

**10 year Statistical  
Bulletin for the Office  
of the Police  
Ombudsman for  
Northern Ireland,  
2000/01 - 2009/10**

## Notes

The following pages provide data on the work of the Police Ombudsman's Office during the period 6 November 2000 - 31 March 2010.

It is important to note that these data are extracted from the Office's 'live' Case Handling System (CHS) and may therefore be subject to future revisions.

On 1 December 2008 the Office went live on a new allegation based Case Handling System (CHS). This replaced the previous Case Management System (CMS), which was complaint based. The new system presented an opportunity to capture additional information and improve recording and reporting mechanisms. During 2008/09 it has been necessary within certain areas to distinguish information processed on the old CMS (1 April 2008 – 30 November 2008) with that processed on the new CHS (1 December 2008 – 31 March 2009).

## Official Statistics

This is an Official Statistics publication. Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The code is consistent with the United Nations fundamental principles of Official Statistics, the European Statistics Code of Practice, and the Civil Service core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. They undergo regular data quality checks to ensure that they meet the required standards and are produced free from any political interference.

## Data use

The data collected are used by the Office to monitor and evaluate the service it provides to the public and to report to the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland (the Department). The information provides the Department, the public, the Northern Ireland Assembly, community and voluntary organisations and key stakeholders with a mechanism to assess the work and performance of the Police Ombudsman's Office.

## Data quality

Data quality is considered to be high. The CHS has been designed to limit the incidence of inaccurate data through the use of measures such as logical validation checks, drop down lists for data input and a minimum of free format data. All data input is completely auditable and allows for an effective quality control procedure to review and, where necessary, amend key data for the purpose of accurate reporting. When considered necessary, focused data cleansing exercises of key fields are also conducted. Additionally, 100% audits of fields with small numbers associated are conducted.

## **Bias and Errors**

As stated above, substantial validation and quality control procedures are in place to ensure that the data derived from CHS are of high quality. However, there is still a possibility of a small number of errors arising from data input, missing data, failure to update data and errors in communication. The Police Ombudsman estimates that the level of error is so small that it has no impact on the quality of statistical reporting.

# **Glossary of terms**

## **Informal Resolution**

Offered to complainants of less serious allegations, e.g. rudeness or incivility. Involves a senior police officer speaking to both the officer (s) involved and the complainant with a view to reaching satisfactory resolution of the complaint.

## **Processing of new complaints received**

When a complaint is made to the Office of the Police Ombudsman, it is received by the Initial Complaints Office (ICO) for preliminary assessment. The ICO has the authority to close complaints which are not suitable for formal investigation, for example, those which lie outside of the Office's remit. Where an investigation is deemed necessary by the ICO, the complaint is then passed to an investigations team for thorough examination of the available evidence. The investigations team then carries out the investigation and works towards closing each allegation with a recommendation.

## **Recommendations following allegations closed**

When the investigation of an allegation is complete a recommendation for allegation closure is made. It should be noted that one allegation may have more than one associated recommendation, for example when there are a number of police officers linked to an allegation.

## **Recommended Action**

Includes action such as criminal charges, disciplinary charges, Superintendent's Written Warning, Advice and Guidance.

## **Section 55 referral**

By virtue of Section 55 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 the Police Ombudsman can investigate matters about which no complaint has been made. This is known as a Section 55 referral. References to the number of complaints received include all Section 55 Referrals and public complaints.

# Statistical Tables

**Table 1: Complaints and Allegations Received**

Year	Complaints	Allegations
2000/01	1531	1994
2001/02	3600	4368
2002/03	3214	4389
2003/04	2979	4238
2004/05	2887	4401
2005/06	3140	5515
2006/07	3283	5615
2007/08	2994	5432
2008/09	3086	5395
2009/10	3528	6419
<b>Total</b>	<b>30242</b>	<b>47766</b>

**Table 2: Sources of complaints received**

Year	Direct to the Office	Via police	Via representative	Other
2000/01	30%	54%	16%	1%
2001/02	33%	47%	19%	1%
2002/03	36%	41%	22%	1%
2003/04	43%	32%	21%	1%
2004/05	50%	31%	19%	1%
2005/06	51%	31%	18%	0%
2006/07	55%	28%	15%	1%
2007/08	58%	28%	14%	0%
2008/09	52%	25%	12%	1%
2009/10	67%	17%	15%	1%

**Table 3: Section 55 Matters\***

Year	Chief Constable Referral	Police Ombudsman Call-In	DPP Referral	HET Referral	NIPB Referral	Harbour Police Referral	Total
2000/02	*	*	*	*	*	*	34
2002/03	48	5	0	0	1	0	54
2003/04	28	10	0	0	0	0	38
2004/05	72	0	0	0	0	0	72
2005/06	23	2	3	0	0	0	28
2006/07	39	5	0	46	0	0	90
2007/08	18	4	5	0	0	0	27
2008/09	22	10	4	3	0	0	39
2009/10	33	3	3	0	0	1	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>422</b>

\* No breakdown by type of referral available for 2000/02

**Table 4: Factors underlying complaints received**

Year	Arrest	Criminal Investigation	Traffic Incident	Search	Parade/ Demonstration	Other	Police Enquiries (no investigation)
2000/01	34%	10%	9%	7%	1%	40%	N/A
2001/02	38%	12%	7%	6%	4%	32%	N/A
2002/03	32%	15%	6%	7%	2%	38%	N/A
2003/04	27%	19%	7%	6%	1%	40%	N/A
2004/05	24%	22%	10%	5%	2%	37%	N/A
2005/06	24%	26%	11%	7%	3%	29%	N/A
2006/07	24%	36%	12%	6%	1%	21%	N/A
2007/08	21%	41%	11%	5%	1%	22%	N/A
2008/09	20%	30%	12%	6%	1%	26%	4%
2009/10	17%	22%	14%	9%	1%	21%	15%

**Table 5: Proportions of main allegation types received, 2000/01 - 30 November 2008 (CMS)**

Year	Failure in Duty	Oppressive Behaviour	Incivility	Others
2000/01	23%	49%	13%	14%
2001/02	23%	49%	14%	14%
2002/03	27%	40%	16%	17%
2003/04	31%	37%	15%	16%
2004/05	39%	35%	13%	13%
2005/06	43%	30%	10%	17%
2006/07	39%	32%	15%	13%
2007/08	41%	34%	14%	12%
2008/09**	41%	31%	15%	14%

\*\* 1 April 2008 – 30 November 2008

**Table 6: Proportions of main allegation types received, 1 December 2008 - 2009/10 (CHS)**

A number of 'new' allegation types were added upon creation of the CHS, namely, Discriminatory Behaviour, Search, Mishandling of Property and Unlawful/Unnecessary Arrest/Detention.

Allegation Type	2008/09***	2009/10
Failure in Duty	37%	37%
Oppressive Behaviour	29%	29%
Incivility	13%	13%
Search	5%	4%
Unlawful/Unnecessary Arrest/Detention	4%	4%
Discriminatory Behaviour	1%	1%
Mishandling of Property	1%	1%
Others	11%	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*\* 1 December 2008 – 31 March 2009

**Table 7: Location of incidents leading to allegations received**

Year	Police Station	Street/Road	Domestic Residence	Police Vehicle	Other	Unknown
2000/01	7%	7%	7%	1%	12%	67%
2001/02	17%	35%	15%	3%	20%	10%
2002/03	21%	27%	14%	5%	26%	7%
2003/04	23%	21%	14%	3%	31%	8%
2004/05	27%	24%	16%	4%	21%	9%
2005/06	31%	34%	15%	5%	9%	6%
2006/07	36%	27%	17%	5%	10%	5%
2007/08	37%	28%	17%	5%	8%	6%
2008/09	37%	28%	18%	4%	9%	4%
2009/10	39%	27%	18%	4%	7%	5%

**Table 8: Day of incidents leading to allegations received**

Year	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2000/01	13%	12%	12%	14%	14%	20%	14%
2001/02	13%	12%	14%	14%	14%	17%	17%
2002/03	12%	13%	12%	11%	14%	21%	18%
2003/04	13%	13%	13%	14%	14%	17%	17%
2004/05	12%	13%	12%	12%	14%	17%	19%
2005/06	12%	12%	11%	13%	15%	20%	18%
2006/07	11%	13%	14%	12%	15%	18%	18%
2007/08	13%	13%	14%	14%	14%	17%	15%
2008/09	12%	13%	12%	12%	14%	18%	19%
2009/10	13%	12%	14%	11%	16%	16%	18%

**Table 9: Proportions of weapons/other equipment used**

Year	Misuse of firearm	Discharge of firearm	Baton	Baton Round	CS Spray	Handcuffs	AEP	Other
2000/01	9	8	114	0	0	113	0	115
2001/02	34	15	312	22	0	194	0	74
2002/03	27	9	241	42	0	167	0	46
2003/04	16	7	175	1	0	163	0	56
2004/05	10	2	99	0	94	128	0	80
2005/06	29	16	143	5	102	143	5	31
2006/07	12	48	88	3	59	148	0	21
2007/08	5	5	101	0	99	99	1	17
2008/09	11	2	66	0	80	124	2	21
2009/10	8	5	48	0	51	131	2	17



**Table 10: Complaints arising from each PSNI Area Command Unit (ACU)\***

\*There may be double counting of complaints by ACU as a complaint may have allegations occurring in more than one DCU; the CMS recorded complaints at station level and could therefore contain 'other' organisations than PSNI. However, the number of 'others' are very small from 2006/07 - 2008/09 (approximately 8 complaints by Area). The development of the CHS allowed for complaint recording at Area level for specific organisations, thus the 2009/10 total equals the total number of complaints received against PSNI only within the year.

DCU	ACU	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
A District	North Belfast	50	560	355	193	204	358	282	261	223	265
	West Belfast	33	212	181	107	136	184	162	122	186	167
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>83</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>432</b>
B District	East Belfast	19	114	227	147	170	163	169	146	122	158
	South Belfast	42	239	270	250	182	227	225	231	216	258
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>416</b>
C District	Ards	29	113	133	113	110	119	119	92	96	104
	Castlereagh	9	53	63	87	91	67	59	81	90	95
	Down	16	143	140	118	99	95	70	88	91	101
	North Down	11	93	126	147	101	123	123	143	121	111
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>411</b>
D District	Antrim	16	100	87	143	113	142	136	108	116	112
	Carrickfergus	9	67	54	32	44	67	82	97	72	48
	Lisburn	15	106	149	163	131	152	152	127	158	223
	Newtownabbey	14	85	79	84	82	78	104	84	82	130
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>513</b>
E District	Armagh	16	82	73	78	79	87	93	76	77	84
	Banbridge	2	88	59	63	57	47	51	64	55	74
	Craigavon	20	152	125	135	167	116	111	123	104	155
	Newry and Mourne	7	95	85	112	93	116	110	119	109	107
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>420</b>
F District	Cookstown	10	76	33	42	47	50	52	41	54	51
	Dungannon and South Tyrone	10	69	42	70	67	74	63	44	78	72
	Fermanagh	17	78	75	87	83	61	81	56	59	91
	Omagh	16	84	50	64	55	59	67	62	46	102
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>316</b>

DCU	ACU	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
G District	Foyle	51	198	179	114	143	131	132	156	151	164
	Limavady	7	42	58	43	59	43	44	51	67	73
	Magherafelt	8	30	35	45	48	48	48	38	56	55
	Strabane	12	87	43	52	74	56	85	58	49	43
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>335</b>
H District	Ballymena	18	137	125	135	136	133	133	99	141	164
	Ballymoney	2	12	10	21	17	34	21	32	20	16
	Coleraine	14	105	96	120	134	171	231	190	176	202
	Larne	7	50	60	44	58	46	58	46	51	56
	Moyle	2	9	11	21	19	33	27	16	14	9
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>447</b>
Other and Unknown		1065	345	286	242	165	210	256	230	233	238
<b>Total</b>		<b>1547</b>	<b>3624</b>	<b>3309</b>	<b>3072</b>	<b>2964</b>	<b>3290</b>	<b>3346</b>	<b>3081</b>	<b>3113</b>	<b>3528</b>

**Table 11: Number of complaints received which were successfully Informally Resolved**

Year	Number successful
2000/01	93
2001/02	301
2002/03	281
2003/04	312
2004/05	278
2005/06	353
2006/07	405
2007/08	326
2008/09	362
2009/10	398

**Table 12: Proportions of outcomes of complaints closed following Informal Resolution process**

Year	Successful	Failed	Withdrawn
2002/03	88%	9%	2%
2003/04	76%	22%	2%
2004/05	73%	26%	1%
2005/06	76%	22%	2%
2006/07	74%	25%	1%
2007/08	74%	25%	1%
2008/09	71%	27%	2%
2009/10	77%	21%	2%

**Table 13: Proportions of outcomes of successful Informal Resolution complaints, closed by PSNI**

Outcomes	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Accept nothing further could be done	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Action taken accepted	24%	28%	25%	27%	23%	27%	25%
Apology from officer	9%	9%	13%	9%	11%	10%	11%
Apology on behalf of PSNI	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	7%	7%
Brought to attention of officer(s)/senior officer	32%	29%	22%	26%	26%	27%	24%
Constructive advice	9%	15%	18%	16%	19%	20%	23%
Explanation accepted	11%	6%	6%	5%	9%	4%	6%
Expression of regret	4%	2%	3%	4%	2%	1%	1%
Face to face meeting with officer	1%	3%	4%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Face to face apology	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%
Other	3%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%

**Table 14: Number of complaints closed per year**

Year	Number closed
2000/01	489
2001/02	3207
2002/03	3379
2003/04	3071
2004/05	2914
2005/06	2932
2006/07	3078
2007/08	3052
2008/09	3286
2009/10	3532
<b>Total</b>	<b>28940</b>

**Table 15: Number of complaint closure types per year (CMS)\***

Closure Type	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	1 Apr 08 - 30 Nov 08
Outside Remit	69	311	396	277	329	385	282	250	211
Ill founded	0	145	258	268	303	377	390	365	252
Withdrawn by complainant	60	276	215	263	205	218	250	292	175
Non co-operation by complainant	297	1664	1362	1094	889	802	908	848	451
Informal resolution accepted	38	295	280	401	343	367	405	332	279
Not substantiated	0	246	589	541	652	531	601	648	582
Action arising	1	4	15	56	76	97	106	160	221
Substantiated - no action recommended	0	1	3	7	10	73	28	49	31
All other	24	265	261	164	107	82	108	108	147
<b>Total</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>3207</b>	<b>3379</b>	<b>3071</b>	<b>2914</b>	<b>2932</b>	<b>3078</b>	<b>3052</b>	<b>2349</b>

\*From the establishment of the Office in 2000 until 30 November 2008, the Office's Case Management System (CMS) recorded one outcome against each complaint.

**Table 16: Number of recommendations arising from allegations closed per year (CHS)\*\***

Recommendation Type	1 Dec 08 - 31 Mar 09	2009/10
Ill founded	124	386
Informal Resolution Accepted	164	691
Non Co-operation by Complainant	504	1,966
Not Substantiated	733	4,041
Outside Remit	166	550
Recommended Action	116	404
Substantiated - No action recommended	46	95
To PPS No Criminal Charges Recommended	139	936
Withdrawn by Complainant	160	601
Other	51	157
<b>Total</b>	<b>2203</b>	<b>9827</b>

\*\*From 1 December 2008, the Office replaced its Complaints Management System (CMS) with one that is allegation based. The new system reports on recommendations made against each allegation. Each allegation may have more than one associated recommendation, for example when there are a number of police officers linked to an allegation.

**Table 17: Number of cases submitted to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS)\***

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cases submitted for no prosecution or advice/interim direction	78	184	174	149	169	200	241	272
Cases submitted with recommendations for prosecution	12	16	10	7	5	11	11	11
Number of charges recommended	12	24	10	19	9	22	19	13

\*Reported from the Office's original complaint level Case Management System

**Table 18: Number of recommendations made to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS)\***

	2009/10
Recommendations for no prosecution	1027
Recommendations for prosecution	5
Number of charges recommended	7

\*Reported from the Office's allegation level Case Handling System

**Table 19: Charges recommended to the Public Prosecution Service, 2001/02 - 2009/10**

Charge	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Total
Administering a noxious substance	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Assault (aggravated - minor)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	4	4	0	3	0	2	3	4	1	21
Assault occasioning grievous bodily harm	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Attempted murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Attempting to pervert the course of public justice	0	0	0	5	4	1	1	0	0	11
Attempted wounding or causing GBH with intent	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Breach of Criminal Procedure Investigations Act	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Breach of Data Protection	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Careless driving	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Causing death by dangerous driving	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Causing harassment alarm or distress	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Common assault	0	5	3	1	3	10	5	0	2	29
Criminal damage	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	3
Dangerous driving	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Discharge of firearm in a public place	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Discharge of firearm with intent to endanger life	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Disorderly behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Driving whilst disqualified	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Driving without insurance	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Endangering persons on railway by neglect	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Intimidation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Kidnapping	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Making a false statement	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Misconduct in public office	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	4
Obstruction of the Police Ombudsman	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Offence under the Protection from Harassment (NI) Order (1997)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Charge	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Total
Other	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Perjury	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	5
Perverting the course of justice	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	14
Possession of firearm with intent to endanger life	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Theft	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Unlawful disclosure of information under the Data Protection Act	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>135</b>

**Table 20: Direction by the Public Prosecution Service, 2001/02 - 2009/10**

Direction by Public Prosecution Service, 2001/02 - 2009/10	
Type of Charge	Number
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	12
Attempted wounding with intent	4
Careless driving	1
Causing death by dangerous driving	2
Common Assault	16
Criminal damage	2
Dangerous driving	3
Dangerous driving causing grievous bodily injury	1
Data Protection	3
Driving whilst disqualified	3
Driving without insurance	3
Malicious wounding	1
Perjury	1
Perverting the course of justice	8
Possession of firearm with intent	1
Unlawful and injurious imprisonment	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>

**Table 21: Cases recommended to the Chief Constable, 2001/02 - 2008/09 (within CMS\*)**

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Misconduct Charges	2	8	11	10	14	8	11	11
Advice and Guidance	3	27	39	35	41	65	86	188
Superintendent's Written Warning	0	6	8	12	11	21	23	20
Management Discussion	0	0	18	15	0	0	38	18
<b>Total Cases Recommended</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>237</b>

\*Reported from the Office's original complaint level Case Management System

**Table 22: Recommendations made to the Chief Constable, 2009/10 (within CHS\*)**

	2009/10
Misconduct Charges	13
Advice and Guidance	352
Superintendent's Written Warning	34
Management Discussion	12
<b>Total Recommendations Made</b>	<b>411</b>

\*Reported from the Office's allegation level Case Handling System