling in the room.
- Correctly documenting the incident, complete all necessary risk, threat and harm checks and documenting a NDM assessment.
- The changing natures of demand – especially public safety incidents – tend to be complex and take more time to deal with.
- The introduction of PCRO’s completing the first page crime report on incidents.
- Inexperienced operators take longer to deal with calls.

FIGURE 10: AVERAGE CALL HANDLING TIME (JAN '14 – MAY '17)



Part of our demand is made up of hoax calls to the emergency services. They have always formed a part of our demand but over the past four quarters there has been a significant increase in their volume, almost doubling.

FIGURE 11: VOLUME OF HOAX CALLS PER QUARTER



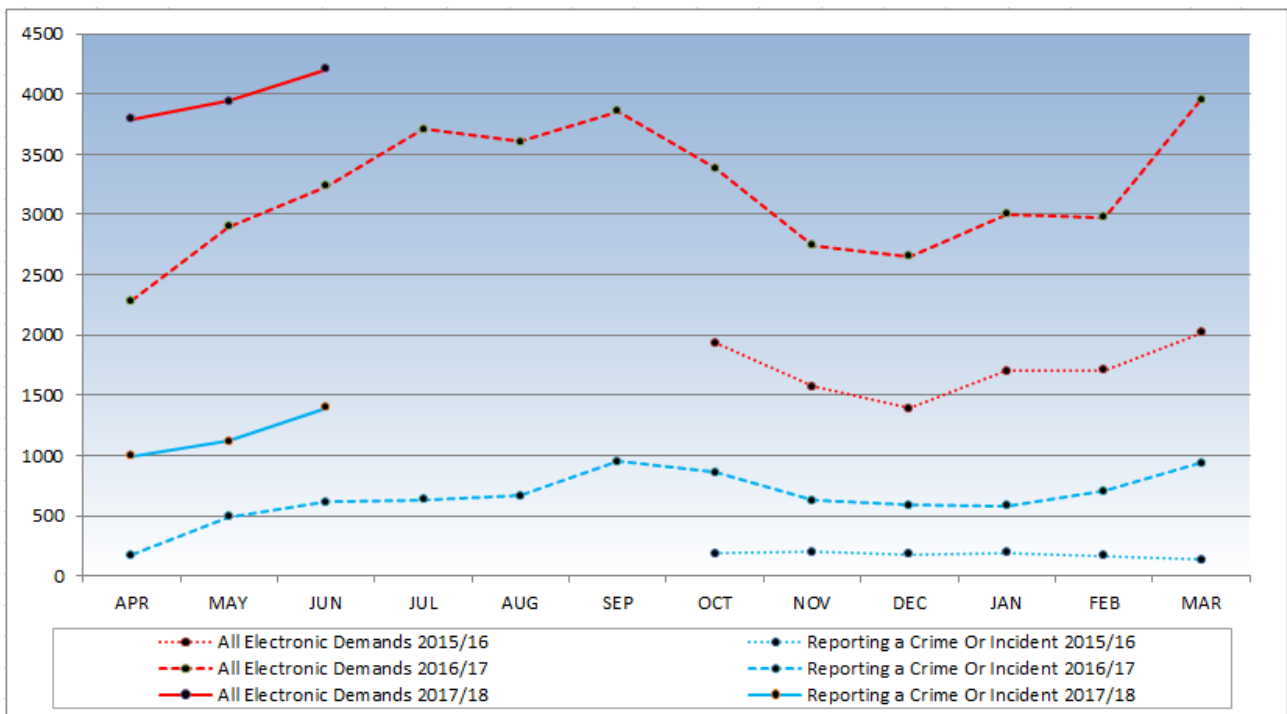
Hoax calls take a disproportionate amount of time to resolve due to all the necessary safeguarding checks and if made at peak times can impact severely to the detriment of call performance. The department seeks to investigate problematic hoax callers with divisions whenever possible.

3.3 Online Demand

The department is increasingly promoting online reporting options because they are often a preferred method for the public to report matters to the police, but also allow the control room to manage demand at times when it has capacity to do so. For the first time the report to the Committee is able to include measures about online demand shown in Figure 12 below.

All Electronic Demand includes everything received by the Force Mailbox and ranges from internal demand, to other force enquiries, other organisations, in addition to contacts from members of the public including emails commenting about good work of officers and staff, reports of incidents, complaints, and violations of electronic tags etc. Mailbox demand has only been categorised and recorded since October 2015 – hence mid-year data in the chart.

FIGURE 12: EMAIL / ONLINE REPORTING DEMAND



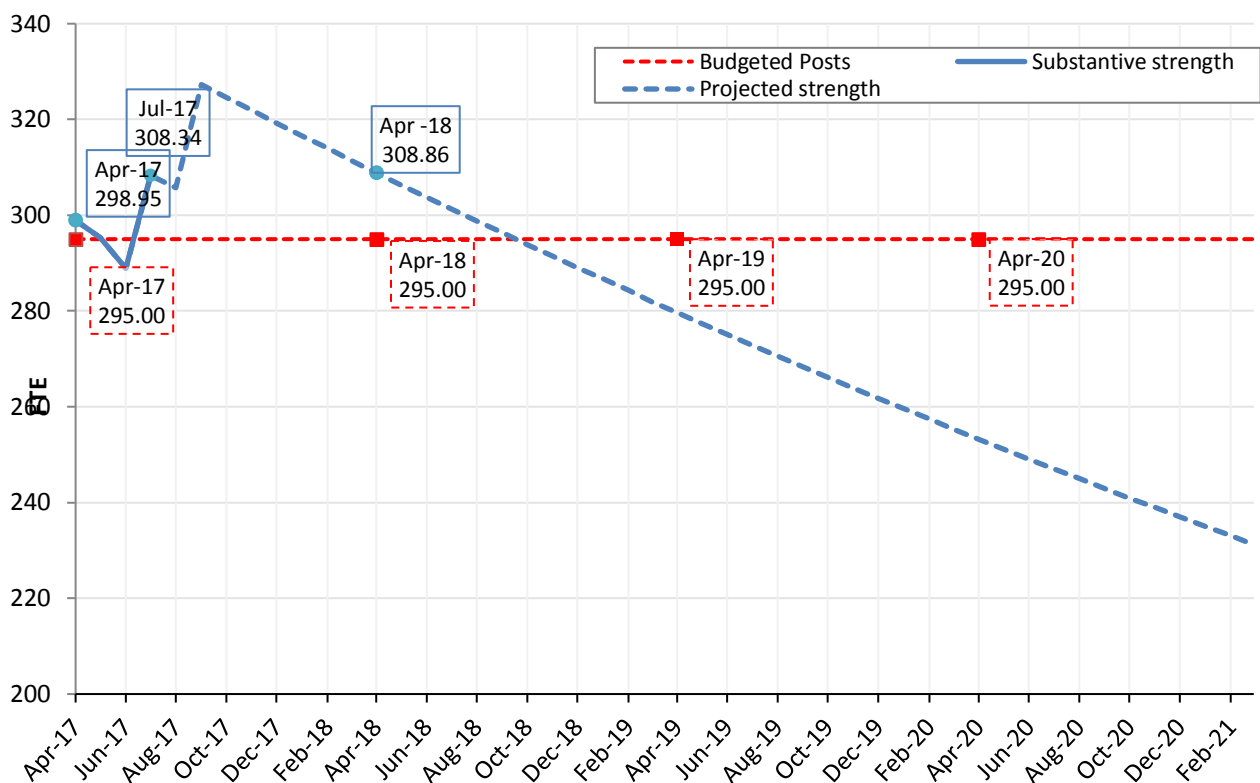
	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	Average
Reporting a Crime Or Incident 2015/16							185	199	183	194	167	138	177.67
Reporting a Crime Or Incident 2016/17	173	493	612	633	669	952	858	625	585	581	705	938	652.00
Reporting a Crime Or Incident 2017/18	999	1119	1398										1172.00
All Electronic Demands 2015/16							1933	1572	1391	1701	1708	2017	1720.33
All Electronic Demands 2016/17	2287	2900	3239	3708	3604	3855	3385	2745	2656	3001	2976	3955	3192.58
All Electronic Demands 2017/18	3791	3940	4205										3978.67

3.4 Capacity and Supply

The recruitment programme continues. Plans are in place to increase the number of intakes and recruit more new staff this year – vital to offset abstractions from the department which for the reporting period have amounted to around 15% - comprised of sickness, maternity, permanent restrictions pending redeployment, temporary promotions, and a small number working in training and demand analysis roles. The department has recently been at a substantive strength of 311 (budgeted establishment 295), but with abstractions tends to have operated for the reporting period with circa 260 FTE available for duties in the room.

Figure 13 below shows the current ‘Step Down’ chart for PCROs reflecting current recruitment plans.

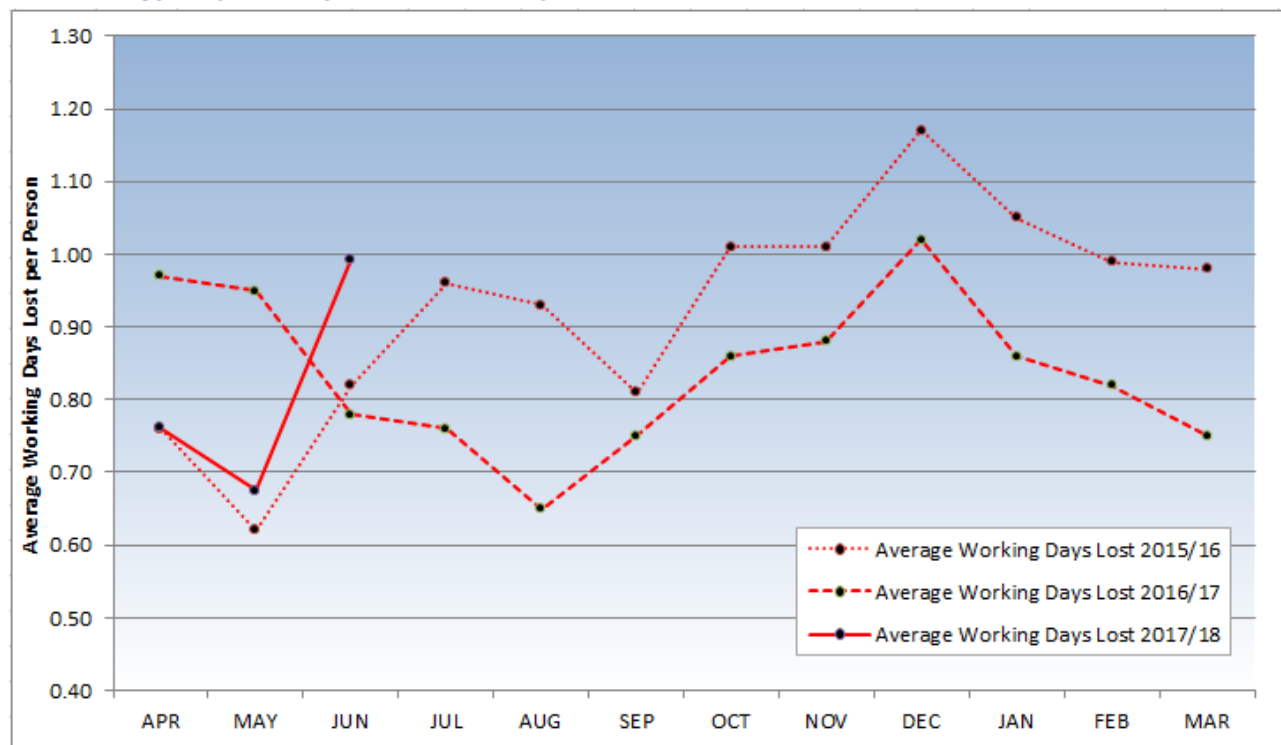
FIGURE 13: PCROS PROJECTED SUBSTANTIVE VS BUDGETED ESTABLISHMENT



Attendance Management

The department has continued to show strong performance in effective attendance management and long term reduction in sickness.

TABLE 14: CONTACT MANAGEMENT ATTENDANCE



	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	Average
Average Working Days Lost 2015/16	0.76	0.62	0.82	0.96	0.93	0.81	1.01	1.01	1.17	1.05	0.99	0.98	0.93
Average Working Days Lost 2016/17	0.97	0.95	0.78	0.76	0.65	0.75	0.86	0.88	1.02	0.86	0.82	0.75	0.84
Average Working Days Lost 2017/18	0.76	0.68	0.99										0.81

3.5 I.T. Systems

There have been a number of ICT challenges which have affected our systems over the period covered by this report. The most serious fault affected Storm during the last week of June and first few days of July; very seriously impacting on room performance. This resulted in some anomalous and outlying performance exceptions; with the longest call waiting of the period occurring during this IT outage on 25th June when the room was working in paper-based fall-back procedures. The problem has since been resolved but for the time it lasted it had an acute and serious negative impact on staff and performance.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS

On-going and Proposed Actions to Manage Room Performance

- Staffing – the department is continuing to recruit such that it is projected to be in an over strength position for the next 12 months. However continued call performance pressures and the underlying abstractions that will always feature to a greater or lesser degree mean that the department will revisit the question of what its budgeted establishment ought to be; taking into account cost and public expectation considerations.
- Channel Shift – adapting to modern public expectations the department is promoting online reporting channels and is due to adopt the CONNECT Public Engagement Module later in the year. This is expected to enhance service and be a step change in terms of the “Follow Up” offer that is available to the public in Lancashire.
- Internal and External Campaigns - An internal campaign to reduce failure demand has started and an external campaign is planned to educate the public about the most appropriate channel and how to access policing services.
- Place Based Policing - Continued development of integrated approaches to Place Based Policing will be essential to problem solve many of the root causes of raised demand for policing services. The complex demand described above in this paper is highly correlated to changes that have occurred in the wider public sector and society.
- Systems – Work is progressing to make the Integrated Command & Control System (ICCS) ESN ready. This is a substantial piece of work being project managed by BTLS and will also deliver stability improvements for systems in the room.
- South Pod Trial – this is the pilot concept for geographic based working within the single centrally located control room. Early findings indicate it will deliver significant benefits related to customer service and streamlined processes. It is being evaluated during August prior to decisions made about how to develop it further.