



Complaints and Compliments
National Quarterly Report
July to September 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 Manager Client Services / National Coordinator (46 6499).

Introduction

This report provides statistical data for complaints and compliments received during the period July to September 2007. All statistical data included in this report was extracted on 17 September 2007. Where appropriate, comparative tables and graphs are provided for previous reporting periods.

Executive summary

Complaints

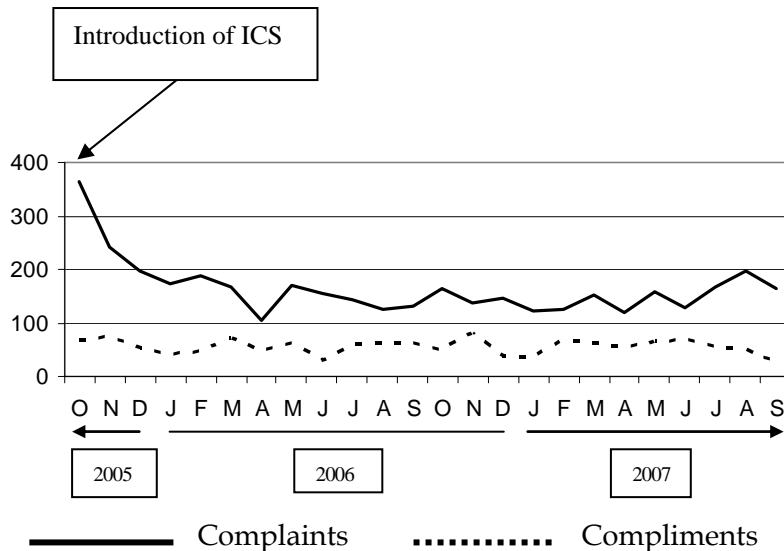


Figure 1. National trends for complaints and compliments from July 2005 to September 2007 by month

A total number of **528** complaints, excluding referrals, were reported compared with **405** in the previous quarter.

The top four complaint issues were:

- **Process took too long (105):** Of these complaints, **89** occurred in Cargo Division - **31** related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B) and **54** related to Postal Operations (see Annex C).
- **Didn't expect duty or tax (59):** These complaints occurred primarily in Passengers Division (**37**) and related to passenger concessions (see Annex A). **10** related to Postal Operations (see Annex C).
- **Didn't Expect Fees (47):** These complaints (**31**) largely occurred in Cargo Division - **28** of which related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B).
- **Officer was rude (48):** This occurred **33** times in Passengers Division, **26** of which were in Assessment and Response and **6** in Clearance (see Annex E).

In addition to the above, Customs referred **94** complaints to other agencies.

Significant variations in the September 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 57 to **105**. This complaint largely relates to Cargo Division (**89**), in both the Container Examination Facilities (**29** – up 2)(see Annex B) and Postal Operations (**54** – up 40)(see page 2 of Annex C).

'Didn't expect fees'

The complaint 'Didn't expect fees' increased nationally from 32 to **49**. The increase largely occurred in Cargo Division (**28** – the same as for the last quarter) and Intelligence and Targeting (**12** – up 12) (see Annex B).

'Didn't expect duty/tax'

The complaint 'Didn't expect duty/tax' increased nationally from 41 to **59**. The increase largely occurred in Passengers Division (**37** – up 14) (see Annex A) and Cargo Division (**19** – up 4).

'Goods were missing'

The complaint 'Goods were missing' increased nationally from 9 to **23**. The increase largely occurred in Passengers Division (**7** – up 6) (see Annex A) and Cargo Division (**15** – up 8) (see Annex C).

'Officer was rude'

The complaint 'Officer was rude' increased nationally from 36 to **48**. The increase occurred in Cargo Division (3 to **7**), Industry Engagement and User Services (2 to **6**) and Passengers Division (30 to **33**) (see Annex E).

'I didn't like the questions'

The complaint 'I didn't like the questions' decreased nationally from 17 to **6**. The decrease occurred largely at Sydney Airport (6 to **1**) and at Perth Airport (4 to **0**) (see Annex A).

Compliments

A total number of **132** compliments were reported about Customs compared with **189** in the previous quarter. The top three compliments were:

- "Officer/s was helpful" (**43** – down 11),
- "Appreciated assistance" (**34** - down 13), and
- "Officer/s was professional" (**14** – down 12).

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

1. National Trends

1.1 National Trends by Division (excluding referrals)

Complaints

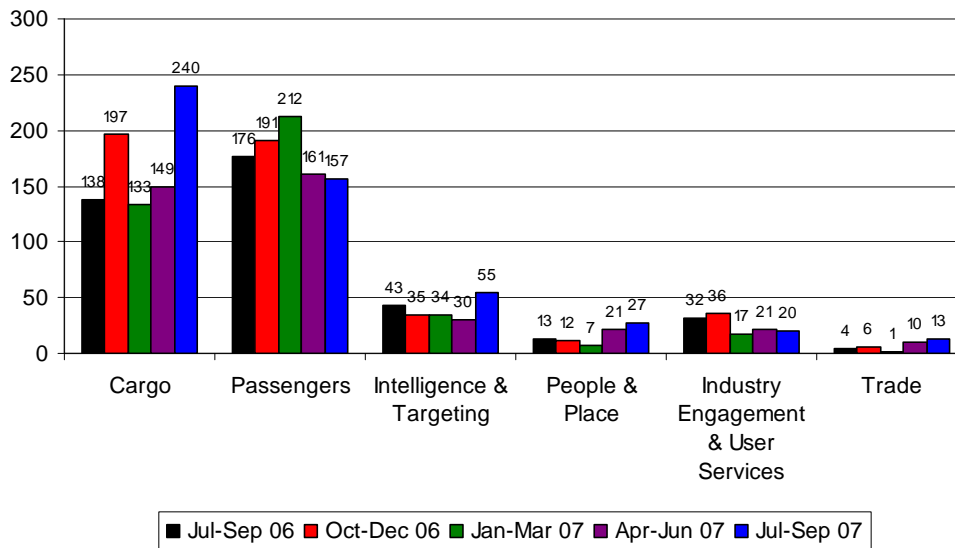


Figure 2. Total number of complaints for the top six divisions comparing the last five quarters

The increase in Cargo and Intelligence and Targeting complaints relates to both container examination and postal operations. For further information see Annexes B & C.

Compliments

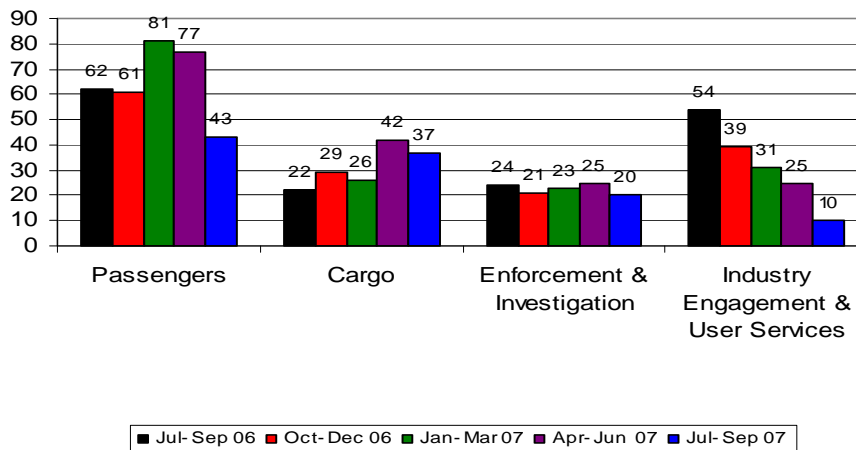


Figure 3. The trend in compliments for the four larger divisions comparing the last five quarters

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), Postal Operations, Customs Information and Support Centre (CI&SC), Integrated Cargo System (ICS) and the issue of 'rude officers' are provided in Annexes A-E.

National Trends by Region (excluding referrals)

Complaints

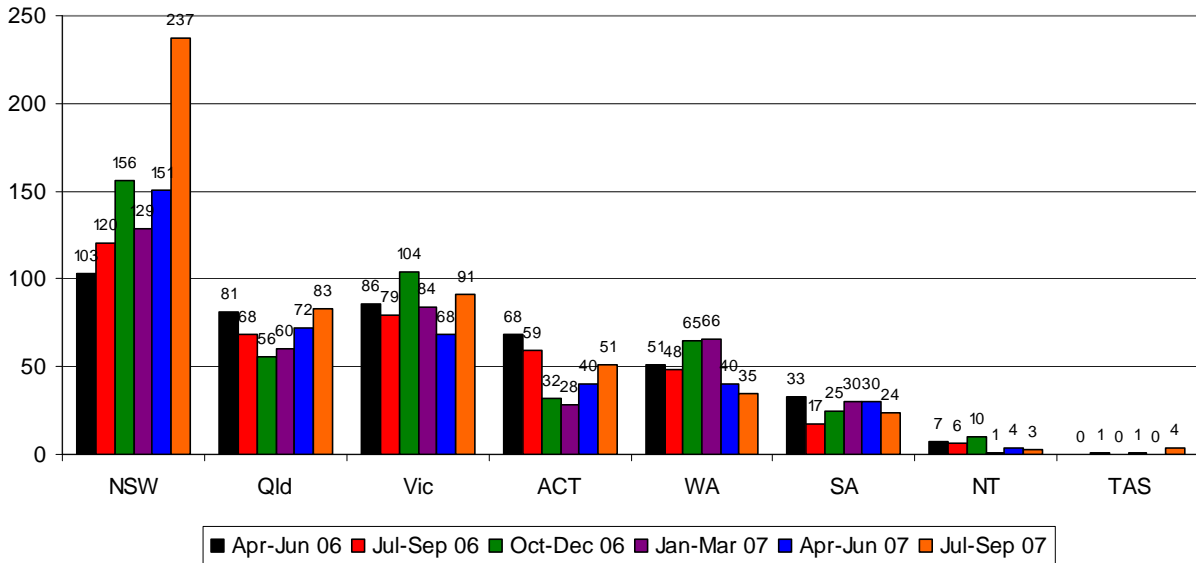


Figure 4. Total number of complaints by region comparing each quarter from April-June 2007 to July-September 2007

The increase in NSW complaints largely relates to container examination. For further information see Annex B.

Compliments

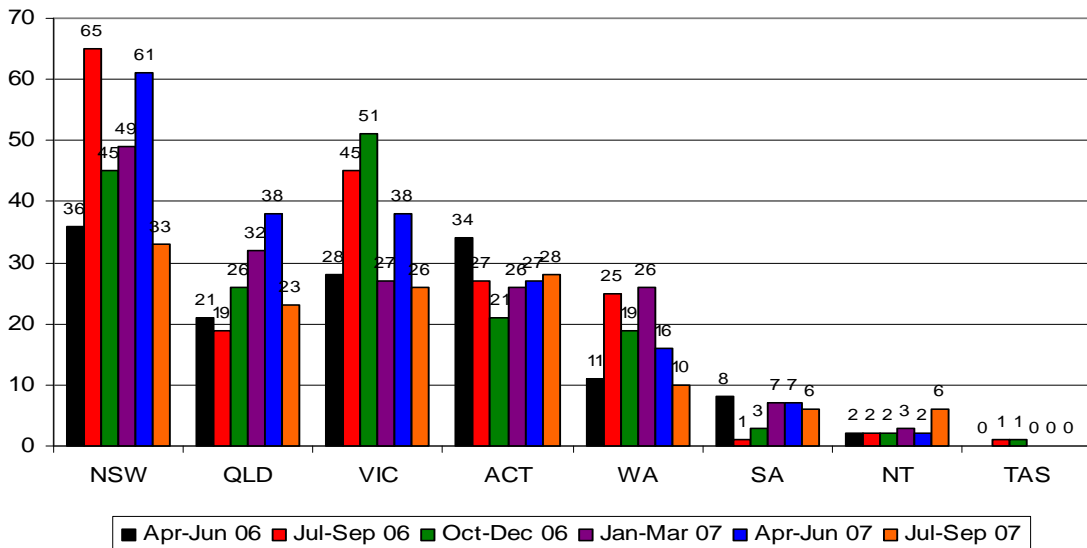


Figure 5. Total number of compliments by region comparing each quarter from April-June 2007 to July-September 2007

1. Type of Complaint

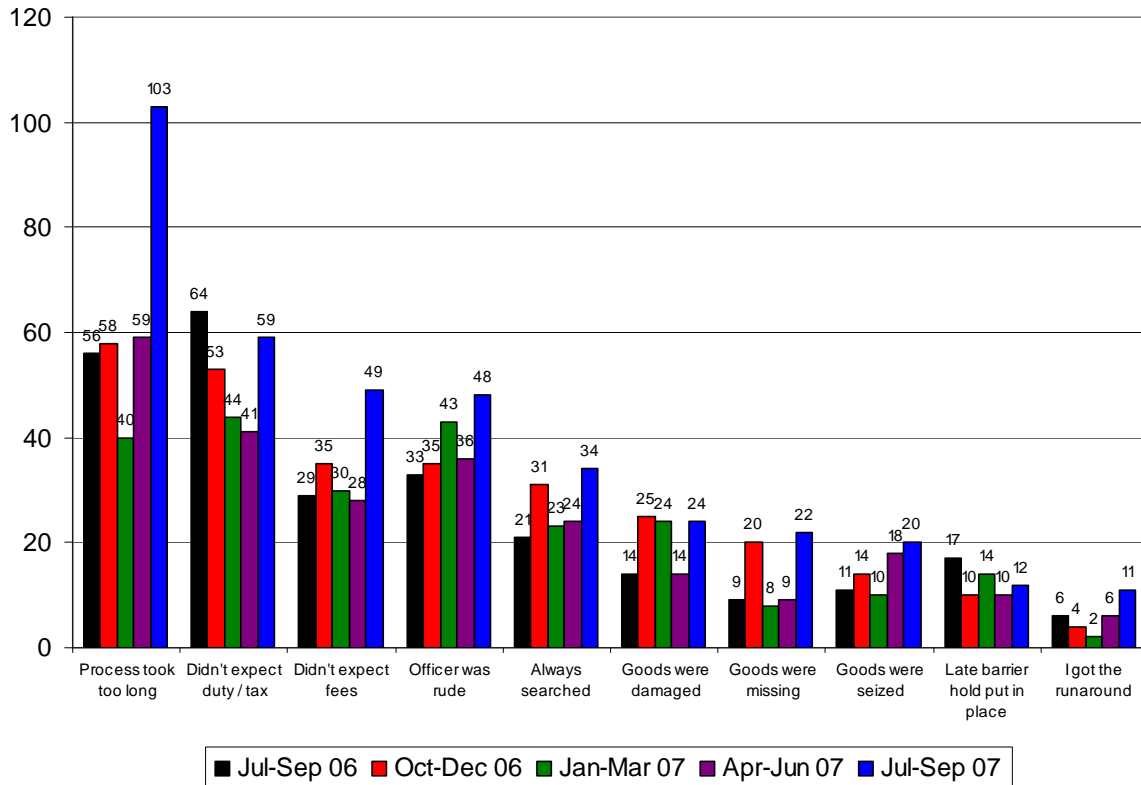


Figure 6. National Top 10 Complaints (excluding referrals) for the last four quarters

The complaint about 'Process took too long' largely relates to Postal Operations. For further information see Annex C.

A total number of **528** complaints were made for this quarter (excluding referrals). This compares to **405** for the previous quarter and represents a **30.37% increase**.

2. Type of Compliment

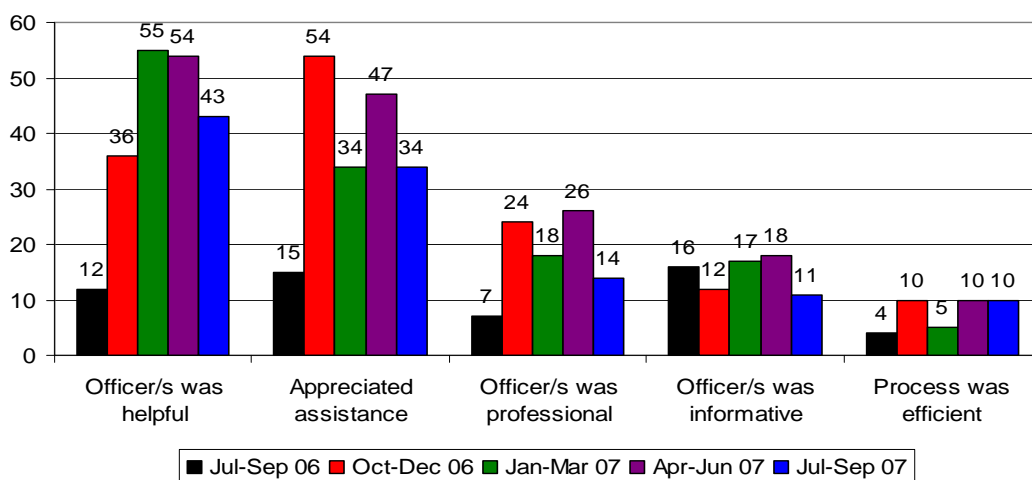


Figure 7. National top 5 compliments (excluding referrals) for the last five quarters

A total of **132** compliments (excluding referrals) were registered for this quarter. This compares to **189** for the previous quarter and represents a **30.16% decrease**.

The top three compliment issues were:

- **Officer/s was helpful (43):** Cargo Division received this compliment most frequently (**22**), followed by Passengers Division (**12**).
- **Appreciated assistance (34):** Enforcement and Investigation Division received this compliment most frequently (**15**)(for the National Marine Unit), followed by Passengers Division (**13**)(see Annex A).
- **Officer was professional (14):** Passengers Division and Cargo Division each received this compliment most frequently (**5**).

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 **95** complaints and **2** compliments. The main agencies receiving referrals were AQIS (**28**), DOTARS (**24**), Australia Post (**16**), and Security Operators (**8**).

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 **9.37** working days reported in the previous quarter has *increased* to **9.87** working days.

The average compliment resolution time of **1.06** working days reported in the previous quarter has *increased* to **1.46** working days.

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

Out of a total of **756** cases received, **74** cases opened during the September quarter did not meet the 15 working day benchmark (**9.79%**). The majority of cases which did not meet the benchmark were closed in less than 20 working days. Last quarter **3.89%** of cases did not meet this criteria.

6. How People Contact Us

The main methods for contacting Customs during this quarter were by email (**484**), phone (including the 1800 number) (**145**), and brochure (**50**).

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 **399** to **484**),
- 1800 228227/phone (increased from **126** to **145**),
- remote entry (decreased from **66** to **32**),
- brochure (decreased from **63** to **50**),
- letter or fax (increased from **46** to **62**),
- Ministerial/Ombudsman (increased from **19** to **33**).

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:

Name: Roni Giacobetti, Manager Client Service, 02 6275 6499
Email: roni.giacobetti@customs.gov.au

Passengers Division

Complaints

The number of complaints received nationally was **157** (excluding referrals) during this quarter (compared to **161** in the previous quarter) which is equivalent to 1 complaint for every **37,304** passengers arriving in, or departing from, Australia. This compares with one complaint for every **30,518** passengers in the April to June 2007 quarter.

During the period 1 July to 30 September 2007 **5,856,765** 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	64	1,300,710	1,262,164	40,045
Melbourne	31	589,715	568,627	37,366
Brisbane	22	534,237	532,622	48,494
Perth	16	322,642	294,010	38,541
Total	133	2,747,304	2,657,423	40,637

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

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

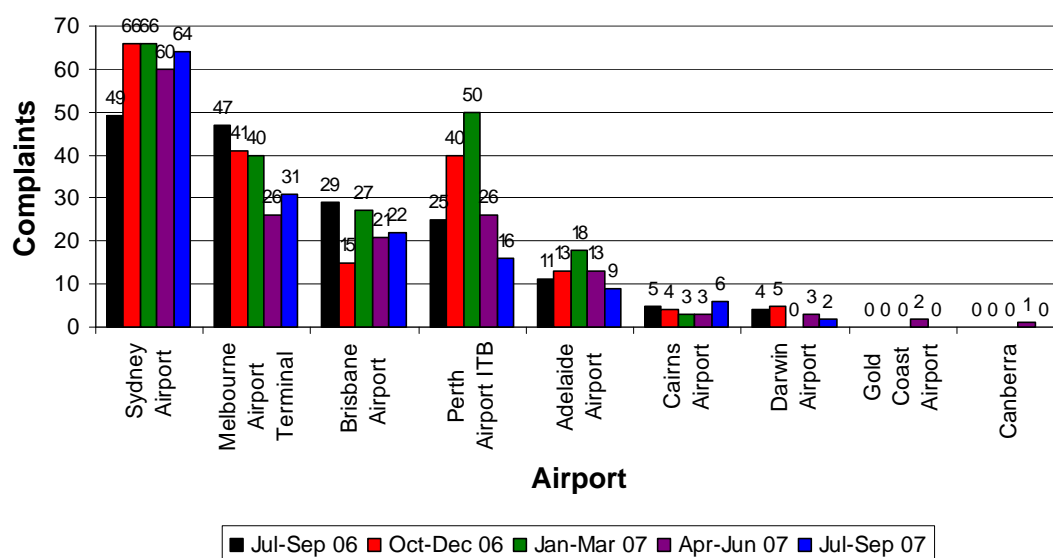


Figure 1. Passenger Complaints at each Airport for the last five quarters.

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

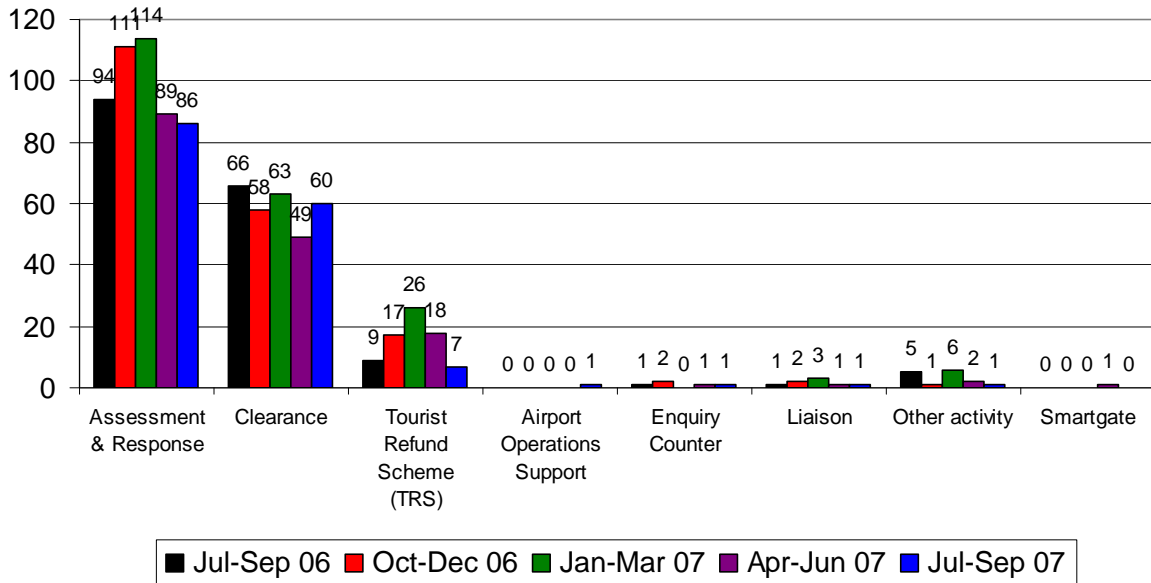


Figure 2. Passengers complaints - comparative assessment by region for the last five quarters.

TRS: down from **18** to **6**.

Passenger Concessions

Passenger concessions complaints were **37** this quarter, up from **23** last quarter.

Passenger concessions complaints by Region:

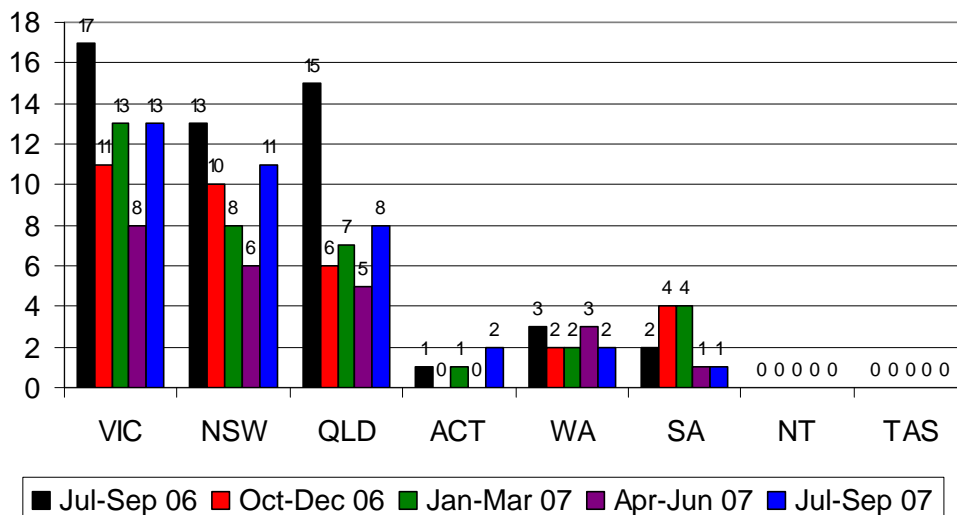


Figure 3. Passenger concessions complaints - comparative assessment by region for the last five quarters.

Compliments

There were **43** compliments for Passengers during this quarter, a decrease from **77** during the previous quarter.

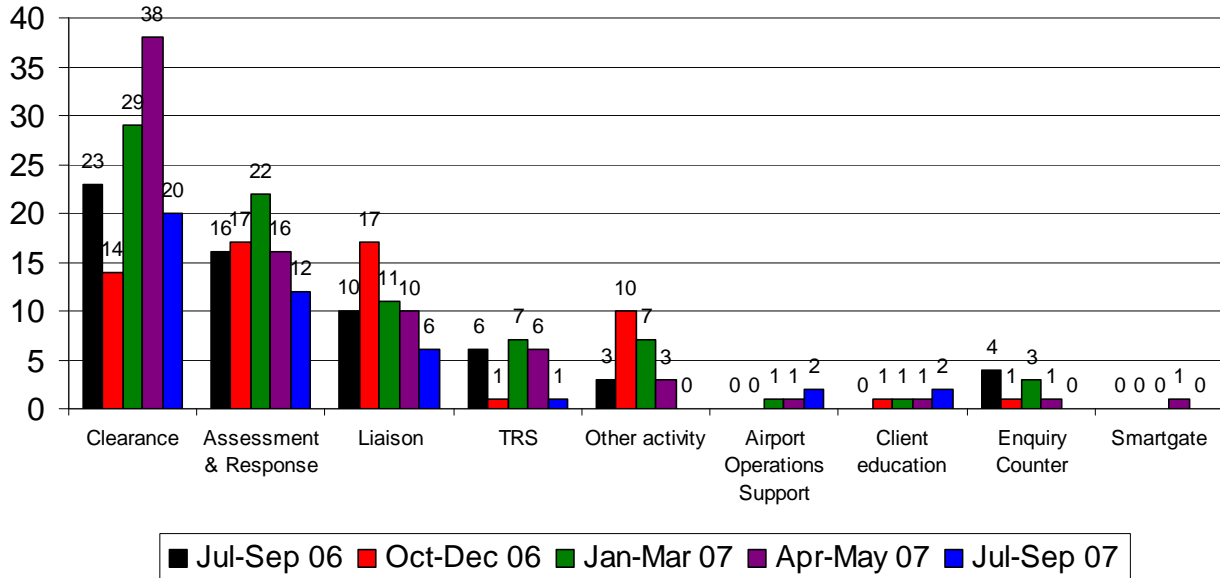


Figure 3. Passenger compliments - comparative assessment for the last five quarters.

Cargo Division Container Examinations

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

CEF related complaints have *increased* from **88** to **145** during the September quarter.

The **145** container related complaints consist of **79** Cargo Division complaints, **53** Intelligence & Targeting Division complaints, as well as **6** for Industry Engagement & User Services (ICS), **6** classified to CTO/Wharf/Stevedores and Brokers, and **1** classified to Compliance.

During the quarter Customs inspected **36,156 TEU**. This is equivalent to **1** complaint for every **249 TEU** (previous quarter was **410 TEU**).

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

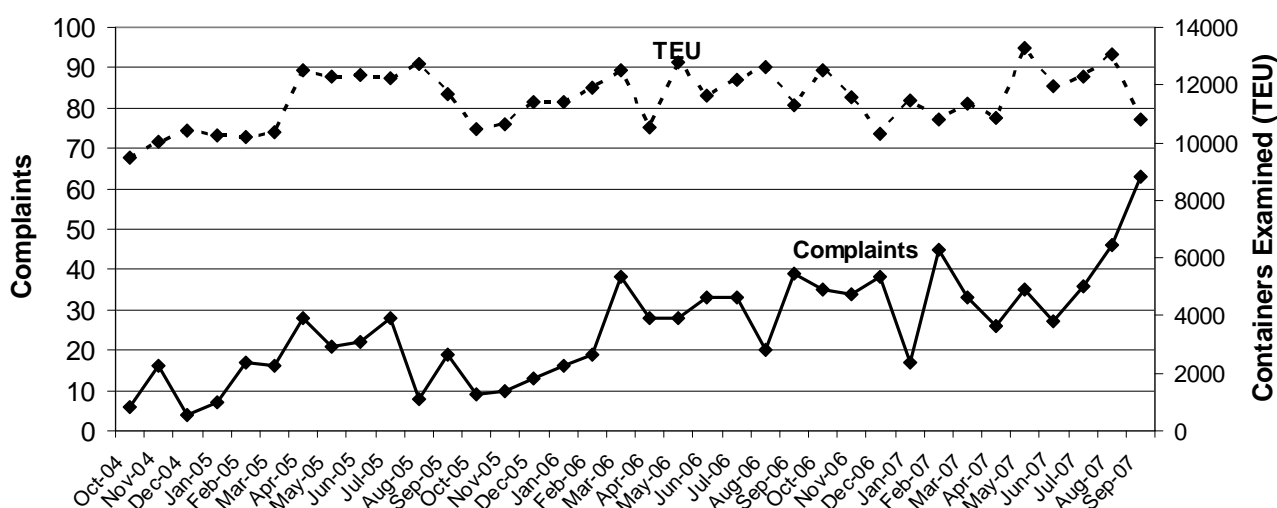


Figure 1. Trend of complaints against TEU x-rayed by Customs since July 2004

The increase in total container related complaints during this quarter occurred in NSW with an increase of **24** complaints.

Of the total **79** Cargo Division complaints, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Process took too long” (**29**) – up from 27 from the last quarter.

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**28**) - the same as for the last quarter.

Issue: “Pre-emptive” (**8**) – an increase from **2** during the last quarter.

The following table details Cargo Division complaints registered for each CEF for the September quarter was **79** (compared to **56** for the last quarter). This table excludes complaints recorded against Intelligence & Targeting Division, Industry Engagement & User Services (ICS), Compliance, (see Table 2) and Other Organisations (CTO/Wharf/Stevedores, Brokers, AQIS). It only includes complaints related to the CEFs themselves.

Issues	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Fremantle	Adelaide	Canberra	Total
Didn't expect fees	13	6	3	5	1	0	28
Examination too thorough	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Goods not repacked properly	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Goods were damaged	5	0	2	0	0	0	7
Goods were missing	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
I got the runaround	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Process took too long	11	11	5	1	0	1	29
Pre emptive	2	2	2	1	1	0	8
Total	35	21	13	7	2	1	79

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

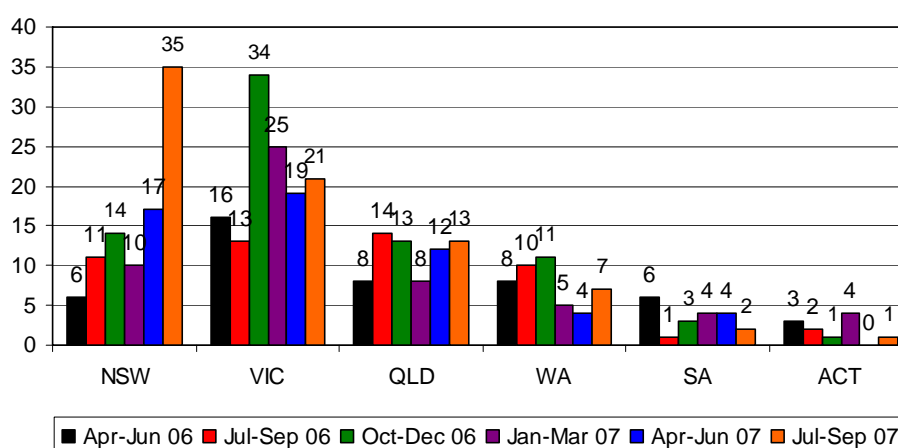


Figure 2. Comparison of Cargo Division CEF complaints by region for the previous six quarters

Issues	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Fremantle	Adelaide	Canberra	Total
Always searched	3	9	9	2	1	1	25
Late barrier hold put in place	7	0	3	0	1	0	11
Did not expect fees	3	6	2	0	0	1	12
I'm not happy with the policy	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Process took too long	1	1	0	2	0	0	4
Total	14	16	14	4	2	3	53

Table 2. National container related complaints within Intelligence and Targeting Division by region for July to September 2007
Note: Issues for Canberra are policy related

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

**Cargo Division CEF Complaints Only
(excluding Central Office)**

CEF Location	Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Sydney	35	9,885	282
Melbourne	21	10,046	478
Brisbane	13	10,432	802
Fremantle	7	5,370	767
Adelaide	2	384	192
Darwin	0	37	n/a
Total	78	36,156	464

Table 3. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs² inspected for July to September 2007

**Intelligence & Targeting
Division, Industry
Engagement & User
Services, Compliance and
'Other Organisations'
(excluding Central Office)**

In Addition: Number of 'container related' complaints classified to Intelligence and Targeting Division	In Addition: Number of 'container related' complaints classified to other Customs work areas	In Addition: Number of 'container related' complaints classified to Other Organisations
14	1	3
16	1	2
14	3	0
4	1	0
2	0	1
0	0	0
50	7	6

Table 4: Number of CEF related complaints for July to September 2007

**Total of All Container Related Complaints
(A Summary of Tables 2 and 3)
(excluding Central Office)**

CEF Location	Total Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Sydney	53	9,885	187
Melbourne	40	10,046	251
Brisbane	30	10,432	348
Fremantle	12	5,370	448
Adelaide	5	384	77
Darwin	0	37	n/a
Total	140	36,156	258

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

Compliments

From December 2002 to September 2007, since the first CEF was established, **39** compliments have been received for CEF operations. During this time Customs has examined **557,750**.

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 container examination process in general, regardless of the specific area of Customs which has responsibility to respond.

Cargo Division Postal Operations

During this quarter **117** complaints were recorded about Postal Operations, compared with **53** for the previous quarter. See Table 1 for details.

Complaints

Issue	Apr-Jun 07	Jul-Sep 07
Process took too long	14	54
Goods were missing	6	12
Didn't expect duty/tax	10	10
Goods were damaged	4	9
Other	0	7
I got the runaround	3	5
Officer was rude	1	4
Didn't expect fees	1	3
Goods not repacked properly	2	3
Always searched	0	2
Documentation	1	2
Goods were seized	5	2
Goods were withheld	2	2
Phone/email not answered	0	2
On hold too long	0	1
Calls not returned	1	0
Process not explained	1	0
Unhappy with selection	2	0
Total	53	118

Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally by Postal Operations by issue.
Comparative assessment: April-June 2007 to July-September 2007

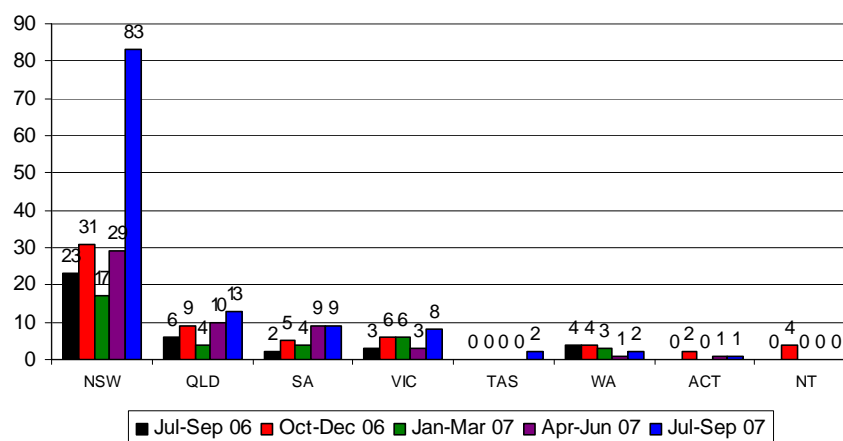


Figure 1. Number of complaints received by Postal Operations by region.
Comparative assessment: Jul-Sep 2006 to Jul-Sep 2007

Note: NSW postal complaints responded to by Client Services have been classified as NSW Postal Operations.

Compliments

Postal Operations received **6** compliments this quarter (compared to **9** last quarter).

Industry Engagement and User Services Division

Customs Information and Support Centre

Complaints

During this quarter **11** complaints were recorded about the CI&SC, compared with **13** for the previous quarter.

The most common complaint related to 'rude officer' (**6**).

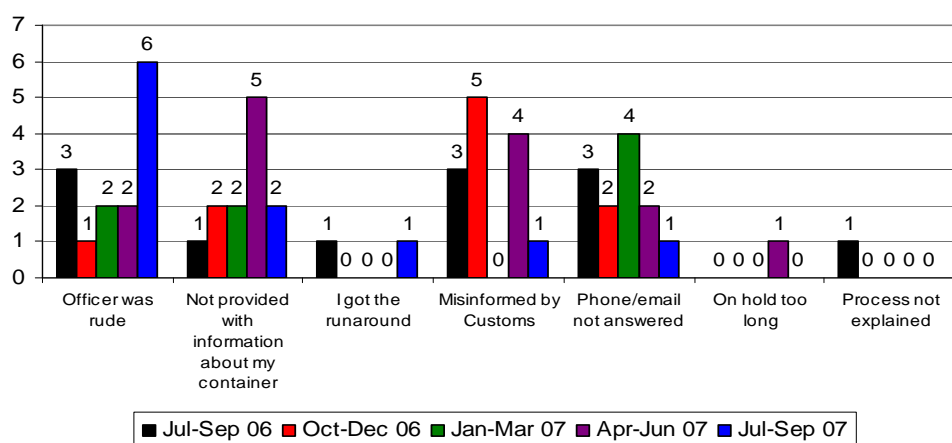


Figure 1. Comparison of the main CI&SC complaints for the previous five quarters

During the quarter **97,869** enquiries were dealt with by the CI&SC.

The number of complaints received during the September quarter was **11** which is **1** complaint for every **8,897** 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
July	3	29514	3540	25	33079	11,026
August	4	31595	3630	16	35241	8,810
September	4	26209	3333	7	29549	7,387

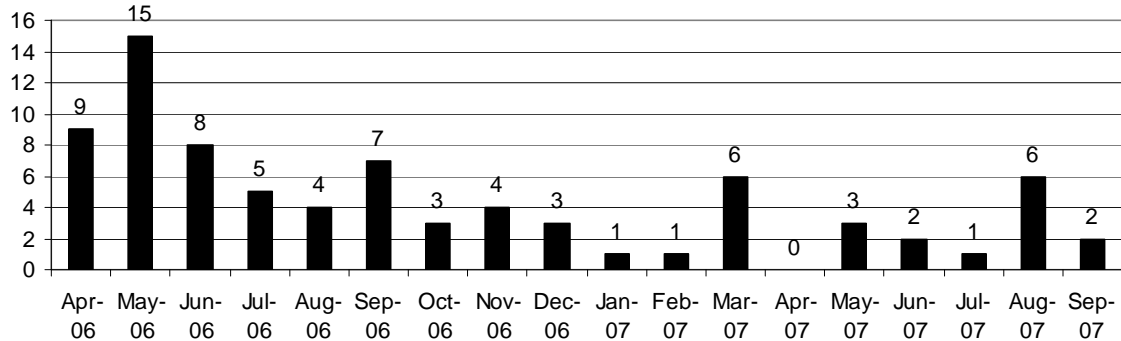
Table 1. Number of complaints lodged at the CI&SC compared to the number of calls received for July to September 2007

Compliments

The CI&SC received **9** compliments this quarter (compared to **23** which last quarter). **6** of the compliments related to officers being helpful.

Integrated Cargo Systems

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 July to September 2007

The reason for complaints in the September quarter were:

Issue	Oct-Dec 06	Jan-Mar 07	Apr-Jun 07	Jul-Sep 07
Process took too long	1	0	1	3
Doesn't work	1	4	0	2
Didn't expect fees	3	1	0	2
Digital Certificates	0	0	2	1
System Too Slow	2	0	1	1
Implementation	1	2	0	0
Poor Design	2	1	0	0
System Down	0	0	1	0
Total	10	8	5	9

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

ICS Compliments

During the quarter **0** compliments were received.

Issue – ‘Officer was rude’

‘Officer was rude’ was the third highest complaint in the quarter with **48** complaints nationally (**36** for the previous quarter).

Work Area	Apr-Jun 07	Jul-Sep 07
Assessment & Response	23	26
Clearance	5	6
CI&SC	2	6
Client Services	2	3
Postal Operations	1	4
Investigation Case Activity	0	1
Refunds	0	1
TRS	1	1
Enquiry Counter	1	0
Property Management	1	0
Total	36	48

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

Officer was rude - by Month

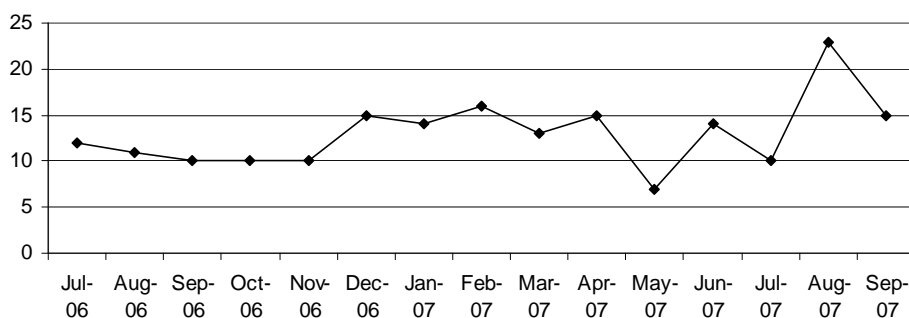


Chart 1. Line graph of complaints received for ‘Officer was rude’ for all Divisions by month from July 2006

Officer was rude - by Region

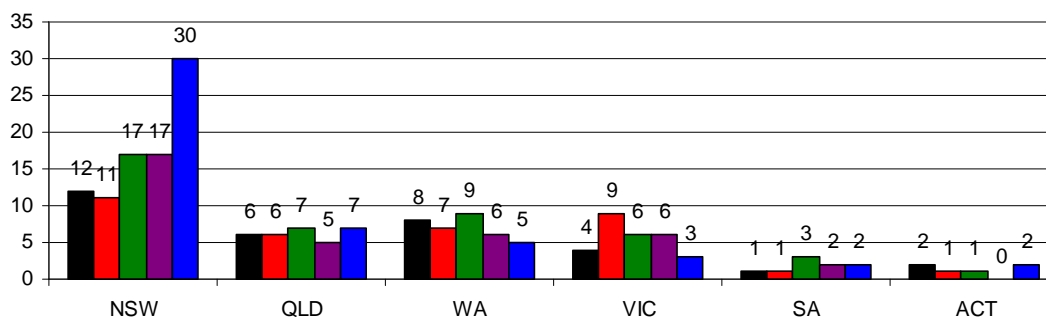


Table 2. Number of complaints received nationally for ‘Officer was rude’ for all Divisions by region. Comparative assessment over the last five quarters

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:
