



Complaints and Compliments
National Quarterly Report
January to March 2007

This is the first report that reflects the new Customs structure.

Where applicable statistics have been historically adjusted to reflect the new structure.

If you have any suggestions to improve it please complete the 'CCMS Quarterly Report Feedback Form' located at the end of this report. It can be forwarded to fax number 46 8099.

- 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 Director Corporate Planning (46 5706).

Introduction

This report provides statistical data for complaints and compliments received during the period January to March 2007. All statistical data included in this report was extracted on 18 April 2007. Where appropriate, comparative tables and graphs are provided for previous reporting periods.

Executive summary

Complaints

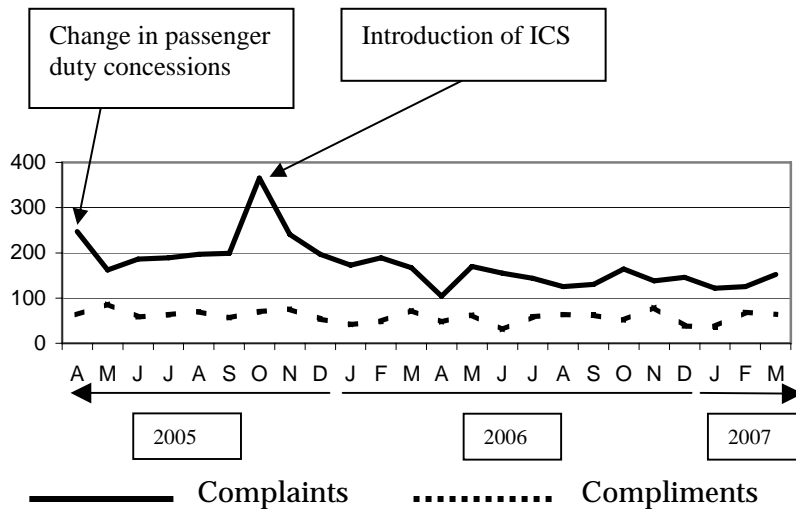


Figure 1. National trends for complaints and compliments from April 2005 to March 2007 by month

A total number of **399** complaints, excluding referrals, were reported compared with **448** in the previous quarter.

The top four complaint issues were:

- **Didn't expect duty or tax (44):** These complaints occurred primarily in Passengers Division (Passenger Enforcement Branch) (**35**) and related to passenger concessions (see Annex A).
- **Officer was rude (43):** This occurred **35** times in Passengers Division, **18** of which were in Passenger Enforcement Branch and **12** in Passenger Compliance Branch (see Annex A).
- **Process took too long (40):** Of these complaints, **32** occurred in Cargo Division (Cargo Operations Branch), **19** related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B) and **6** related to Postal Operations (see Annex C).
- **Didn't Expect Fees (30):** Most complaints (**27**) occurred in Cargo Division (Cargo Operations Branch) and **25** related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B).

In addition to the above, Customs referred **83** complaints to other agencies.

Significant variations in the December 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' decreased nationally from **57** to **40**. This complaint largely relates to Cargo Division (**32**) (Cargo Operations Branch), specifically the Container Examination Facilities (**19**). The decrease mainly occurred in Melbourne (see Annex B).

'Goods were missing'

The complaint 'Goods were missing' decreased nationally from **20** to **8**. The decrease largely occurred in Cargo Division (Cargo Operations Branch) in the Container Examination Facilities (**6-1**) and Postal Operations (**9-4**).

'Didn't expect duty/tax'

The complaint 'Didn't expect duty/tax' decreased nationally from **53** to **44**. **35** of these complaints were for Passengers Division and related to passenger concessions (see Annex A). The decrease largely occurred in Cargo Division, Cargo Operations Branch, specifically in Postal Operations (**11-3**).

'Unhappy with selection'

The complaint 'Unhappy with selection' increased nationally from **4** to **13**. The increase occurred largely in Passengers Division, Passenger Enforcement Branch from (**4-10**) (see Annex A).

Compliments

A total number of **170** compliments were reported about Customs compared with **185** in the previous quarter. The top three compliments were:

- "Officer/s was helpful" (**55**),
- "Appreciated assistance" (**34**), and
- "Officer/s was professional" (**18**).

In addition to the above, Customs referred **1** compliment to another agency.

1. National Trends

1.1 National Trends by Division (excluding referrals)

Complaints

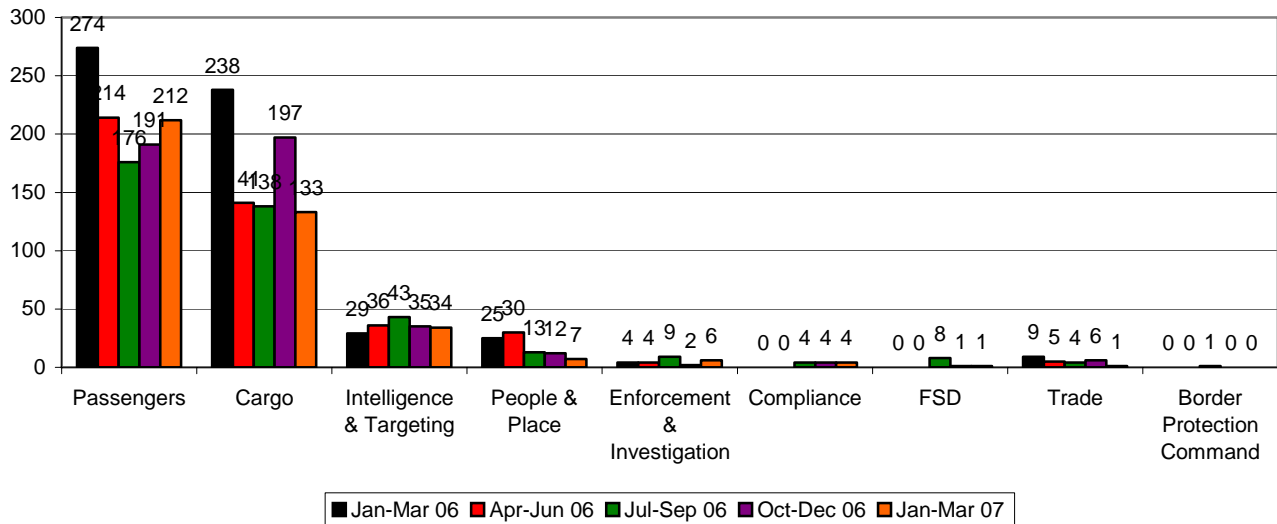


Figure 4. Total number of complaints for divisions comparing the last five quarters

Note – Enforcement and Investigation includes complaints for District Offices

Compliments

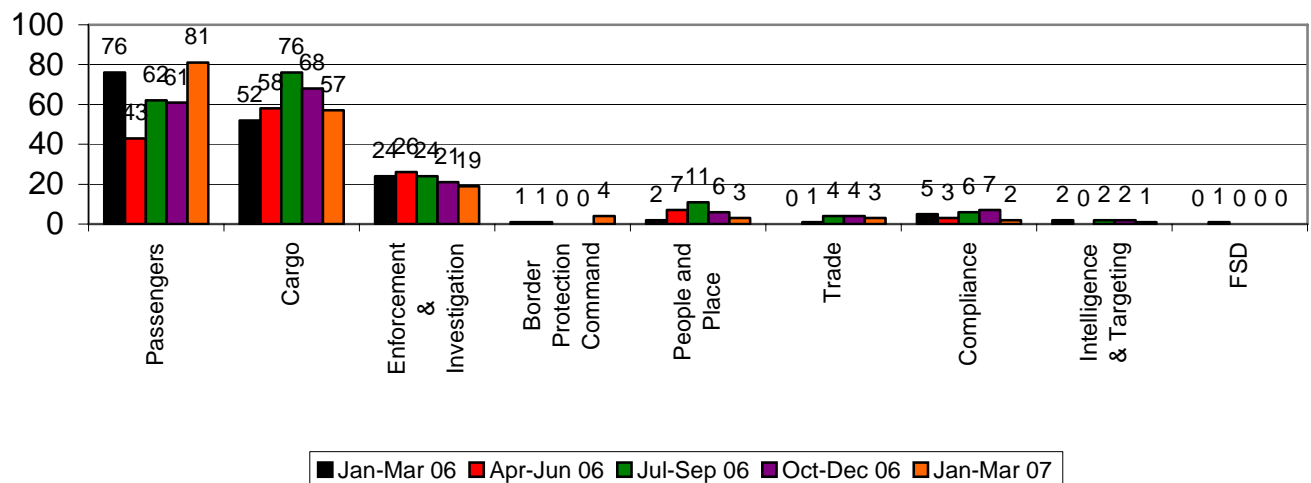


Figure 5. The trend in compliments for the four larger divisions comparing the last five quarters

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.

1.2 National Trends by Region (excluding referrals)

Complaints

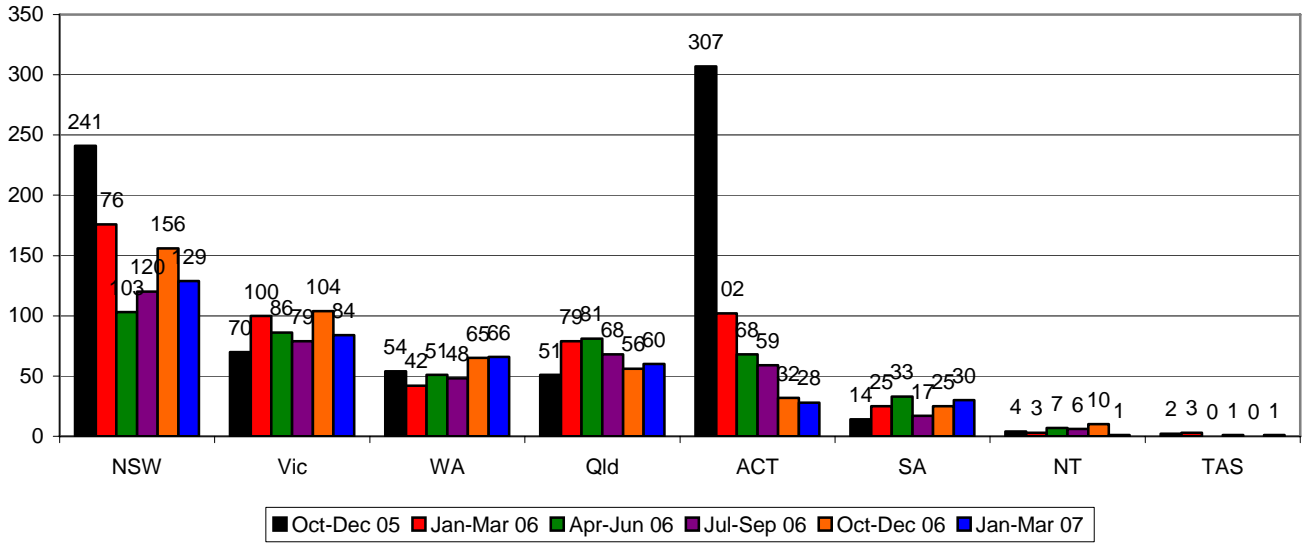


Figure 2. Total number of complaints by region comparing each quarter from October-December 2005 to January-March 2007

Compliments

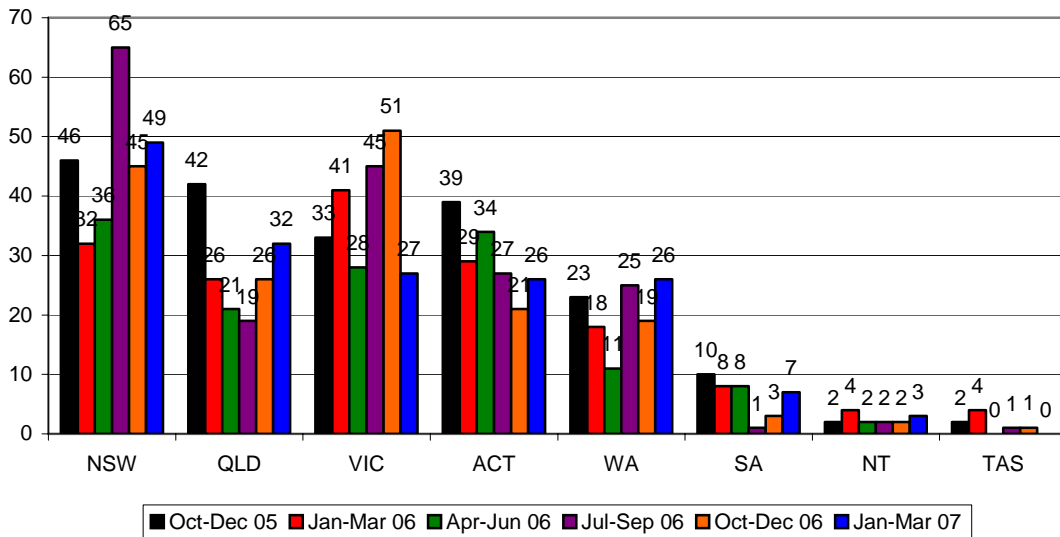


Figure 3. Total number of compliments by region comparing each quarter from October-December 2005 to January-March 2007

2. Type of Complaint

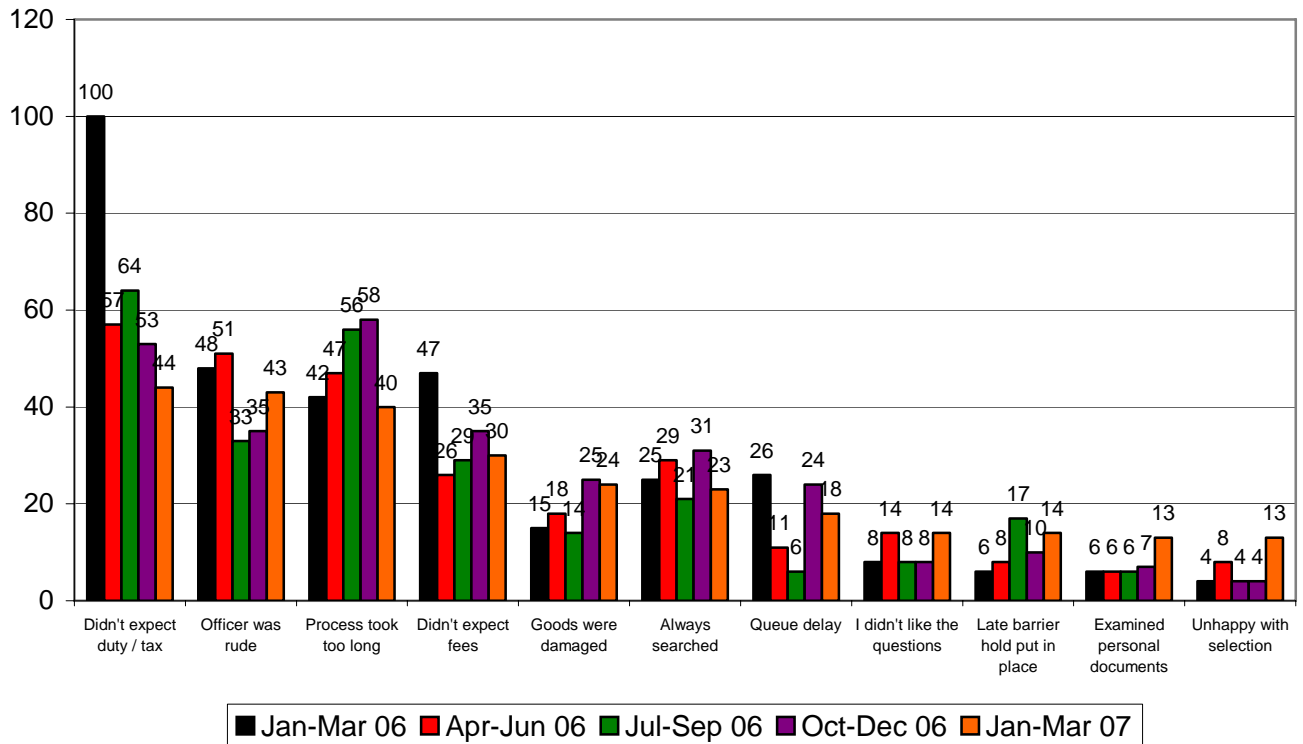


Figure 6. National Top 10 Complaints (excluding referrals) for the last four quarters

A total number of **399** complaints were made for this quarter (excluding referrals). This compares to **448** for the previous quarter and represents a **10.9%** decrease.

3. Type of Compliment

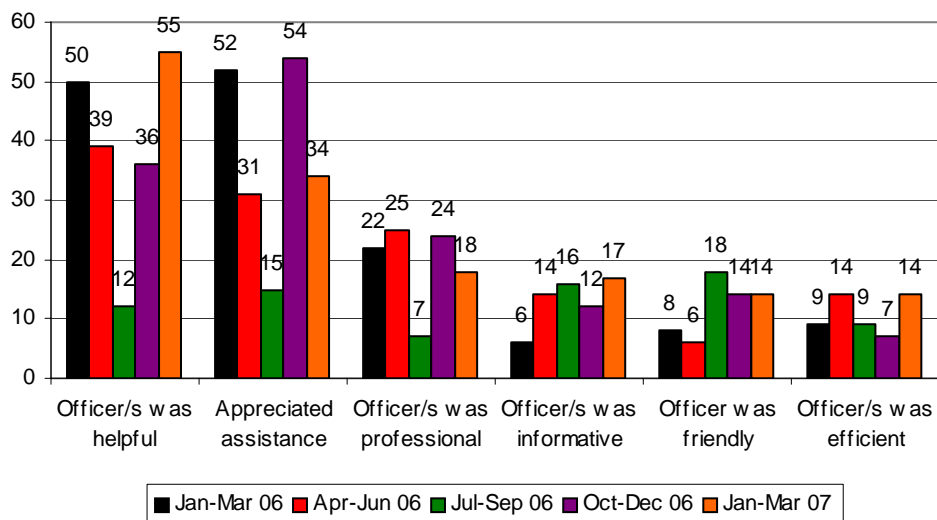


Figure 7. National top 5 compliments (excluding referrals) for the last five quarters

A total of **170** compliments (excluding referrals) were registered for this quarter. This compares to **169** for the previous quarter and represents a **0.6%** increase.

The top three compliment issues were:

- **Officer/s was helpful (55):** Cargo Division received this compliment most frequently with **(31)**, **17** of which were for Information Engagement and User Services.
- **Appreciated assistance (34):** Passengers Division received this compliment most frequently **(20)**, **9** of which occurred in Sydney (see Annex A).
- **Officer was professional (18):** Passengers Division received this compliment most frequently **(7)** (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 **83** complaints and **1** compliment. The main agencies receiving referrals were AQIS **(41)**, Australia Post **(17)**, Security Operators **(6)**, and Airport Operators **(5)**.

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 **9.96** working days reported in the previous quarter has *increased* to **9.97** working days.

The average compliment resolution time of **1.07** working days reported in the previous quarter has *increased* to **1.67** working days.

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

Out of a total of **653** cases received, **25** cases opened during the March quarter did not meet the 15 working day benchmark (**3.83%**). 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 (**326**), phone (including the 1800 number) (**122**), brochure (**76**), letter/fax (**67**), remote entry (**48**) and Ministerial/Ombudsman (**14**).

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:

- 1800 228227/phone (increased from **119** to **122**),
- email (increased from **319** to **326**),
- brochure (decreased from **92** to **76**).
- Ministerial/Ombudsman (decreased from **21** to **14**)
- letter or fax (decreased from **75** to **67**),
- remote entry (decreased from **51** to **48**).

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:

Name: Ben Hickey, Director, Corporate Planning, 02 6275 5706

Email: ben.hickey@customs.gov.au

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 **212** (excluding referrals) during this quarter (compared to **191** in the previous quarter) which is equivalent to 1 complaint for every **27,364** passengers arriving in, or departing from, Australia. This compares with one complaint for every **30,528** passengers in the October to December 2006 quarter.

During the period 1 January to 31 March 2007 **5,801,197** 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	66	1,353,965	1,283,752	39,965
Melbourne	40	634,461	571,038	30,137
Brisbane	27	508,603	467,312	36,145
Perth	50	310,879	274,861	11,715
Total	183	2,807,908	2,596,963	29,535

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

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

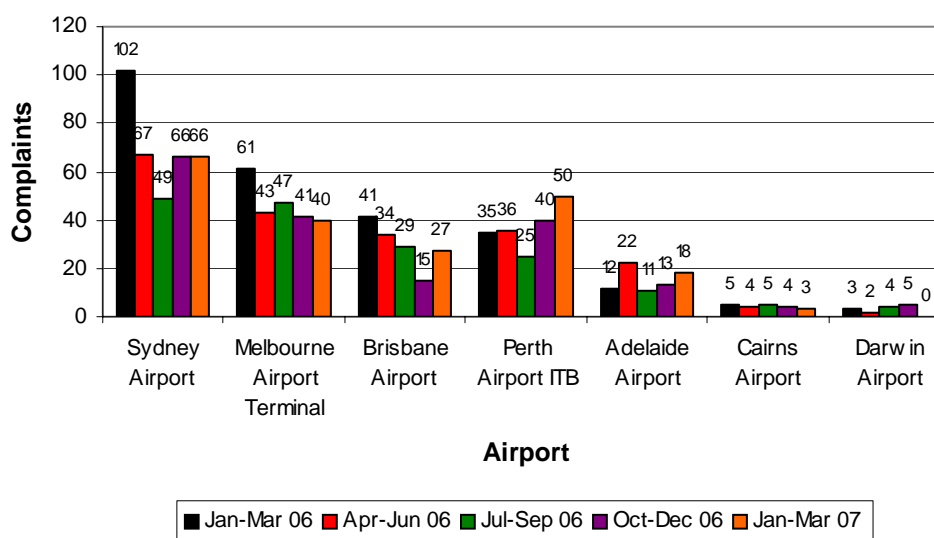


Figure 1. Passenger Complaints at each Airport for January - March 2006, April - June 2006, July - September 2006, October - December 2006 and January - March 2007

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

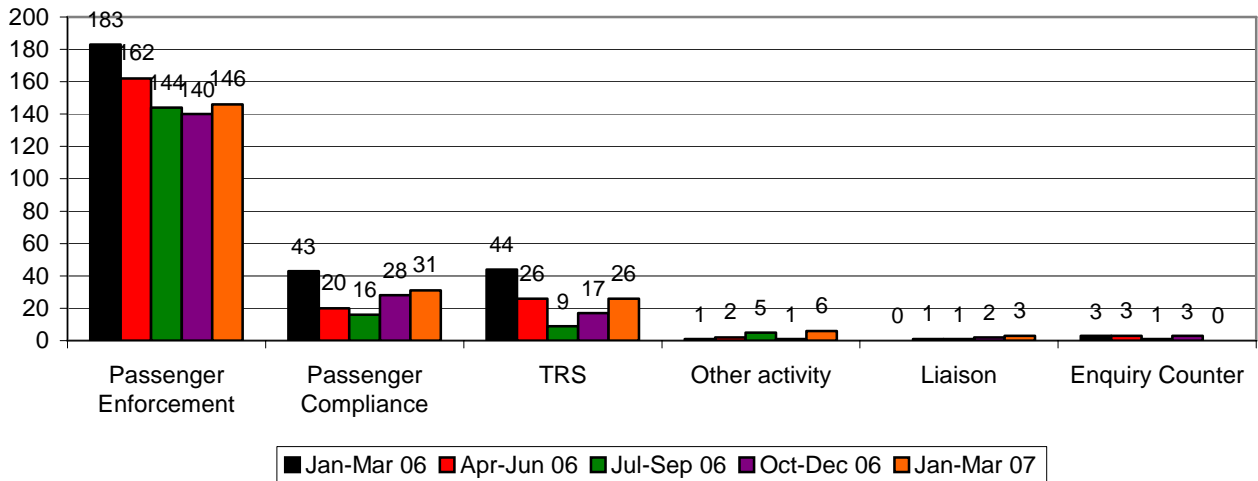


Figure 2. Passengers complaints - comparative assessment by region for January – March 2006, April – June 2006, July – September 2006, October – December 2006 and January – March 2007

The increase in complaints mainly concerned:

Passenger Enforcement: up from **140** to **146**. The main increase was Queue related (**18**, up from **12** during the previous quarter).

TRS: up from **17** to **26**.

Passenger Concessions

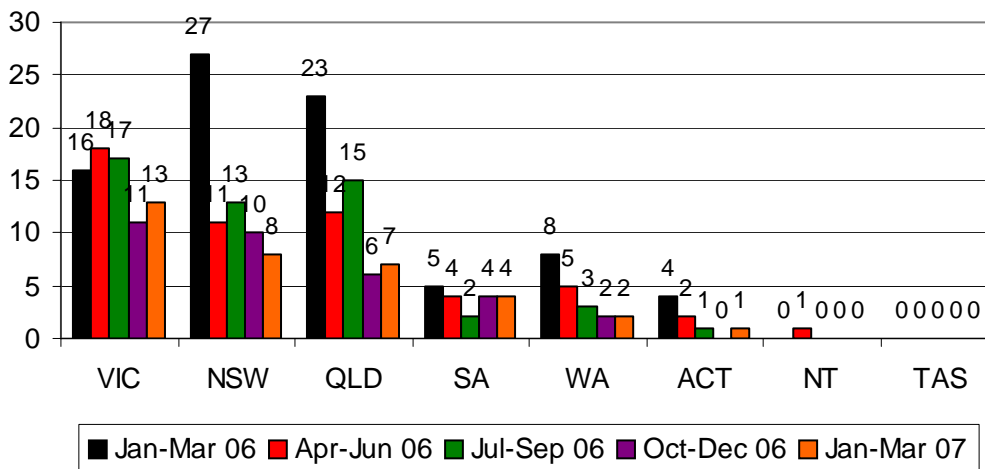


Figure 3. Passenger concessions complaints - comparative assessment by region for January – March 2006, April – June 2006, July – September 2006, October – December 2006 and January – March 2007

Compliments

There were **81** compliments for Passengers during this quarter, an increase from **61** during the previous quarter.

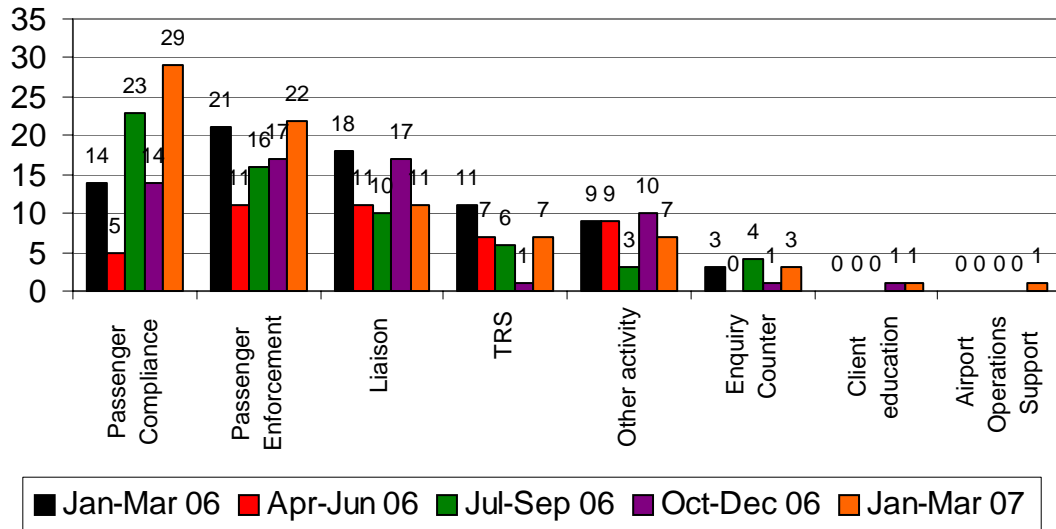


Figure 4. Passenger compliments - comparative assessment for January - March 2006, April - June 2006, July - September 2006, October - December 2006 and January - March 2007

Annex B

Container Examinations

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

CEF related complaints have *decreased* from **105** to **95** during the March quarter.

The **95** CEF related complaints consist of **56** Cargo Division complaints, **34** Intelligence & Targeting Division complaints, as well as **4** classified to CTO/Wharf/Stevedores and Brokers, and **1** classified to AQIS.

During the quarter Customs inspected **33,631 TEU**. This is equivalent to **1** complaint for every **354 TEU** (previous quarter was **321 TEU**).

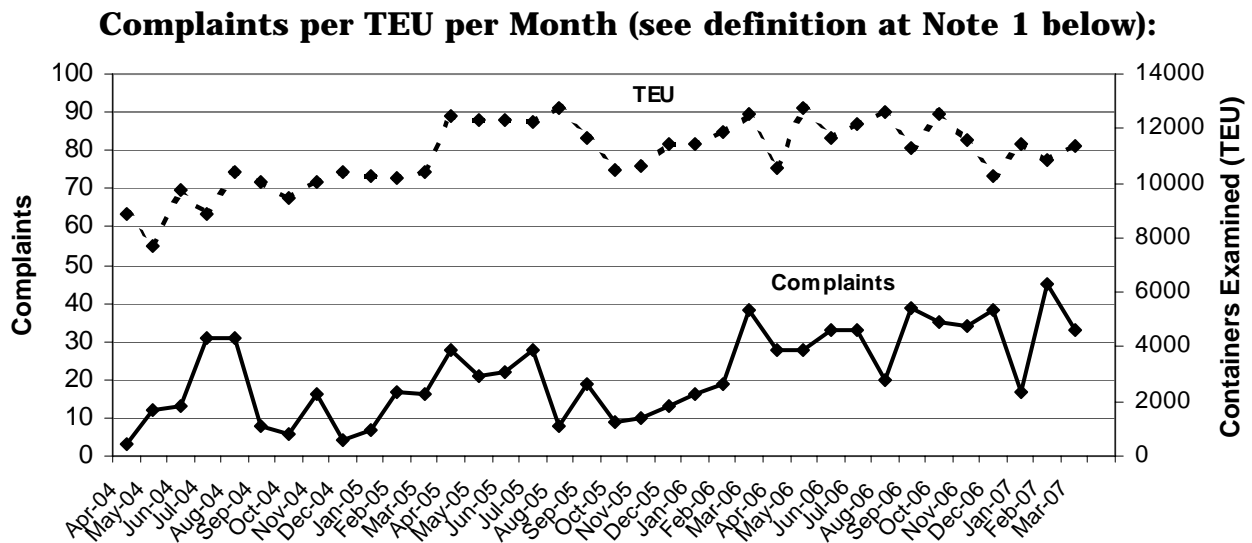


Figure 1. Trend of complaints against TEU x-rayed by Customs since April 04

The decrease in complaints during this quarter occurred largely in Victoria and Western Australia, each with a reduction of **8** complaints.

Of the total **95** complaints, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**25**) - an increase from **23** during the last quarter.

Issue: “Always searched” (**20**) - the same as for last quarter.

Issue: “Process took too long” (**19**) - a decrease from **32** during the last quarter.

The following table details CEF Cargo Division complaints registered for each CEF for the March quarter (**56** compared to **69** for last quarter). This is a *decrease* of **18.84%**. This table *excludes* complaints recorded against Intelligence & Targeting Division (see Table 2) and Other Organisations (CTO/Wharf/Stevedores, Brokers, AQIS).

Issues	Brisbane	Melbourne	Fremantle	Sydney	Adelaide	Canberra	Total
Didn't expect fees	3	15	3	4	-	-	25
Goods were damaged	2	-	-	1	4	-	7
Goods were not repacked	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Policy/ACN doesn't work - general	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Process not explained	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Process took too long	2	10	2	5	-	-	19
Goods were missing	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pre-emptive	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
3 days of storage free time is not enough	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	8	25	5	10	4	4	56

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

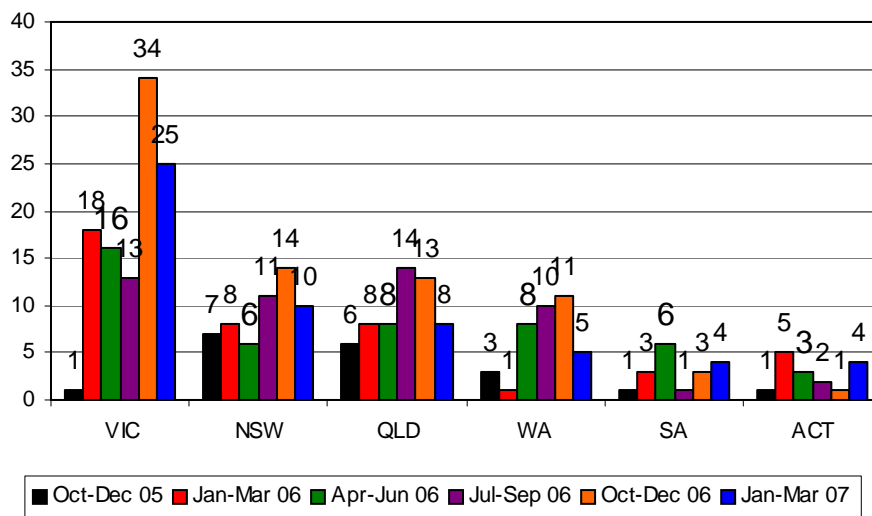


Figure 2. Comparison of Cargo Division CEF complaints by region for the previous six quarters

Issues	Melbourne	Sydney	Brisbane	Fremantle	Adelaide	Total
Always searched	5	4	8	3	0	20
Late barrier hold put in place	3	9	1	0	1	14
Total	8	13	9	3	1	34

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

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

Cargo Division CEF Complaints Only

CEF Location	Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Melbourne	25	9358	374
Sydney	10	9143	914
Brisbane	8	9683	1210
Fremantle	5	5042	1008
Adelaide	4	378	95
Darwin	0	27	n/a
Total	52	33,631	647

Table 3. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs² inspected for January to March 2007

Intelligence & Targeting Division and 'Other Organisation' Complaints

<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 Other Organisations
8	2
13	2
9	1
3	0
1	0
0	0
34	5

Table 4: Number of CEF related complaints for January to March 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	35	9358	267
Sydney	25	9143	366
Brisbane	18	9683	538
Fremantle	8	5042	630
Adelaide	5	378	76
Darwin	0	27	n/a
Total	91	33,631	370

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

Compliments

From December 2002 to March 2007, since the first CEF was established, **32** compliments have been received for CEF operations. During this time Customs has examined **485,497 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 **8** complaints were recorded about the CI&SC, compared with **11** for the previous quarter.

The most common complaint related to 'Phone/email not answered' (**4**). This *increased* from **2** during the previous quarter.

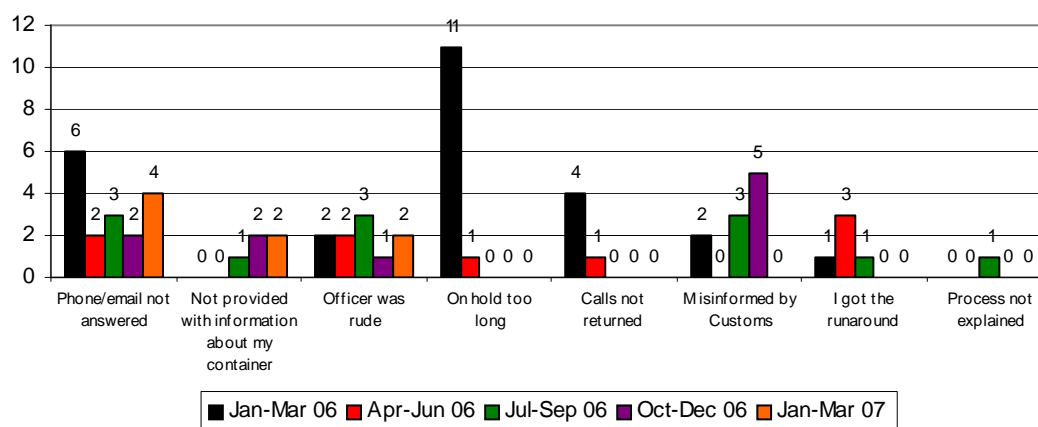


Figure 1. Comparison of the main CI&SC complaints for the previous five quarters

During the quarter **119,885** enquiries were dealt with by the CI&SC.

The number of complaints received was **8** during the March quarter which is **1** complaint for every **14,986** 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
January	3	37,223	2,756	119	40,098	13,366
February	3	34,825	3,585	123	38,533	12,844
March	2	37,307	3,805	112	41,224	20,612

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

Compliments

The CI&SC received **20** compliments this quarter (compared to **14** which last quarter). **12** of the compliments related to officers being helpful.

Postal Operations

(Cargo Operations Branch)

During this quarter **34** complaints were recorded about Postal Operations, compared with **61** for the previous quarter. See Table 1 for details.

Complaints

Issue	Oct-Dec 06	Jan-Mar 07
Goods were damaged	12	9
Process took too long	4	6
Goods were missing	9	4
Didn't expect duty/tax	11	3
Goods not repacked properly	3	3
Unhappy with selection	0	3
Goods were seized	5	2
I got the runaround	4	2
Officer was rude	2	1
Other	4	1
Always searched	1	0
Didn't expect fees	2	0
Facilities were inadequate	2	0
Goods were withheld	1	0
Signage	1	0
Total	61	34

Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally by Postal Operations by issue. Comparative assessment: October to December 2006 and January to March 2007

Compliments

Postal Operations received **5** compliments this quarter (the same as for the December quarter), **3** in Western Australia and **2** in Victoria (compared to **14** which last quarter).

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

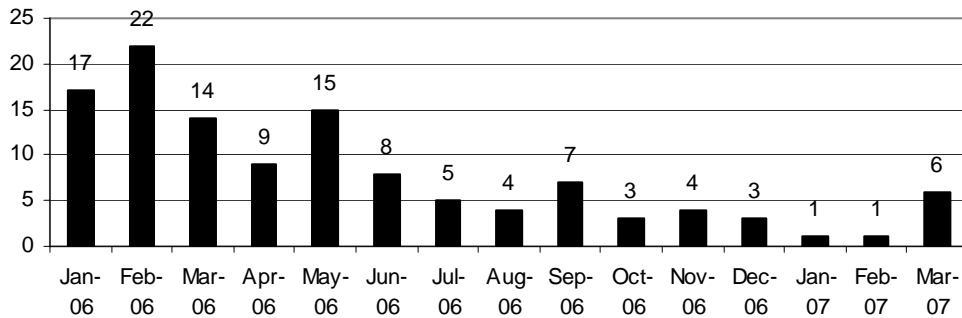


Figure 1. Number of ICS complaints received during January 06 to March 2007

The reason for complaints in the March quarter were:

Issue	Apr-Jun 06	Jul-Sep 06	Oct-Dec 06	Jan-Mar 07
Doesn't work	3	0	1	4
Implementation	1	0	1	2
Didn't expect fees	13	8	3	1
Poor Design	8	3	2	1
System Too Slow	1	4	2	0
System Down	1	1	0	0
Documentation	2	0	0	0
Self Assessed Clearance	2	0	0	0
Process took too long	1	0	1	0
Total	32	16	10	8

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

ICS Compliments

During the quarter **1** compliment was received regarding an officer being helpful.

Issue – ‘Officer was rude’

‘Officer was rude’ was the third highest complaint in the quarter with **43** complaints nationally (**35** for the previous quarter).

Work Area	Oct-Dec 06	Jan-Mar 07
Passenger Enforcement	15	18
Passenger Compliance	8	12
TRS	4	4
CI&SC	1	2
Air Cargo Examination	0	1
Air Cargo Operations	0	1
Client Services	0	1
Import clearance	0	1
DDU	0	1
Liaison	0	1
Postal Operations	2	1
Counter	2	0
Enquiry Counter	1	0
Other Activity	1	0
HR	1	0
Total	35	43

Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally for ‘Officer was rude’ by work area. Comparative assessment: October to December 2006 and January to March 2007

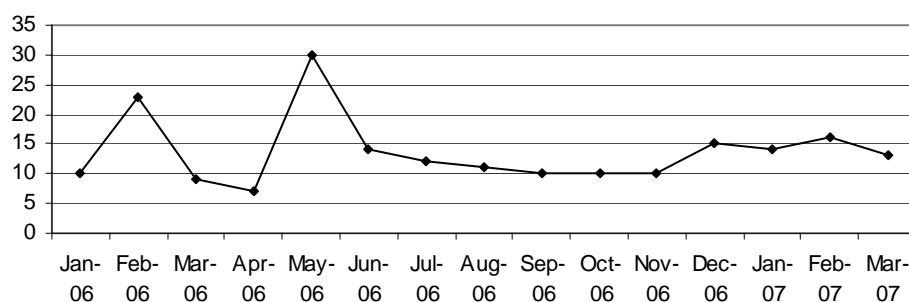
Officer was rude

Chart 1. Line graph of complaints received for ‘Officer was rude’ in Passengers Division by month from January 06 to March 2007

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:
