



Complaints and Compliments
National Quarterly Report
October to December 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) or the Assistant National Coordinator (46 8135) .

Introduction

This report provides statistical data and analysis for complaints and compliments received during the period October to December 2007. All statistical data included in this report was extracted on 15 January 2008. Where appropriate, comparative tables and graphs include figures from previous reporting periods.

Executive summary

Complaints

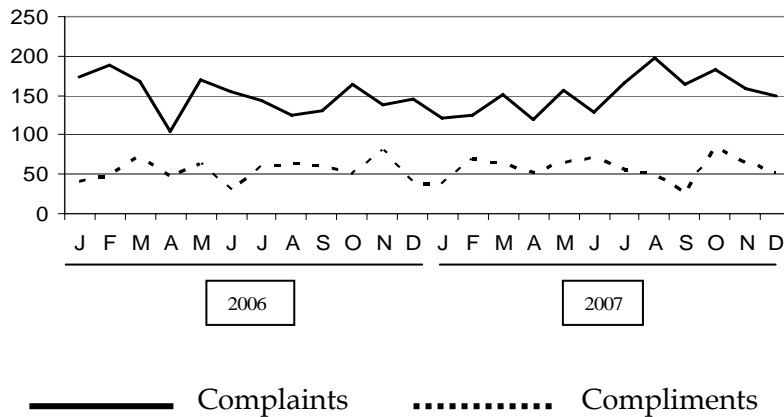


Figure 1. National trends for complaints and compliments from January 2006 to December 2007 by month

A total number of **492** complaints, excluding referrals, were reported compared with **528** in the previous quarter.

The top four complaint issues were:

- **Process took too long (61):** Of these complaints, **49** occurred in Cargo Division - **23** related to Container Examination Facilities and **18** related to Postal Operations.
- **Officer was rude (57):** This occurred **38** times in Passengers Division, **26** of which were in Assessment and Response and **12** in Clearance, **8** related to Industry Engagement and User Services being for the CI&SC.
- **Didn't Expect Fees (51):** **47** of these complaints were related to containers - **30** of which related to Container Examination Facilities and **11** to Intelligence and Targeting.
- **Didn't expect duty or tax (45):** **28** of these complaints occurred in Passengers Division and related to passenger concessions, **17** occurred in Cargo Division of which **11** related to Postal Operations.

In addition to the above, Customs referred **130** complaints to other agencies. See page 7 for additional details.

Significant variations in the October - December Quarter

General

The following complaint issues had a significant variation, increase or decrease, compared to the previous quarter.

Type of Complaint

'Process took too long'

The complaint 'Process took too long' decreased nationally from 105 to **61**. This occurred largely in Cargo Division decreasing from 89 to **49**.

'Unhappy with Selection'

The complaint 'Unhappy with Selection' increased nationally from 3 to **16**. This occurred largely in Passengers Division increasing from 3 to **13**.

'Didn't expect duty/tax'

The complaint 'Didn't expect duty/tax' decreased nationally from 57 to **45**. This largely occurred in Passenger Division decreasing from 37 to **28**.

'Always Searched'

The complaint 'Always Searched' decreased nationally from 34 to **23**. This largely occurred in Intelligence and Targeting Division decreasing from 26 to **15**.

'Late Barrier hold put in place'

The complaint 'Late Barrier hold put in place' decreased nationally from 12 to **1**. The decrease occurs wholly in Intelligence and Targeting Division.

'Officer was rude'

The complaint 'Officer was rude' increased nationally from 48 to **57**. The increases occurred largely in Passengers Division increasing from 33 to **38** with Assessment and Response at Melbourne Airport moving from 1 to **8** and Clearance at Sydney Airport moving from 2 to **7**.

'Process not explained'

The complaint 'Process not explained' increased nationally from 4 to **13**. Previously only Passengers Division featured in this complaint (4 from last quarter). The following Divisions have received these complaints: Passengers (**6**), Financial Services (**1**), Industry Engagement & User Services (**1**), Cargo (**4**), Intelligence & Targeting (**1**).

Compliments

A total number of **198** compliments were reported about Customs compared with **132** in the previous quarter. The top three compliments were:

- "Officer/s was helpful" (**61** - Up 18),
- "Appreciated assistance" (**35** - Down 1), and
- "Officer/s was professional" (**27** - Up 13).

1. National Trends

1.1 National Trends by Division (excluding referrals)

Complaints

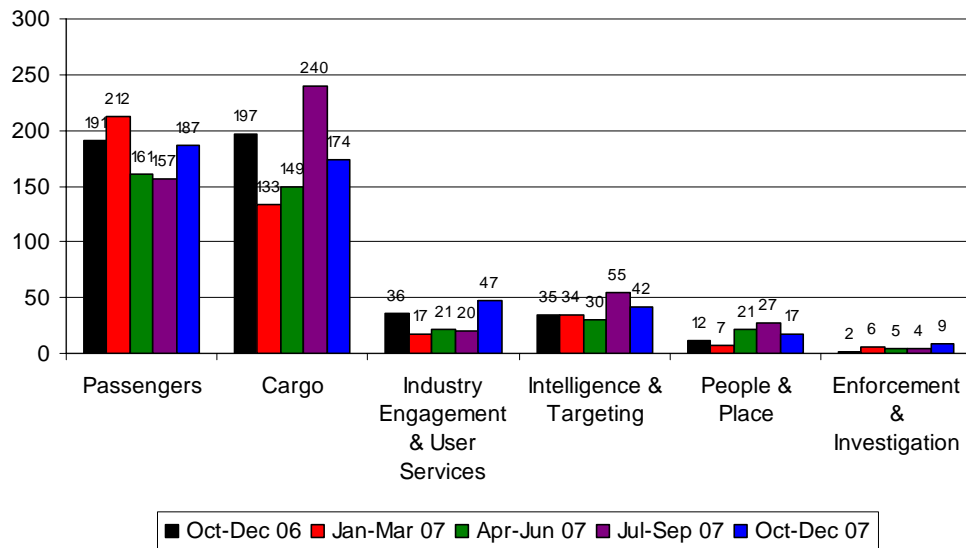


Figure 2. Total number of complaints for the top six divisions comparing the last five quarters

Compliments

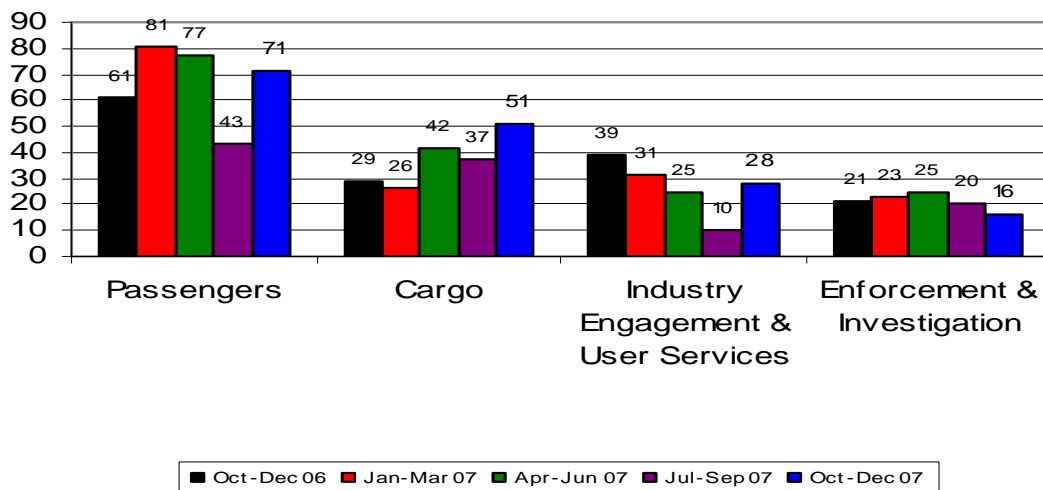


Figure 3. The trend in compliments for the four larger divisions comparing the last five quarters

Note – Enforcement and Investigation includes compliments for District Offices

A more detailed analysis of complaints and compliments for Passengers Division, overall container related complaints (includes individual tables for CEF and Intelligence and Targeting) , Postal Operations, Customs Information and Support Centre (CI&SC), Integrated Cargo System (ICS) and the important issue of ‘Rude Officers’ are provided in Annexes A-E.

National Trends by Region (excluding referrals)

Complaints

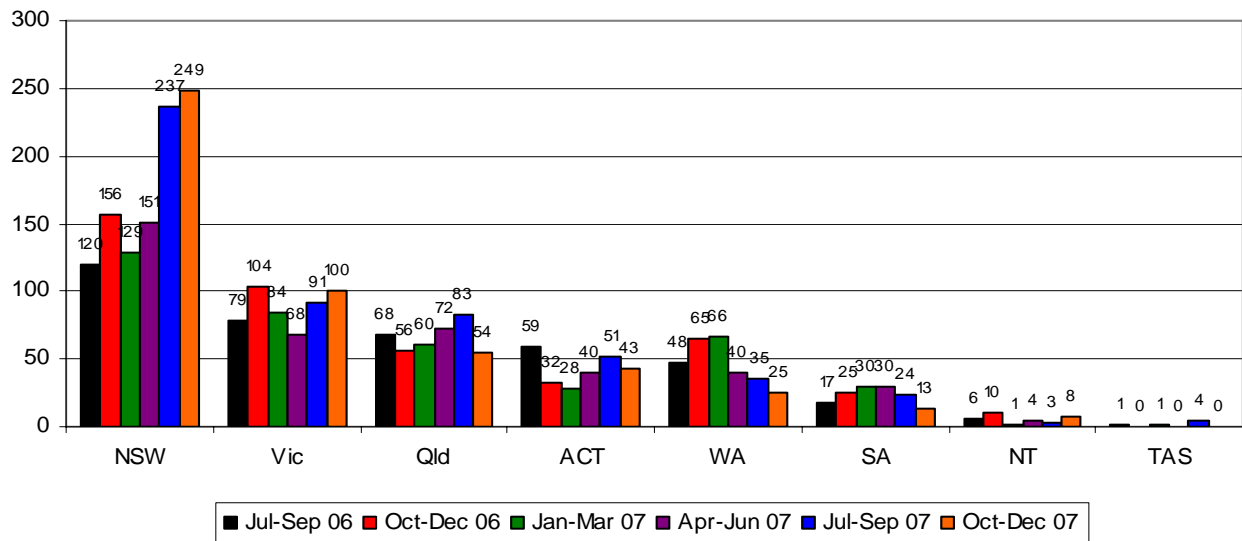


Figure 4. Total number of complaints by region comparing each quarter from July-September 2006 to October-December 2007

Compliments

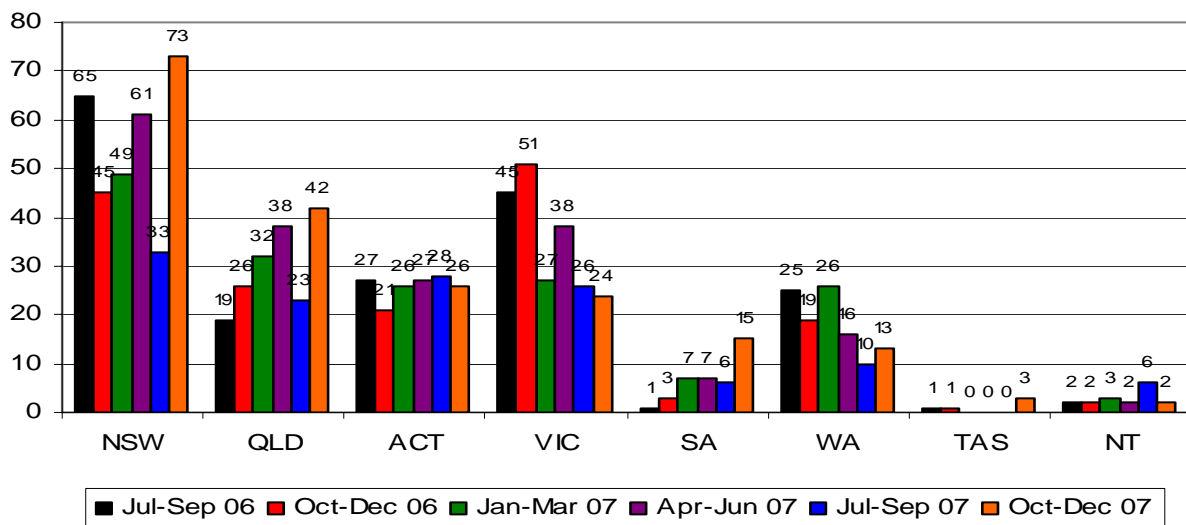


Figure 5. Total number of compliments by region comparing each quarter from July-September 2007 to October-December 2007

1. Type of Complaint

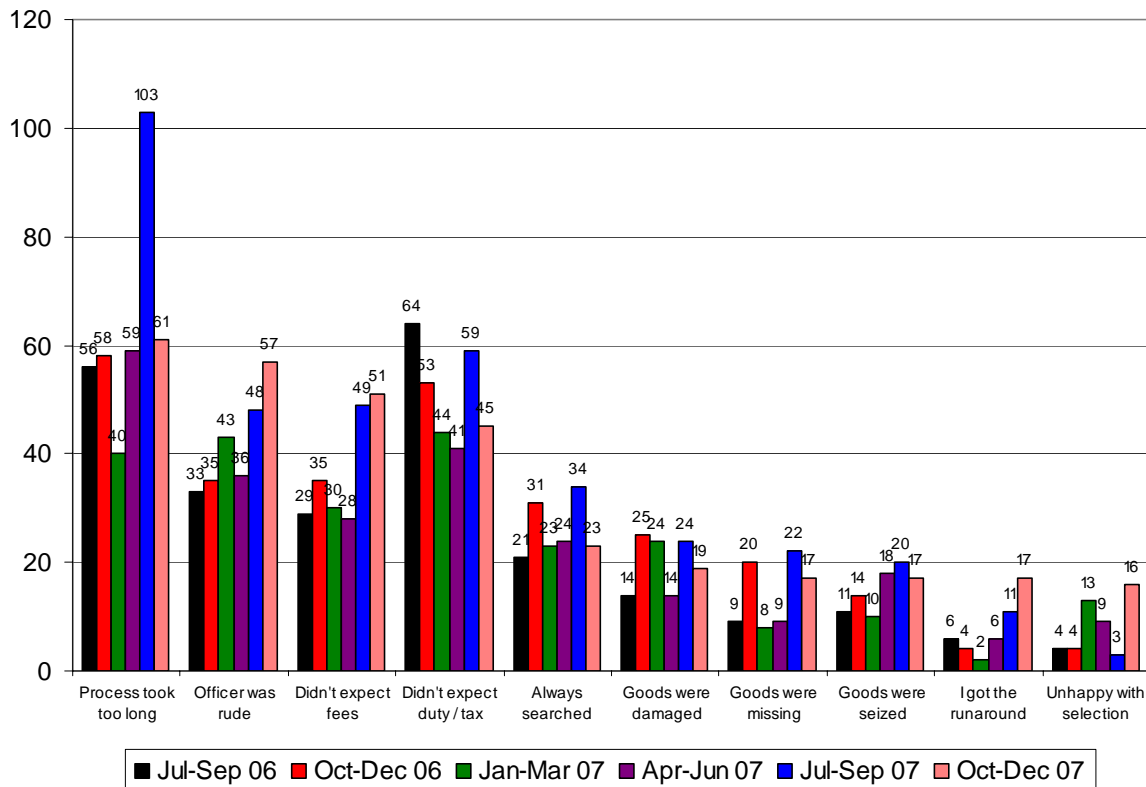


Figure 6. National Top 10 Complaints (excluding referrals) for the last four quarters

66% of Officer was Rude complaints relate to Passengers Division (**38**) with 68% of these being for Assessment and Response (**26**).

A total of **492** complaints were made for this quarter (excluding referrals). This compares to **528** for the previous quarter and represents a **6.81% decrease**.

2. Type of Compliment

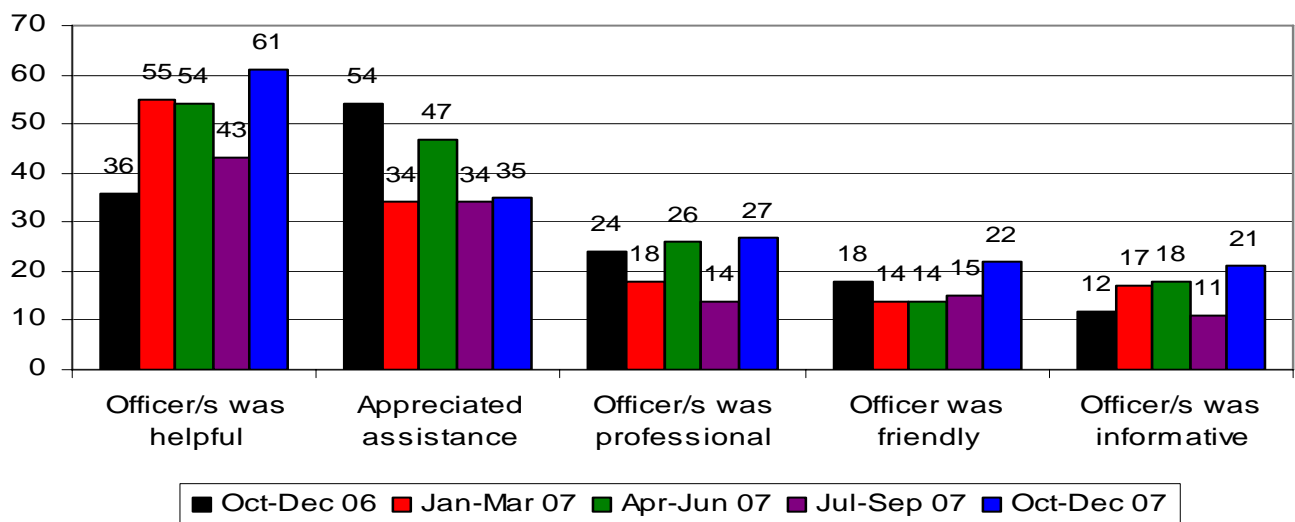


Figure 7. National top 5 compliments (excluding referrals) for the last five quarters

A total of **198** compliments (excluding referrals) were registered for this quarter. This compares to **132** for the previous quarter and represents a **50% increase**.

The top three compliment issues were:

- **Officer/s was helpful (61):** Cargo Division received this compliment most frequently (**28**), followed by Industry Engagement and User Services Division (**14**) and Passengers Division (**13**).
- **Appreciated assistance (35):** Passengers Division received this compliment most frequently (**16**), followed by Enforcement and Investigation Division (**12**).
- **Officer was professional (27):** Passengers Division received this compliment most frequently (**12**) closely followed by Cargo Division (**8**).

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 **130** complaints compared to **128** during the previous quarter. The main agencies receiving referrals were AQIS (**37**), Australia Post (**22**), DOTARS (**11**), CTO/Wharf Terminal/Stevedore (**10**) and Brokers (**10**).

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 **11.58** working days.

The average compliment resolution time of **1.46** working days reported in the previous quarter has *increased* to **2.56** working days.

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

Out of a total of **821** cases received, **66** cases opened during the quarter did not meet the 15 working day benchmark (**8.03%**). Last quarter **9.79%** of cases did not meet this criteria.

6. How People Contact Us

The main methods for contacting Customs during this quarter were by email (**469**), phone (including the 1800 number) (**119**), and letter (**82**).

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 (decreased from **484** to **469**),
- 1800 228227/phone (decreased from **145** to **119**),
- remote entry (increased from **32** to **52**),
- brochure (increased from **50** to **67**),
- letter or fax (increased from **62** to **87**),
- Ministerial/Ombudsman (decreased from **33** to **11**)
- Telephone (not through 1800 number) (increased from **0** to **17**).

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 **187** (excluding referrals) during this quarter (compared to **157** in the previous quarter) which is equivalent to 1 complaint for every **32,920** passengers arriving in, or departing from, Australia. This compares with one complaint for every **37,304** passengers in the July to September 2007 quarter.

During the period 1 October to 31 December 2007 **6,156,112** passengers arrived and departed through international airports nationally. Numbers of passengers traveling through the major international airports are shown in Table 1 below (Other relates to non-standard international arrivals E.G. Alice Springs).

Airport	Number of Airport Complaints	Passenger Arrival Numbers	Passenger Departure Numbers	Number of Passengers for Every Complaint
Cairns	3	99248	93496	64248
Perth	11	344739	320001	60431
Brisbane	26	521369	528756	40389
Melbourne	39	627065	611741	31764
Sydney	89	1376575	1370222	30863
Adelaide	7	67043	59634	18097
Darwin	5	27628	29139	11353
Coolangatta	0	29513	33707	0
Other	0	8199	8037	0

Table 1. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of passengers arriving or departing during October to December 2007(Canberra Policy complaints are not shown in this table).

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

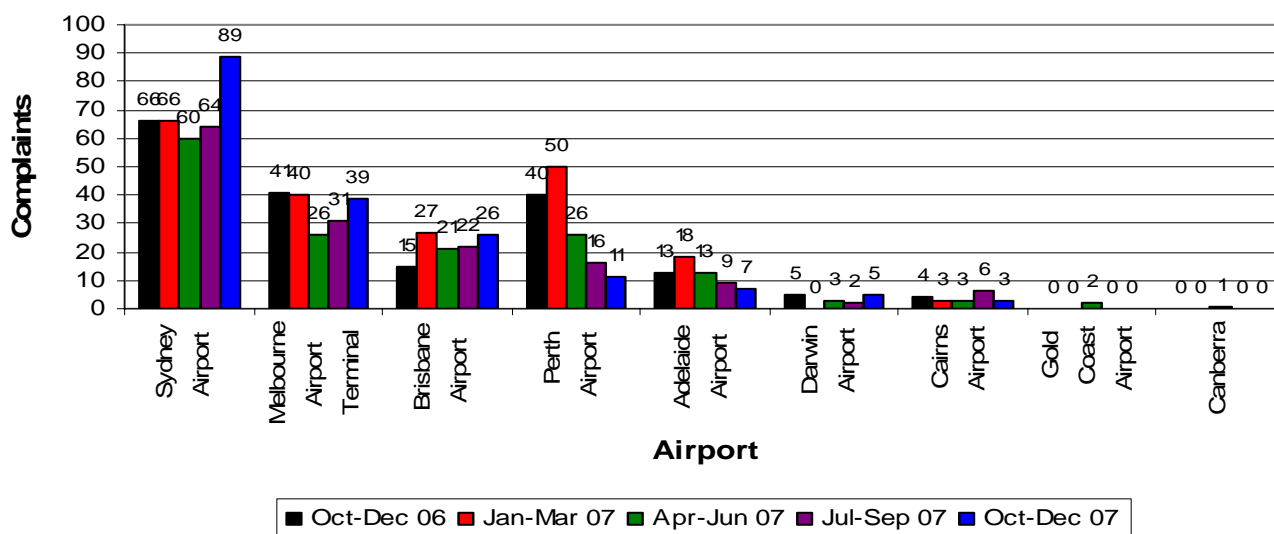


Figure 1. Passenger Complaints at each Airport for the last five quarters (Canberra Complaints are Policy related complaints and not Canberra Airport Complaints).

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

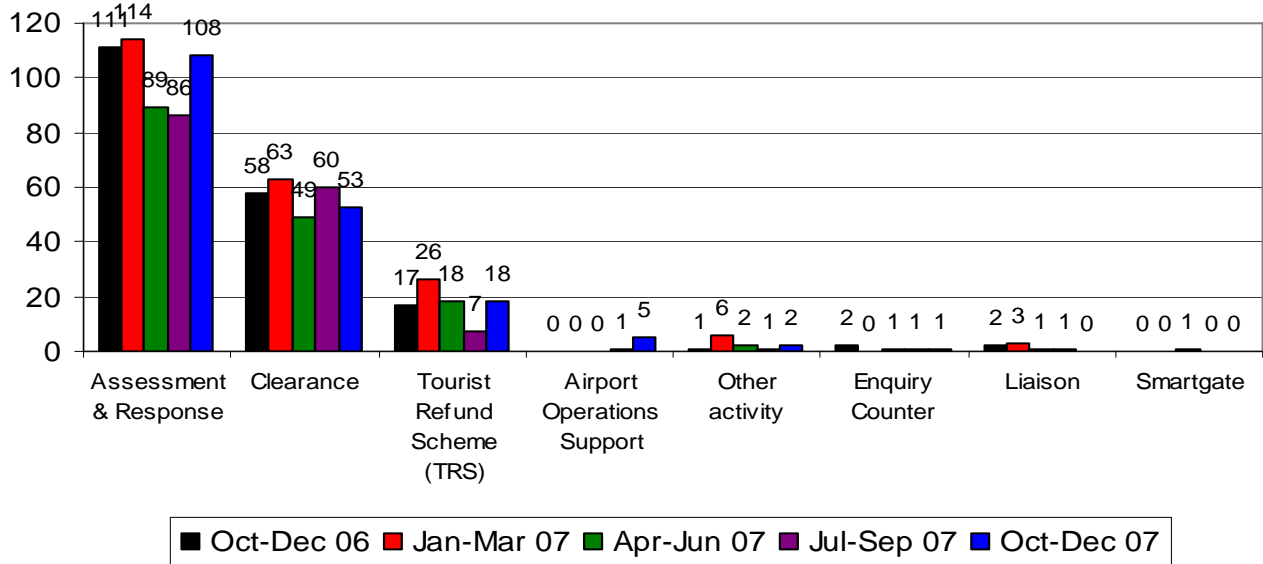


Figure 2. Passengers complaints - comparative assessment by region for the last five quarters.

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

Passenger Concessions

Passenger concessions complaints were **28** this quarter, down from **37** last quarter.

Passenger concessions complaints by Region:

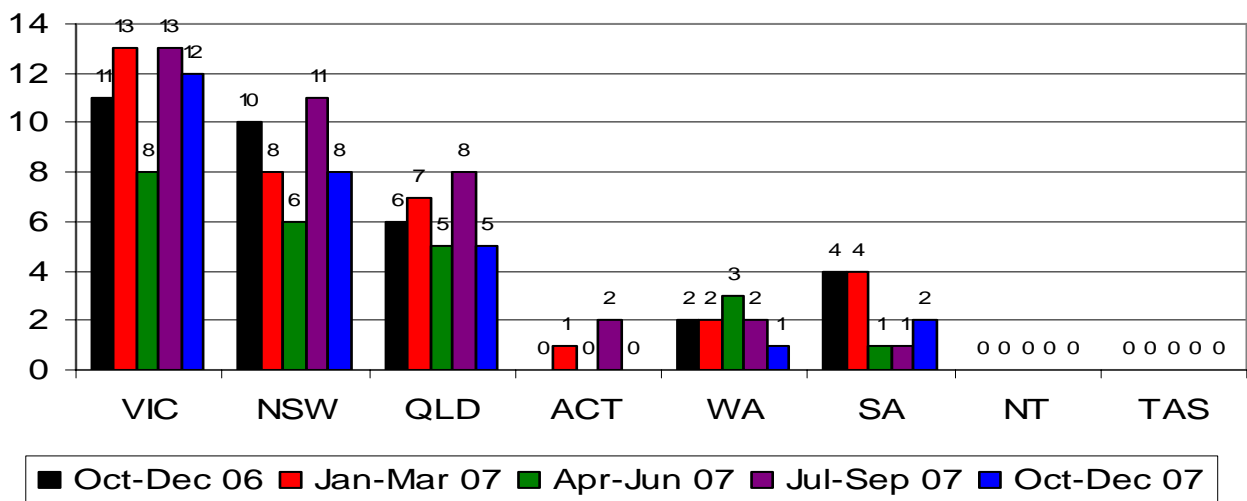


Figure 3. Passenger concessions complaints - comparative assessment by region for the last five quarters.

Compliments

There were **71** compliments for Passengers during this quarter, an increase from **43** during the previous quarter.

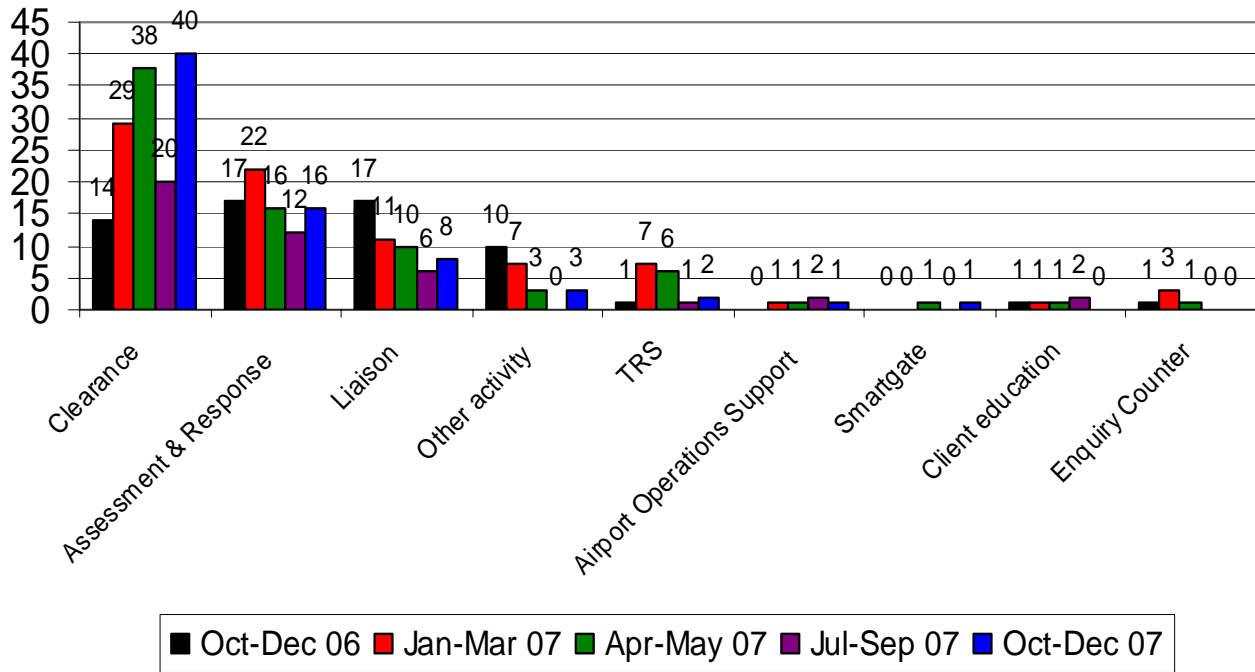


Figure 3. Passenger compliments - comparative assessment for the last five quarters.

Container Related Complaints

(Data is largely from complaints related to Cargo Division and Intelligence & Targeting Division)

Container related complaints have had a slight *increase* from **145** to **150** during the October quarter.

The **150** container related complaints consist of **69** Cargo Division complaints, **41** Intelligence & Targeting Division complaints, as well as **10** for Industry Engagement & User Services (ICS), **29** classified to other organisations (CTO/Wharf/Stevedores, Brokers, Carrier , AQIS, DOTARS, Other) and **1** classified to Compliance.

During the quarter Customs inspected **32931 TEU**. This is equivalent to **1** complaint for every **220 TEU** (previous quarter was **249 TEU**).

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

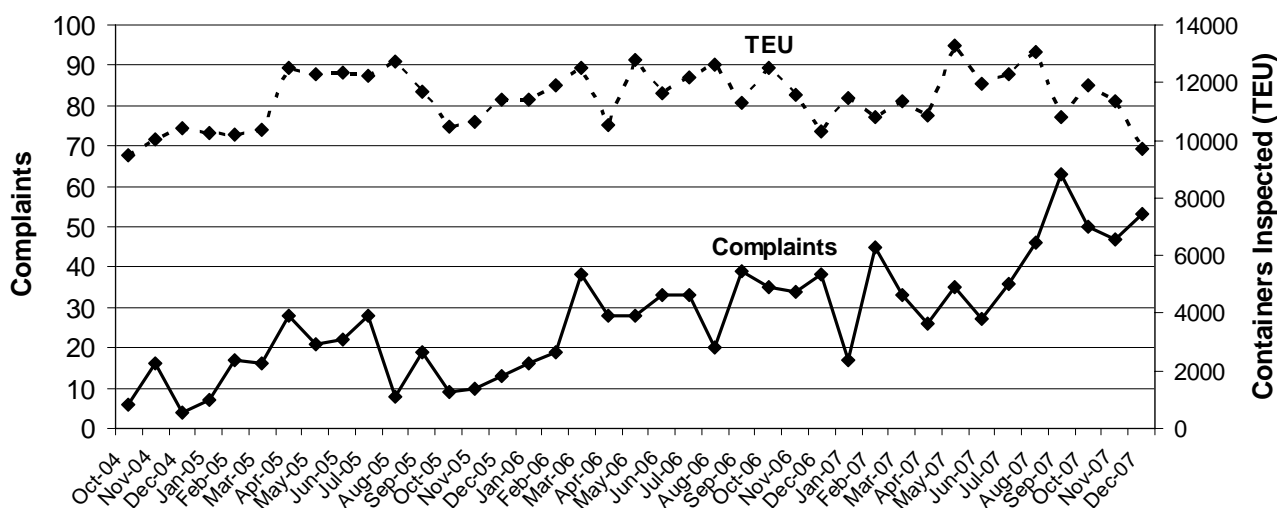


Figure 1. Trend of complaints against TEU x-rayed by Customs since January 2005

Of the total **121** Container related complaints remaining after referrals, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**48**) – up from 43 for the last quarter.

Issue: “Process took too long” (**33**) – down from 35 for the last quarter.

Issue: “Always Searched” (**15**) – down from 26 for the last quarter.

The following table details Cargo Division complaints registered for each CEF for the September quarter was **66** (compared to **79** for the last quarter). This table excludes all other container related complaints.

Issues	Sydney	Brisbane	Adelaide	Melbourne	Perth	Total
Didn't expect fees	18	1	1	9	1	30
Examination too thorough		1				1
Goods were damaged	4	1		1		6
Goods were missing	1					1
I got the runaround				1		1
Officer was rude				1		1
Pre-emptive	1	1		1		3
Process took too long	11			9	3	23
Total	35	4	1	22	4	66

Table 1. National CEF complaints within Cargo Division by region for October to December 2007

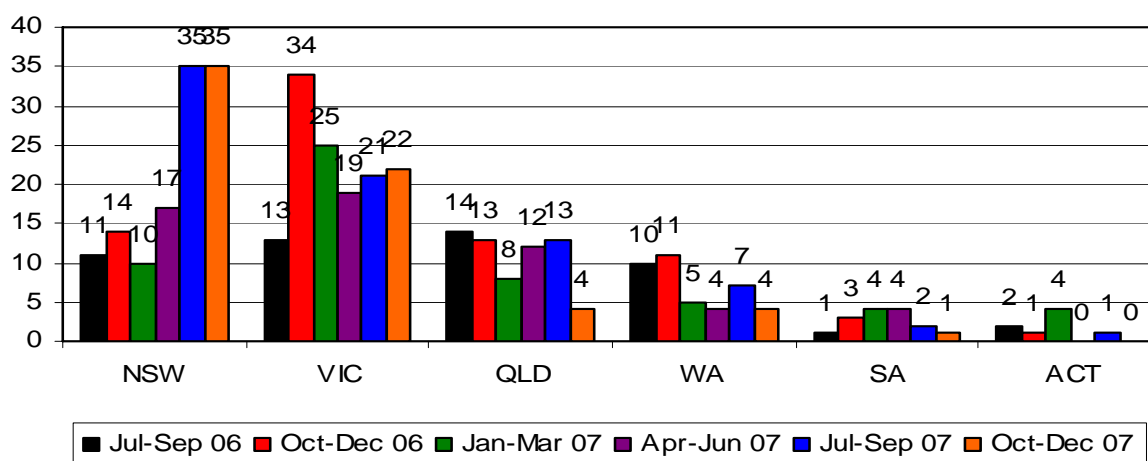


Figure 2. Comparison of Cargo Division CEF complaints by region for the previous six quarters

Of the **66** CEF container related complaints, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**30**) – up from 27 for the last quarter.

Issue: “Process took too long” (**23**) – down from 35 for the last quarter.

Issue: “Goods were damaged” (**6**) – down from 7 for the last quarter.

Of the **41** Intelligence and Targeting container related complaints, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Always Searched” (**15**) – down from 26 for the last quarter.

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**11**) – down from 13 for the last quarter.

Issue: “Process took too long” (**7**) – up from 5 for the last quarter.

Issues	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Fremantle	Adelaide	Total
Always searched	8	4	2	0	1	15
Late barrier hold put in place	0	1	0	0	0	1
Did not expect fees	5	5	0	1	0	11
I'm not happy with the policy	1	0	0	0	0	1
Process not explained	0	1	0	0	0	1
System too slow	0	0	0	1	0	1
Other	2	0	0	0	0	2
I got the Runaround	1	0	0	0	1	2
Process took too long	4	2	1	0	0	7
Total	21	13	3	2	2	41

Table 2. National container related complaints within Intelligence and Targeting Division by region for October to December 2007

Total of All Container Related Complaints (excluding Referrals)

CEF Location	Total Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Sydney	62	9245	149
Melbourne	36	9403	261
Brisbane	9	8043	894
Fremantle	8	5562	695
Adelaide	3	460	153
Darwin	1	38	38
Canberra	2	0	n/a
Total	121	32,751	271

Table 3. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs² inspected for October to December 2007 (excluding Referrals)

Compliments

No Container Related Compliments were received for this quarter

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 **93** complaints were recorded about Postal Operations, with **29** referred to other organisations (AQIS, Australia Post), compared with **118** for the previous quarter (34 of which were referred to other organisations). See Table 1 for details.

Complaints

Issue	Jul - Sep 07	Oct - Dec 07
Process took too long	33	18
Didn't expect duty/tax	10	11
Goods were damaged	7	7
Goods were missing	9	6
Goods were seized	2	5
Other	4	3
Unhappy with selection	0	3
I got the runaround	5	2
Documentation	2	2
Calls not returned	0	1
Didn't expect fees	2	1
Goods not repacked properly	2	1
I'm Not Happy with the Policy	0	1
Officer was rude	3	1
Phone/email not answered	1	1
Process not explained	0	1
Always searched	2	0
Goods were withheld	1	0
On hold too long	1	0
Total	84	64

Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally by Postal Operations by issue (excludes referrals).
Comparative assessment: Jul-Sep 2007 to Oct-Dec 2007

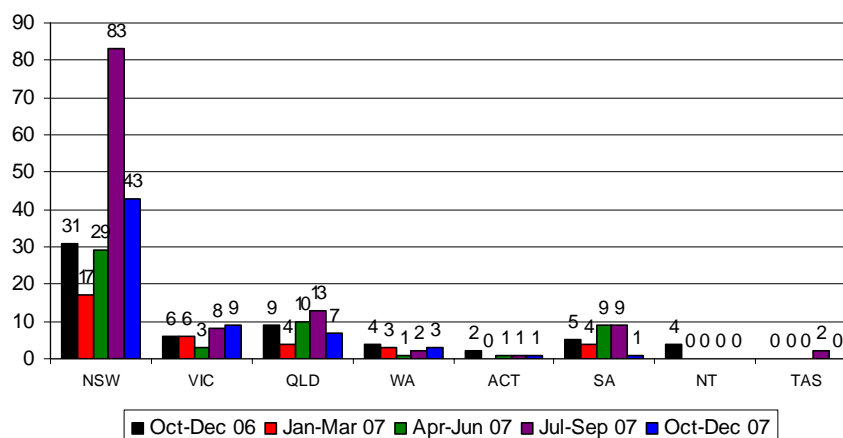


Figure 1. Number of complaints received by Postal Operations by region.
Comparative assessment: Jul-Sep 2006 to Oct-Dec 2007

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

Compliments

Postal Operations received **6** compliments this quarter (No change from last quarter).

Industry Engagement and User Services Division

Customs Information and Support Centre

Complaints

During this quarter **29** complaints were recorded about the CI&SC, compared with **13** for the previous quarter.

The most common complaints related to 'Officer was rude' and 'I Got the run around' both with **8**.

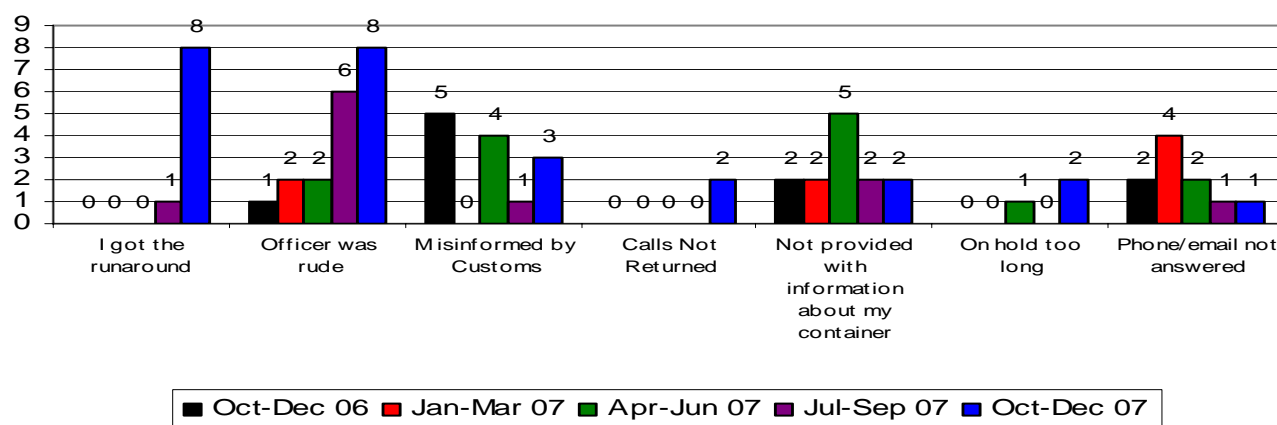


Figure 1. Comparison of the main CI&SC complaints for the previous five quarters

During the quarter _ enquiries were dealt with by the CI&SC.

The number of complaints received during the December quarter was **29** which is **1** complaint for every **3302** 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
October	6	30012	4173	26	34185	5698
November	13	28189	3564	6	31753	2443
December	10	26378	3442	3	29820	2982

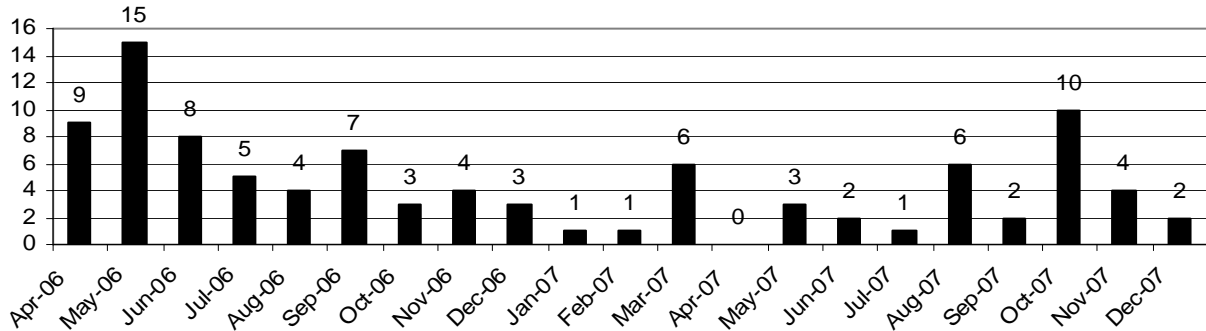
Table 1. Number of complaints lodged at the CI&SC compared to the number of calls received for Oct-Dec 2007

Compliments

The CI&SC received **28** compliments this quarter (compared to **9** last quarter). **14** of the compliments related to officers being helpful.

Integrated Cargo Systems

Customs recorded **16** complaints which could be attributed to the Cargo Integrated System (ICS) for the quarter October - December 2007. The volume of complaints over the last quarter is 1 complaint more than the total complaints over the previous two quarters.



ICS Complaints

Figure 1. Number of ICS complaints received during Oct-Dec 2007

The reason for complaints in the December quarter were:

Issue	Jan-Mar 07	Apr-Jun 07	Jul-Sep 07	Oct - Dec 07
Didn't expect fees	1	0	2	4
Doesn't work	4	0	2	4
Digital Certificates	0	2	1	2
Documentation	0	0	0	2
I'm Not Happy with the Policy	0	0	0	1
Payment facility	0	0	0	1
Poor Design	1	0	0	1
Process took too long	0	1	3	1
Implementation	2	0	0	0
System Down	0	1	0	0
System Too Slow	0	1	1	0
Total	8	5	9	16

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 second highest complaint in the quarter with **57** complaints nationally (**48** for the previous quarter).

Work Area	Jul-Sep 07	Oct- Dec 07
Assessment & Response	26	26
Clearance	6	12
CI&SC	6	8
Client Services	3	8
Container Examination Facility	0	1
Other activity	0	1
Postal Operations	4	1
Enquiry Counter	0	0
Investigation Case Activity	1	0
Property Management	0	0
Refunds	1	0
TRS	1	0
Total	48	57

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

Officer was rude - by Month

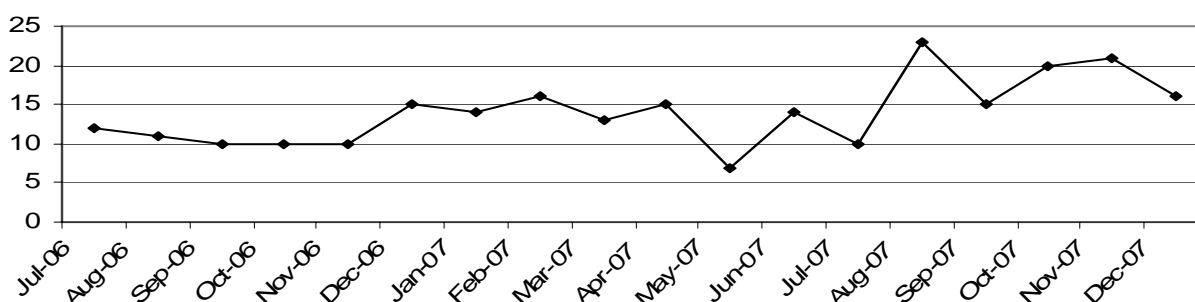


Chart 1. Line graph of complaints received for ‘Officer was rude’ for all Divisions by month from July 2006

Officer was rude - by Region

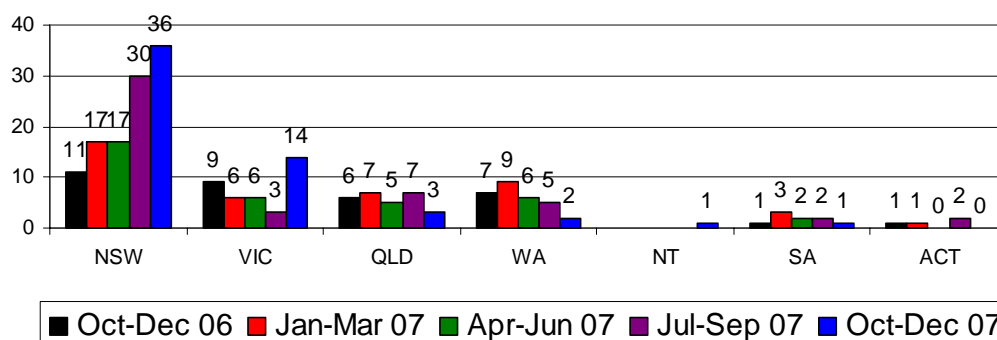


Table 2. Number of complaints received nationally for ‘Officer was rude’ for all Divisions by region. Comparative assessment over the last five quarters

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:
