



Complaints and Compliments
National Quarterly Report
April to June 2007

- This report is provided to senior managers within Customs and is published on the Customs website.
- For further details on any of the information contained in this report please contact the National Coordinator (46 6499) or Manager Client Services (46 6896).

Introduction

This report provides statistical data for complaints and compliments received during the period April to June 2007. All statistical data included in this report was extracted on 16 July 2007. Where appropriate, comparative tables and graphs are provided for previous reporting periods.

Executive summary

Complaints

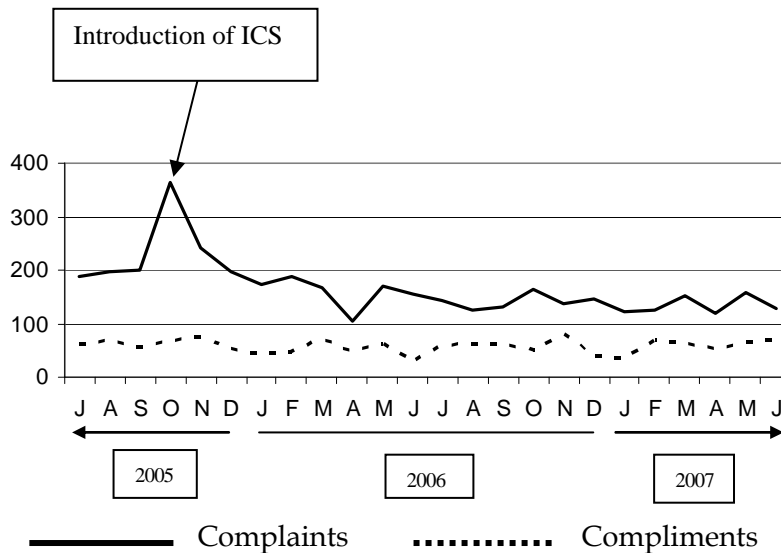


Figure 1. National trends for complaints and compliments from July 2005 to June 2007 by month

A total number of **405** complaints, excluding referrals, were reported compared with **399** in the previous quarter.

The top four complaint issues were:

- **Process took too long (59):** Of these complaints, **48** occurred in Cargo Division (Cargo Operations Branch), **26** related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B) and **14** related to Postal Operations (see Annex C).
- **Didn't expect duty or tax (41):** These complaints occurred primarily in Passengers Division (Passenger Enforcement Branch) (**23**) and related to passenger concessions (see Annex A).
- **Officer was rude (36):** This occurred **30** times in Passengers Division, **23** of which were in Passenger Enforcement Branch and **5** in Passenger Compliance Branch (see Annex A).
- **Didn't Expect Fees (28):** Most complaints (**27**) occurred in Cargo Division (Cargo Operations Branch) and **24** related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B).

In addition to the above, Customs referred **124** complaints to other agencies.

Significant variations in the June Quarter

General

The following issues are highlighted as areas where a significant variation, increase or decrease, has occurred compared to the previous quarter.

Type of Complaint

'Process took too long'

The complaint 'Process took too long' increased nationally from **40** to **59**. This complaint largely relates to Cargo Division (**48**) (Cargo Operations Branch), in both the Container Examination Facilities (**24**)(see Annex B) and Postal Operations (**16**)(see Annex C).

'Examined personal documents'

The complaint 'Examined personal documents' decreased nationally from **13** to **0**. The decrease largely occurred at Sydney Airport (**-7**).

'Goods were damaged'

The complaint 'Goods were damaged' decreased nationally from **24** to **14**. The main decrease occurred in NSW (**8** to **2**).

'Goods were seized'

The complaint 'Goods were seized' increased nationally from **10** to **18**. The increase occurred in both Passengers Division (**4** to **7**) and in Cargo (**4** to **9**).

'Queue delay'

The complaint 'Queue delay' decreased nationally from **18** to **10**. The decrease occurred largely at Perth Airport from (**7-0**) (see Annex A).

Compliments

A total number of **189** compliments were reported about Customs compared with **170** in the previous quarter. The top three compliments were:

- "Officer/s was helpful" (**54**),
- "Appreciated assistance" (**47**), and
- "Officer/s was professional" (**26**).

In addition to the above, Customs referred **2** compliments to other agencies.

1. National Trends

1.1 National Trends by Division (excluding referrals)

Complaints

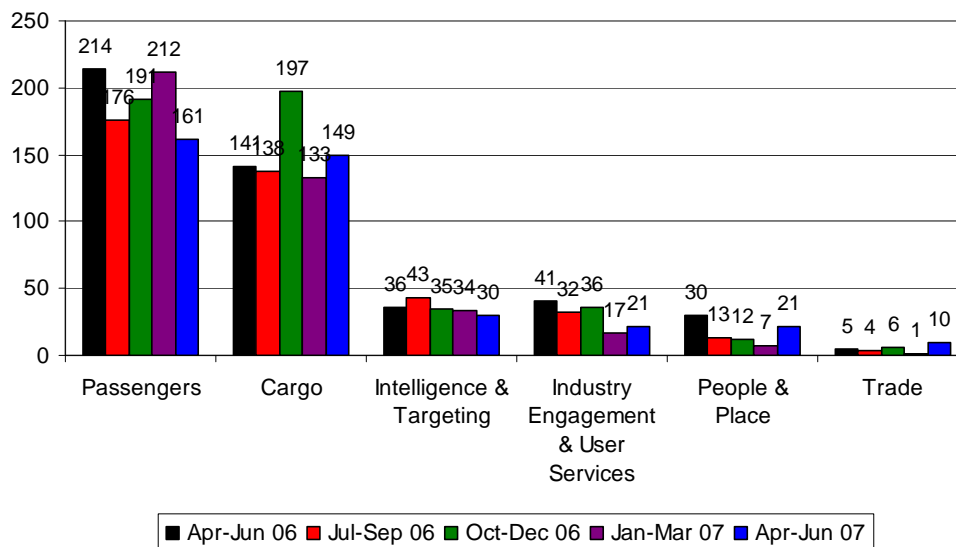


Figure 2. Total number of complaints for the top six divisions comparing the last five quarters

Compliments

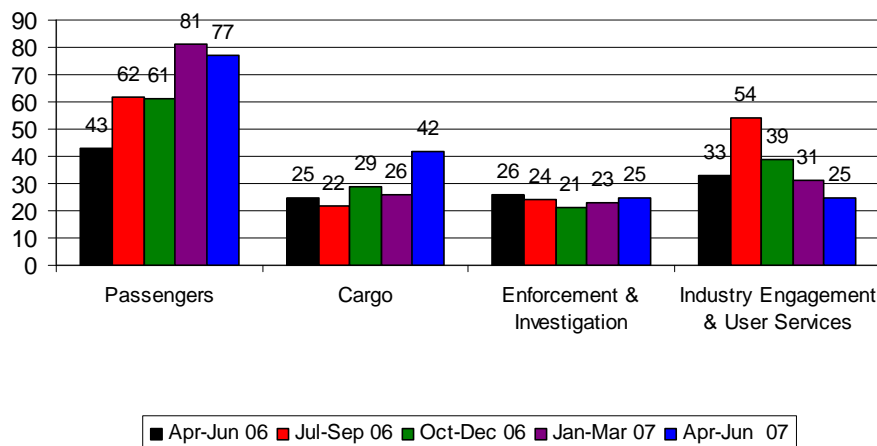


Figure 3. The trend in compliments for the four larger divisions comparing the last five quarters

Note – Enforcement and Investigation includes compliments for District Offices

A more detailed analysis of complaints and compliments for Passengers Division, the Container Examination Facility (CEF), the Cargo Division, and the issue of ‘rude officers’ are provided in Annexes A-D.

A summary of improvements made during 2006-07 as a result/partial result of the CCMS is shown at Annex E.

National Trends by Region (excluding referrals)

Complaints

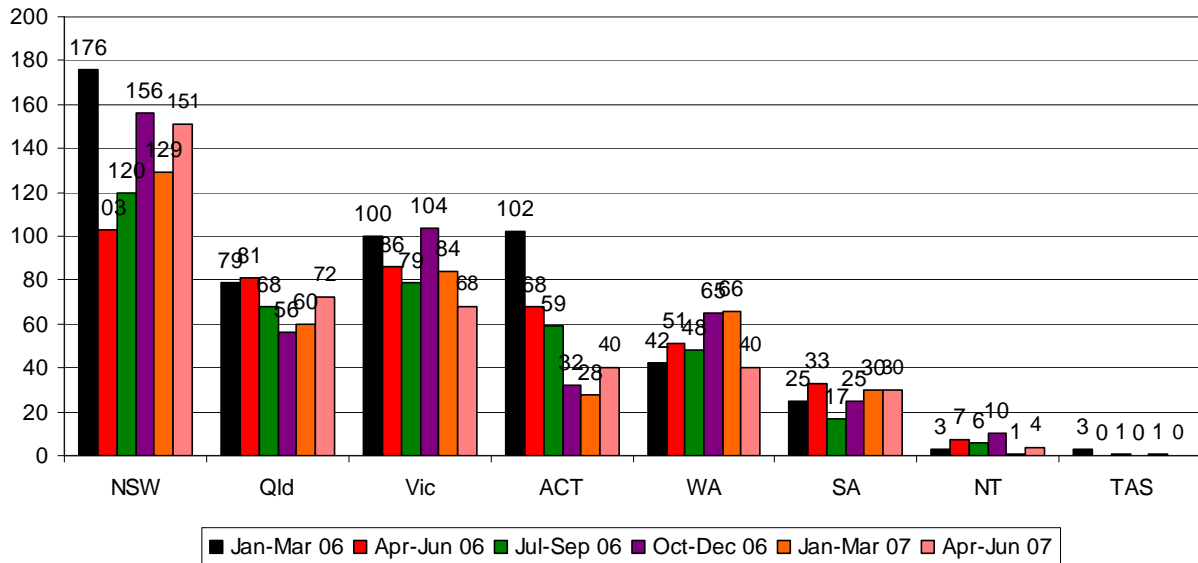


Figure 4. Total number of complaints by region comparing each quarter from January-March 2006 to April-June 2007

Compliments

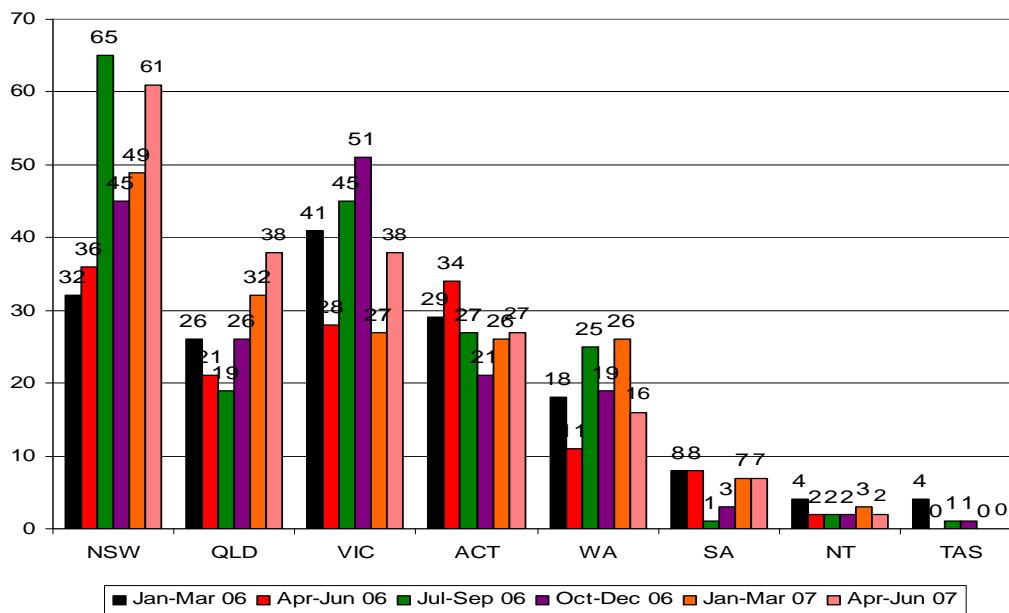


Figure 5. Total number of compliments by region comparing each quarter from January-March 2006 to April-June 2007

1. Type of Complaint

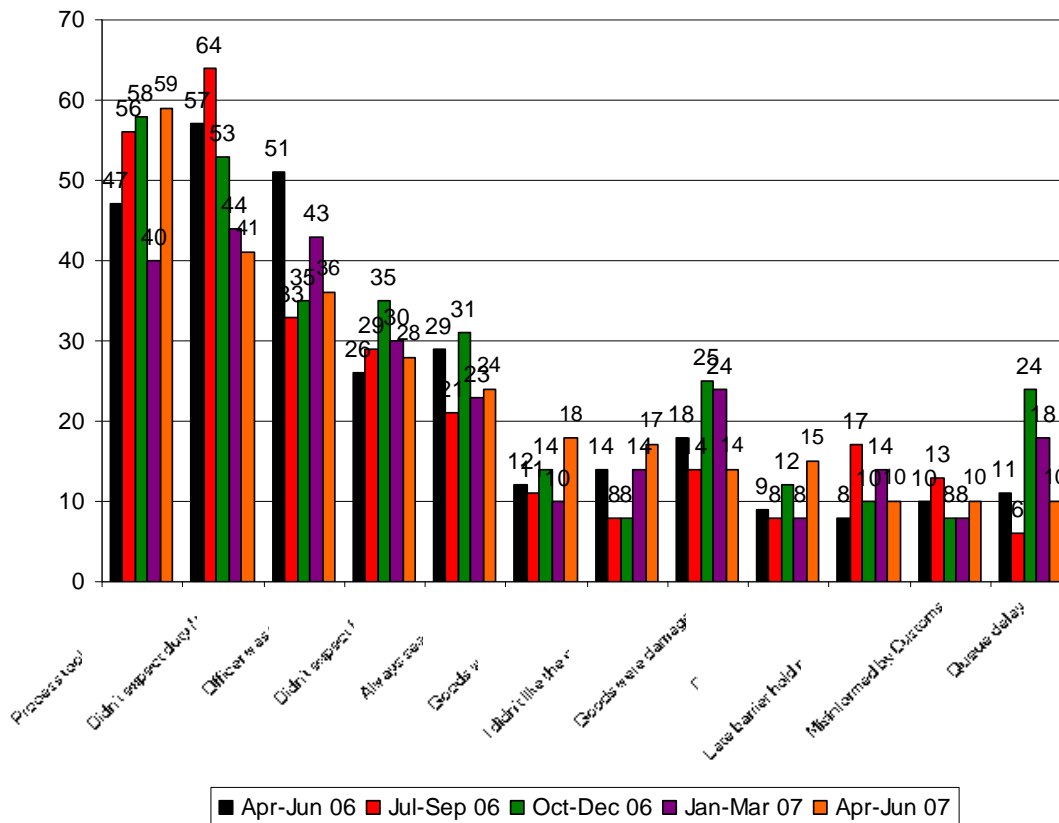


Figure 6. National Top 10 Complaints (excluding referrals) for the last four quarters

A total number of **405** complaints were made for this quarter (excluding referrals). This compares to **399** for the previous quarter and represents a **1.5% increase**.

2. Type of Compliment

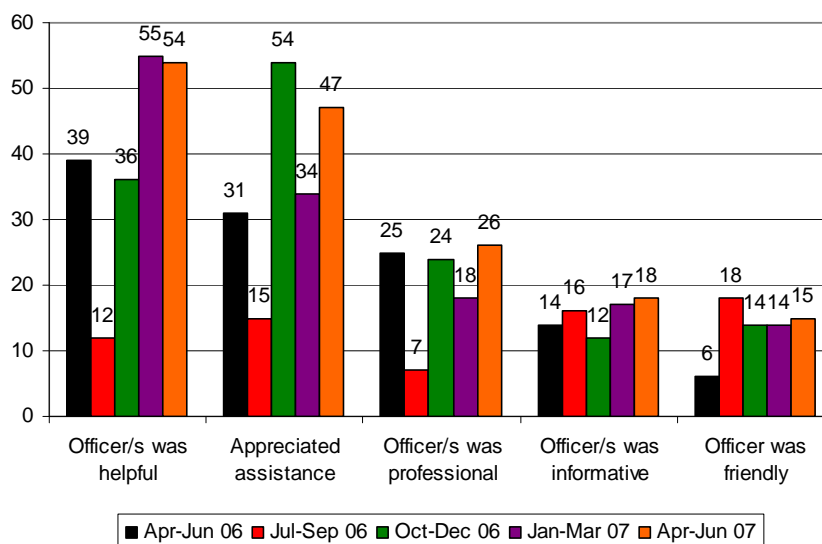


Figure 7. National top 5 compliments (excluding referrals) for the last five quarters

A total of **189** compliments (excluding referrals) were registered for this quarter. This compares to **170** for the previous quarter and represents a **11.18% increase**.

The top three compliment issues were:

- **Officer/s was helpful (54):** Cargo Division received this compliment most frequently with **(24)**, followed by Information Engagement and User Services **(12)**(see Annex C).
- **Appreciated assistance (47):** Passengers Division received this compliment most frequently **(21)**, followed by Enforcement and Investigation **(18)**(for the National Marine Unit).
- **Officer was professional (26):** Passengers Division received this compliment most frequently **(11)** (see Annex A).

4. Referrals to other agencies

Where complaints or compliments are not related to Customs operations or procedures, the Complaints and Compliments Network refer clients to the relevant agencies. During this quarter Customs referred **124** complaints and **2** compliments. The main agencies receiving referrals were DOTARS **(38)**, AQIS **(31)**, Security Operators **(19)**, and Australia Post **(11)**.

5. Performance Against Service Standards

The Complaints and Compliments Network monitors performance against the Customs Client Service Charter. The Client Service Charter states:

If you write to us or email us

We aim to acknowledge your communication within 5 working days and to respond within 15 working days of receipt of your email or written correspondence. If we cannot fully answer your query in that time, we will give you an interim response and advise as to when a final response can be expected.

Service Standards

The average complaint resolution time of **9.97** working days reported in the previous quarter has *decreased* to **9.37** working days.

The average compliment resolution time of **1.67** working days reported in the previous quarter has *decreased* to **1.06** working days.

These resolution times are within the 15 working day service standard.

Out of a total of **720** cases received, **28** cases opened during the March quarter did not meet the 15 working day benchmark **(3.89%)**. Last quarter **4.67%** of cases did not meet this criteria.

6. How People Contact Us

The main methods for contacting Customs during this quarter were by email (**399**), phone (including the 1800 number) (**126**), and brochure (**66**).

Note: 'Remote' entries are originally made by phone or email direct to a Customs work area. A Customs officer then forwards the complaint or compliment to their regional coordinator via a remote entry icon on their desktop.

The number of complaints or compliments received has *varied* by:

- email (increased from **326** to **399**),
- 1800 228227/phone (increased from **122** to **126**),
- remote entry (increased from **48** to **66**),
- brochure (decreased from **76** to **63**),
- letter or fax (decreased from **67** to **46**),
- Ministerial/Ombudsman (increased from **14** to **19**).

The purpose of the CCMS is to provide:

- National coordination of complaints and compliments,
- Analysis of data,
- Reporting of results, and
- Identification of opportunities for continuous improvement of our processes and practices based on client feedback.

The CCMS is committed to recording and reporting all comments provided by clients about their experience with Customs.

Feedback on any information contained in this report should be directed to the following Complaints and Compliments staff:

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Name: Roni Giacobetti, National Coordinator, Complaints and Compliments Network, 02 6275 6499

Email: roni.giacobetti@customs.gov.au

Passengers Division

Complaints

The number of complaints received nationally was **161** (excluding referrals) during this quarter (compared to **212** in the previous quarter) which is equivalent to 1 complaint for every **30,518** passengers arriving in, or departing from, Australia. This compares with one complaint for every **27,364** passengers in the January to March 2007 quarter.

During the period 1 April to 30 June 2007 **5,293,435** passengers arrived and departed through international airports nationally. Numbers of passengers traveling through each major airport are shown in Table 1 below.

Major Airports	Number of Airport Complaints	Passenger Arrival Numbers	Passenger Departure Numbers	Number of Passengers for Every Complaint
Sydney	60	1,118,249	1,223,746	39,033
Melbourne	26	517,140	560,250	41,438
Brisbane	21	463,012	477,046	44,765
Perth	26	259,450	294,538	21,307
Total	133	2,357,851	2,555,580	

Table 1. Number of complaints lodged at the **four major airports** compared to the number of passengers arriving or departing during April to June 2007

Figure 1 below compares the number of Customs complaints received by each of Australia's major airports:

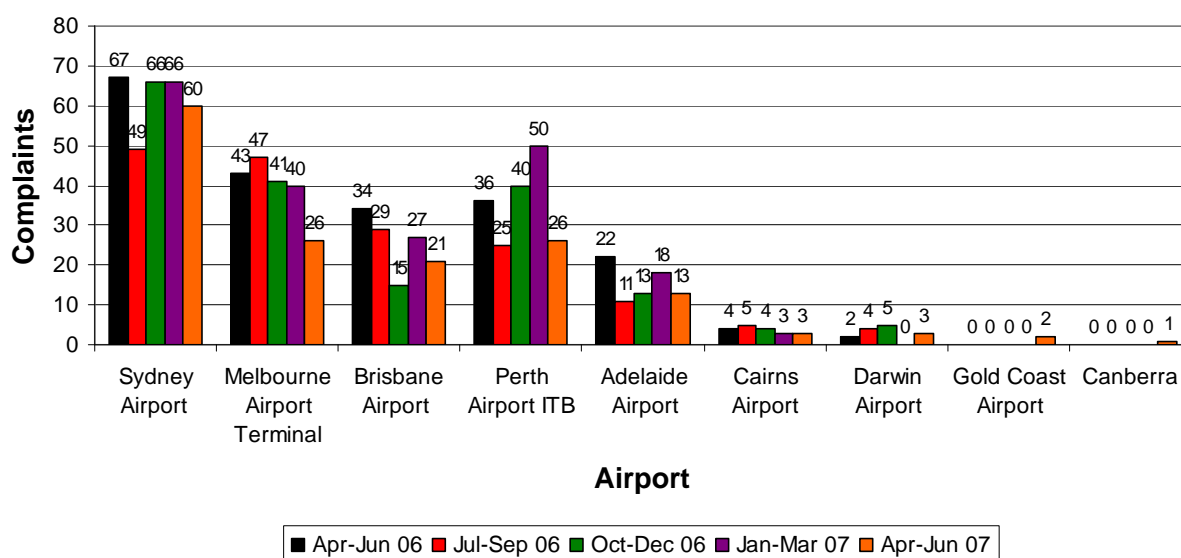


Figure 1. Passenger Complaints at each Airport for the last five quarters.

A comparison of all Passengers Division complaints nationally for the last five quarters is shown in Table 2 below.

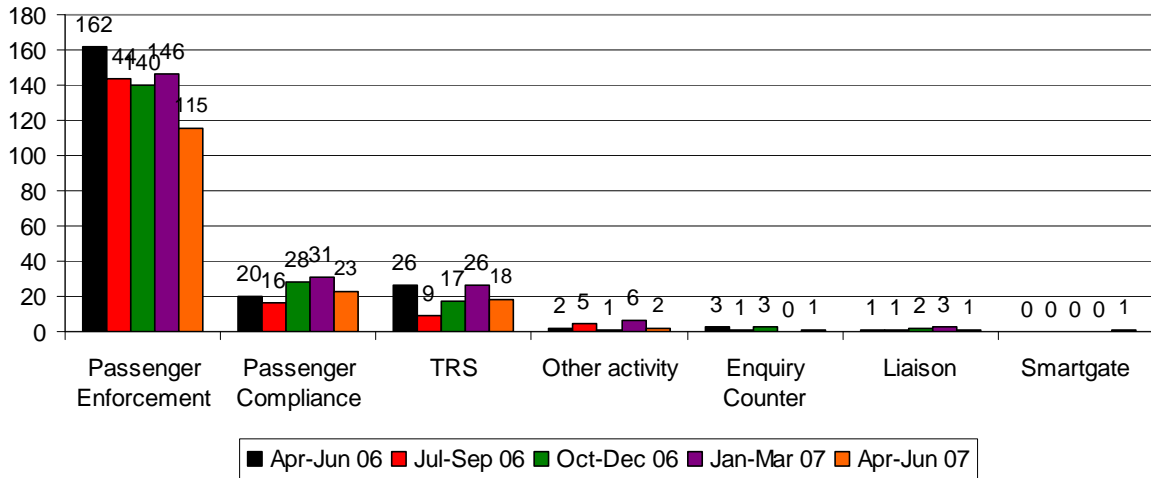


Figure 2. Passengers complaints - comparative assessment by region for the last five quarters.

The increase in complaints mainly concerned:

Passenger Enforcement: down from **146** to **115**. The main decrease was for passenger concessions (see below).

TRS: down from **26** to **18**.

Passenger Concessions

Passenger concessions complaints were **23** this quarter, down from **35** last quarter.

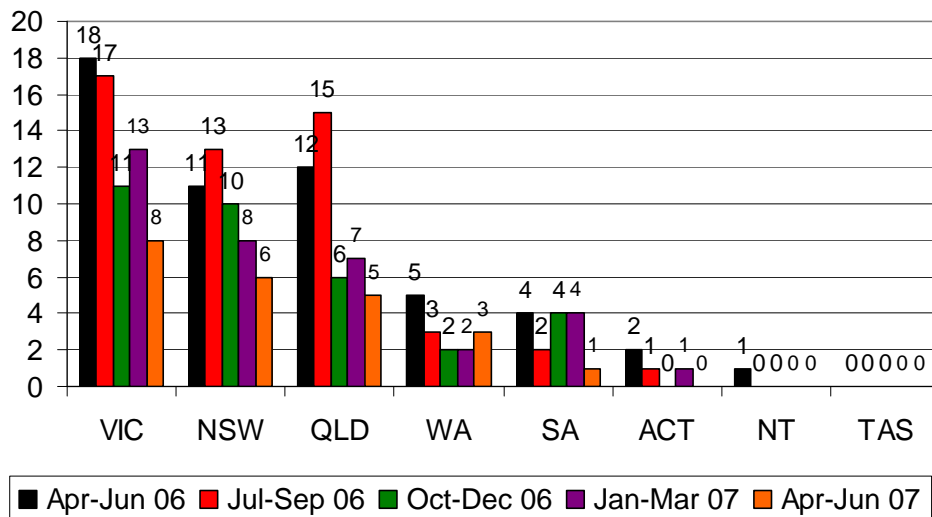


Figure 3. Passenger concessions complaints - comparative assessment by region for the last five quarters.

Compliments

There were **77** compliments for Passengers during this quarter, a decrease from **81** during the previous quarter.

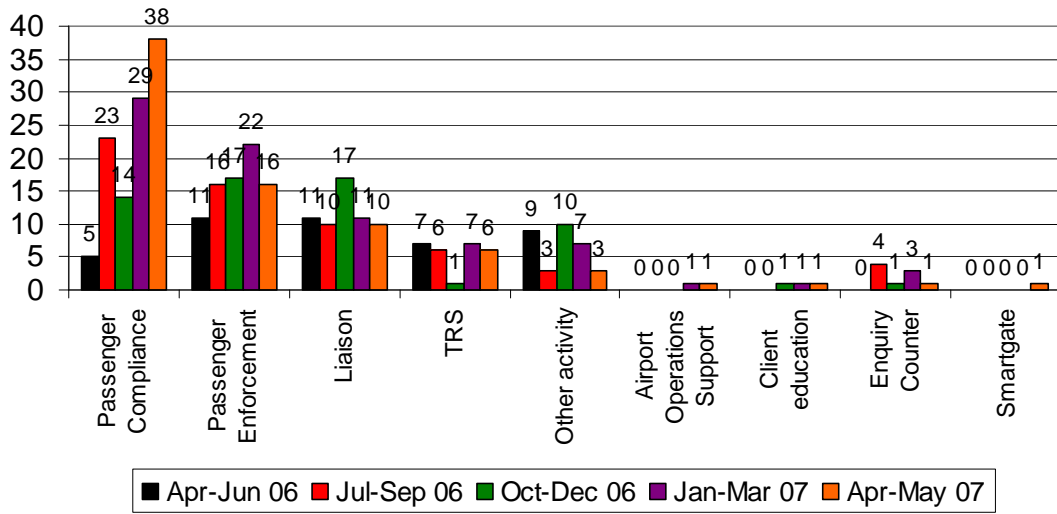


Figure 4. Passenger compliments - comparative assessment for the last five quarters.

Annex B

Container Examinations

(Data includes both Cargo Division and Intelligence & Targeting Division)

CEF related complaints have *decreased* from **95** to **88** during the June quarter.

The **87** CEF related complaints consist of **56** Cargo Division complaints, **26** Intelligence & Targeting Division complaints, as well as **1** for Industry Engagement & User Services (ICS), **2** classified to CTO/Wharf/Stevedores and Brokers, and **3** classified to AQIS.

During the quarter Customs inspected **36,097 TEU**. This is equivalent to **1** complaint for every **410 TEU** (previous quarter was **354 TEU**).

Complaints per TEU per Month (see definition at Note 1 below):

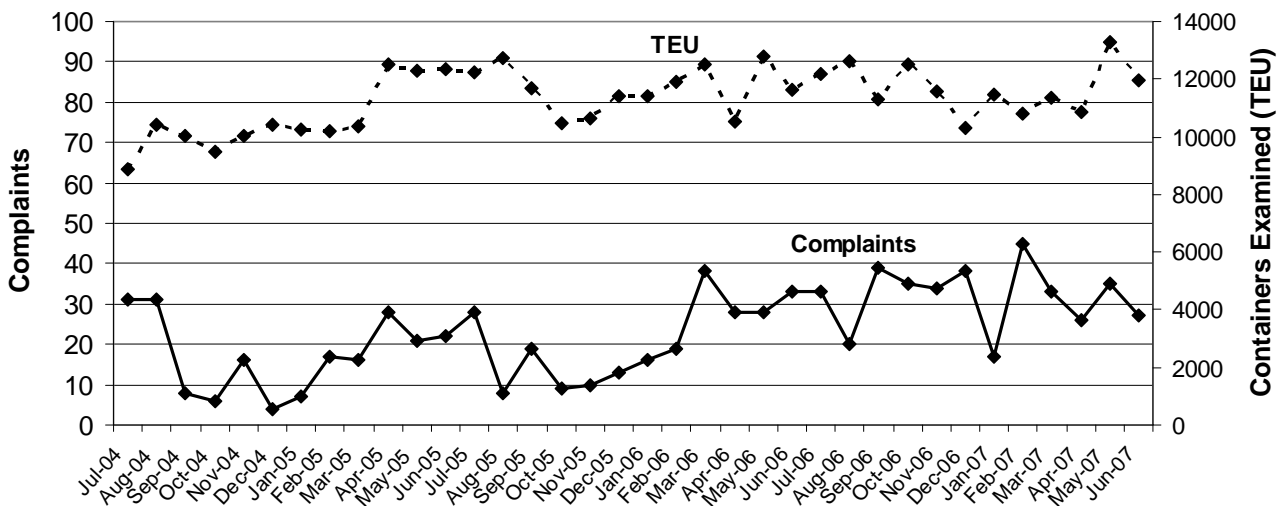


Figure 1. Trend of complaints against TEU x-rayed by Customs since July 2004

The decrease in complaints during this quarter occurred in Central Office with a reduction of **4** complaints.

Of the total **88** complaints, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Process took too long” (**26**) – an increase from **19** during the last quarter.

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**24**) – a decrease from **25** during the last quarter.

Issue: “Always searched” (**16**) – a decrease from **20** during the last quarter.

The following table details CEF Cargo Division complaints registered for each CEF for the June quarter was once again **56** (same as for the last quarter). This table excludes complaints recorded against Intelligence & Targeting Division, Industry Engagement & User Services (ICS), (see Table 2) and Other Organisations (CTO/Wharf/Stevedores, Brokers, AQIS).

Issues	Brisbane	Melbourne	Fremantle	Sydney	Adelaide	Canberra	Total
Didn't expect fees	5	8	1	10	-	-	24
Goods were damaged	-	3	-	-	2	-	7
Process not explained	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Process took too long	7	7	3	6	2	-	25
Pre-emptive	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total	12	19	4	17	4	0	56

Table 1. National CEF complaints within Cargo Division by region for April to June 2007
Note: Issues for Canberra are policy related

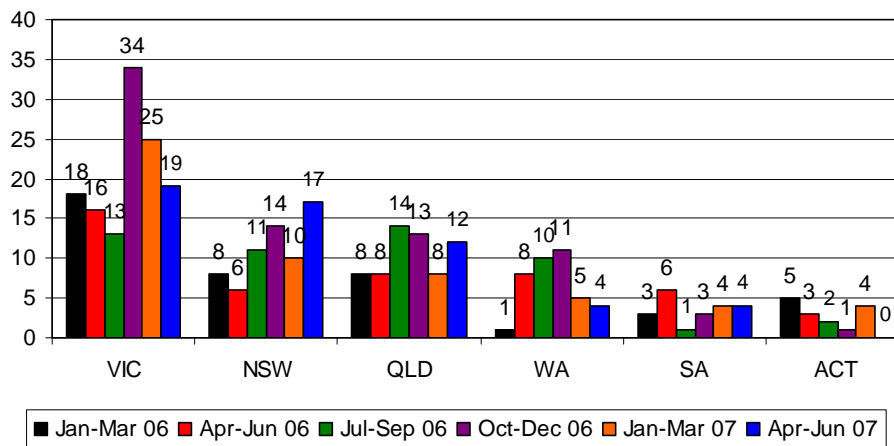


Figure 2. Comparison of Cargo Division CEF complaints by region for the previous six quarters

Issues	Melbourne	Sydney	Brisbane	Fremantle	Adelaide	Total
Always searched	6	5	3	1	1	16
Late barrier hold put in place	3	6	1	-	-	10
Total	9	11	4	1	1	26

Table 2. National CEF related complaints within Intelligence and Targeting Division by region for April to June 2007

A detailed breakdown of complaints (excluding policy related complaints responded to by Central Office) is:

Cargo Division CEF Complaints Only

**Intelligence & Targeting
Division, Industry
Engagement & User
Services and 'Other
Organisation' Complaints**

CEF Location	Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Melbourne	19	10,500	553
Sydney	17	10,467	616
Brisbane	12	9,357	780
Fremantle	4	5,385	1,346
Adelaide	4	355	89
Darwin	0	33	n/a
Total	56	36,097	564

<u>In Addition:</u> Number of 'CEF related' complaints classified to Intelligence and Targeting Division	<u>In Addition:</u> Number of 'CEF related' complaints classified to Industry Engagement and User Services	<u>In Addition:</u> Number of 'CEF related' complaints classified to Other Organisations
9	0	2
11	0	1
4	1	0
1	0	2
1	0	0
0	0	0
26	1	5

Table 3. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs² inspected for April to June 2007

Table 4: Number of CEF related complaints for April to June 2007

**Total of All CEF Related Complaints
(A Summary of Tables 2 and 3)**

CEF Location	Total Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Melbourne	29	10,500	362
Sydney	29	10,467	361
Brisbane	17	9,357	550
Fremantle	7	5,385	769
Adelaide	5	355	71
Darwin	0	33	n/a
Total	88	36,097	352

Table 5. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs² inspected for April to June 2007 (excluding Canberra)

Compliments

From December 2002 to March 2007, since the first CEF was established, **34** compliments have been received for CEF operations. During this time Customs has examined **521,594 TEU**.

Note:

1. The industry standard is to record container statistics in twenty foot equivalent (TEU) unit terms rather than the actual number of containers. Most international containers are either 20 ft (1 TEU) or 40 ft (2 TEUs). On average, the number of containers is equivalent to 75 per cent of the number of TEUs, e.g. 750 containers is equivalent to 1000 TEU.
2. The above TEU figures include import and export containers.
3. The official CEF complaints are shown in Table 3 and relate to specific CEF sites. We have also attached related complaints that are recorded elsewhere as the responsibility of different work areas or organizations, e.g. Intelligence & Targeting Division. These are included because, from the complainant's perspective, their complaints are about the CEF process in general, regardless of the specific area of Customs which has responsibility to respond.

Cargo Division

Customs Information and Support Centre (Industry Engagement and User Services Branch)

Complaints

During this quarter **13** complaints were recorded about the CI&SC, compared with **8** for the previous quarter.

The most common complaint related to being misinformed by Customs and not being provided with information about their container – both with **4**.

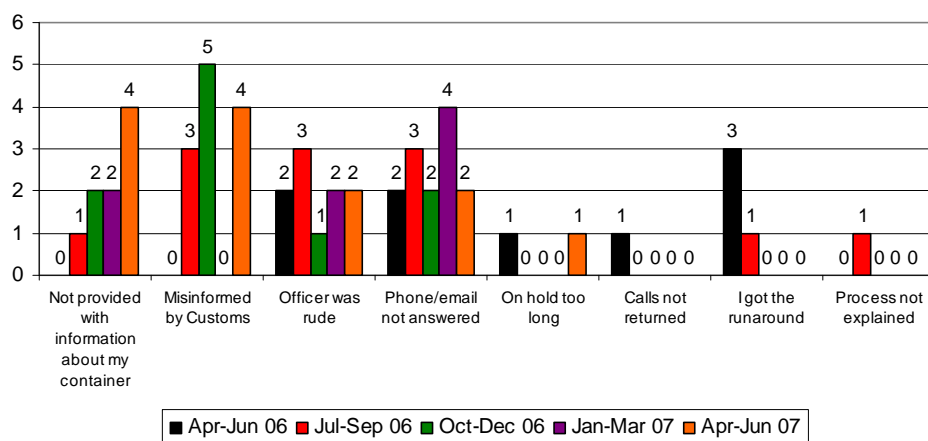


Figure 1. Comparison of the main CI&SC complaints for the previous five quarters

During the quarter **129,217** enquiries were dealt with by the CI&SC.

The number of complaints received was **13** during the June quarter which is **1** complaint for every **9,230** enquiries. See Table 2 below.

Month	Number of Complaints Received	Number of Phone Enquiries Received	Number of Email Enquiries Received	Number of Fax Enquiries Received	Total Number of Enquiries Received	Number of Enquiries for Every Complaint
April	5	35,435	3,643	109	39,187	7,837
May	7	46,494	3,457	104	50,055	6,642
June	1	36,675	3,264	36	39,975	39,975

Table 1. Number of complaints lodged at the CI&SC compared to the number of calls received for April to June 2007

Compliments

The CI&SC received **23** compliments this quarter (compared to **20** which last quarter). **12** of the compliments related to officers being helpful.

Postal Operations

(Cargo Operations Branch)

During this quarter **53** complaints were recorded about Postal Operations, compared with **34** for the previous quarter. See Table 1 for details.

Complaints

Issue	Jan-Mar 07	Apr-Jun 07
Process took too long	6	14
Didn't expect duty/tax	3	10
Goods were missing	4	6
Goods were seized	2	5
Goods were damaged	9	4
I got the runaround	2	3
Goods not repacked properly	3	2
Goods were withheld	0	2
Unhappy with selection	3	2
Calls not returned	0	1
Didn't expect fees	0	1
Documentation	0	1
Officer was rude	1	1
Process not explained	0	1
Total	34	53

*Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally by Postal Operations by issue.
Comparative assessment: January to March 2007 to April to June 2007*

Compliments

Postal Operations received **9** compliments this quarter (compared to **5** last quarter) - **4** in both New South Wales and Victoria, and **1** in Queensland .

Integrated Cargo Systems

(Industry Engagement and User Services Branch)

In early October 2005 Customs new Cargo Integrated System (ICS) went live. The rate of complaints has decreased markedly since October 2005 (188):

ICS Complaints

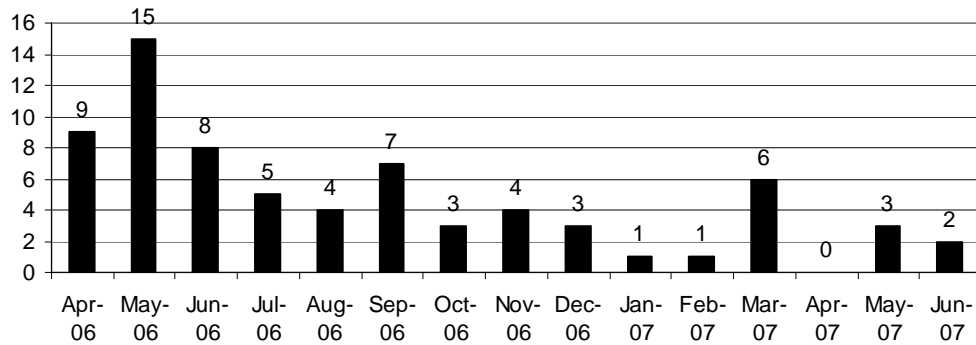


Figure 1. Number of ICS complaints received during April to June 2007

The reason for complaints in the June quarter were:

Issue	Jul-Sep 06	Oct-Dec 06	Jan-Mar 07	Apr-Jun 07
Digital Certificates	0	0	0	2
Process took too long	0	1	0	1
System Down	1	0	0	1
System Too Slow	4	2	0	1
Doesn't work	0	1	4	0
Implementation	0	1	2	0
Didn't expect fees	8	3	1	0
Poor Design	3	2	1	0
Total	16	10	8	5

Table 1. Number of complaints received during the last four quarters by complaint issue

ICS Compliments

During the quarter **2** compliments were received regarding an officer being professional.

Issue – ‘Officer was rude’

‘Officer was rude’ was the third highest complaint in the quarter with **36** complaints nationally (**43** for the previous quarter).

Work Area	Jan-Mar 07	Apr-Jun 07
Passenger Enforcement	18	23
Passenger Compliance	12	5
CI&SC	2	2
Client Services	1	2
Postal Operations	1	1
Enquiry Counter	0	1
Property Management	0	1
TRS	4	1
Air Cargo Examination	1	0
Air Cargo Operations	1	0
DDU	1	0
Import clearance	1	0
Liaison	1	0
Total	43	36

Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally for ‘Officer was rude’ by work area. Comparative assessment: January to March 2007 and April to June 2007

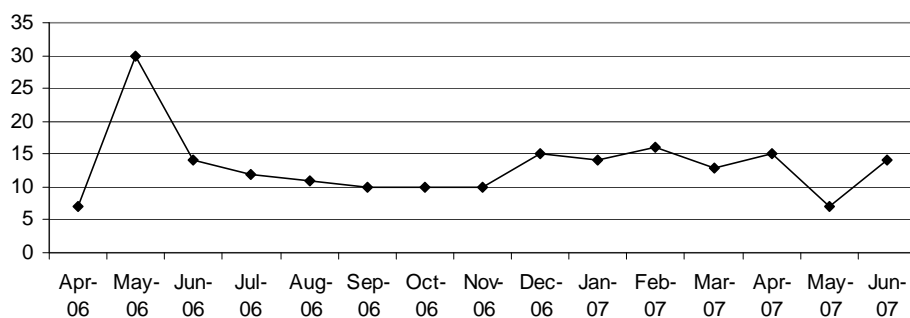
Officer was rude

Chart 1. Line graph of complaints received for ‘Officer was rude’ in Passengers Division by month from April to June 2007

**Improvements Partially or Fully
Resulting From the CCMS for 06/07 Financial Year**

Central Office –

- Late Sea Cargo Status Changes - Customs has put in place national guidelines to ensure consistency:
 - in the management of late sea cargo status changes,
 - implemented procedures for notification to the broker when a Customs hold results in a late sea cargo status change, and
 - developed procedures in relation to complaints and or enquiries relating to late status changes.

Customs has worked with industry on the development of these procedures - especially in relation to broker notification. Customs now has a national and consistent approach to an issue that was a cause of many complaints during 2006.

New South Wales –

- Complaints for the Customs Information & Support Centre (CI&SC) has provided the opportunity for staff and management to review their approach and confirm the proper procedures are being undertaken. It has also reaffirmed the need to provide 110% effort in our professionalism, attitude and accuracy of the information and service they provide.
- Cargo Services has put in place a daily roster for staff of the Prohibitions & Restrictions NSW area to regularly monitor and process the ICS Export Task 'To Do' list, it is the responsibility of the designated officer rostered to complete the duty until 1700hrs (Mon-Fri). Any export tasks after this time escalates to the Match Evaluators Intelligence, NSW for action.
- Cargo Services has highlighted areas within the ICS Imports where monitoring improvements of the Alert/Profile Matches 'To Do' Task List can be undertaken.
- Three Cargo Risk Assessment enhancements have been proposed and are currently under consideration for implementation.
- Detained Goods Management (DGM) are working on the review of their standard correspondence relating to seizures - however this has only just commenced.

Victoria -

- Technical advice was sought from a registered objector to confirm goods as counterfeit. Due to delays in procedures, the owner of the goods was delayed in being advised of their status. The practice now is to contact the registered objector immediately and seize the goods.

- All programmers have been reminded of the client service charter obligations and to immediately notify the supervisor or manager when a likelihood exists of not being able to respond within the necessary timeframe.
- Client Services - A 'Redline' documents drop off box has been installed.
- CEF - a spreadsheet to monitor progress and outcomes of complaints has been created.
- The creation of the Cargo Movement Cell and clarification of the definition of late holds - certain status within 24 hours or the CMC will contact the broker re the change in status.
- The policy decision to not require reporters to provide consignee information on the CR where a full SAC or FID is going to be lodged.

Melbourne Airport –

- Review of signage in the inwards immigration area and around the carousel.
- Officer behaviour and professionalism has been listed as regular agenda items in team briefings for officers in the examination area.

Queensland –

- CEF - Improvements to the secondary 'hold status check process' have been put in place which requires Team Leaders to check the ICS status of containers returned to the wharf after scanning / examination. This process is now also conducted at the end of each shift with the intent of minimising the occurrence of holds remaining in place where Customs has no further interest in the container.
- Postal Operations - Changes to the document retention process for goods subject to revenue assessments have been implemented. Previously, examining officers completed a record of examination sheet for items subject to revenue assessment, which was only retained until such time as an invoice was generated in QSP. This led to some difficulty in reconciling the assessment process for tobacco goods. Record of examination sheets for revenue goods are now retained, which enables effective re-assessment of the decision making process for consignments subject to client query.
- Waterfront Brisbane moved onto shift in preparation for MCV implementation which occurred on 1st July 2007. At the same time, in recognition of the need to increase communication to yachts, a dedicated Smallcraft officer position was created. This has improved and clarified Customs requirements in relation to cruise permits and associated policy and legislation, allowing yachts to better understand the processes required.

Brisbane Airport –

- Airlines are reminded that they must have adequate stocks of Inwards Passenger Cards in various languages for passengers to reduce the number of delays at the Entry Control Point.
- More focus has been placed on signage and brochures at the Outwards Control Point hoping to reduce the number of residents who exceed the passenger concessions and have items seized.
- A Customs Officer has been permanently stationed at the 'Duty Collector' bay to answer any queries/complaints.
- Brisbane Airport Corporation Limited have provided 'Ambassadors' to assist with directing passengers in the baggage retrieval area.

Western Australia –

- Compliance – due to a container incurring additional wharf charges when goods were left for a long time with an incorrect Customs hold due to a deficiency in the ICS system. A process improvement put in place by the local Redline working out ways to minimise any future recurrences.

CCMS Quarterly Report Feedback Form

If you have any comments on this report please fill out the form below (replace the appropriate box with an X) and email it to either the CCMS National Coordinator (Roni Giacobetti) or to [ACS Complaints & Compliments] or forward it by facsimile on 02 6275 8099.

Layout

The current layout is easy to read Yes Average No

The graphs are easy to understand Yes Average No

The tables are easy to understand Yes Average No

Content

The content:

Contains valuable information Yes Average No

Tells me what I need to know Yes Average No

Statistics

There are too many numbers Yes Average No

More analytical text is required Yes Average No

If yes, please provide an example of what you would like to have included in the next report:

Other Comments

I would like to see the following alterations made to the next report:
