



***Complaints and Compliments***  
***National Quarterly Report***  
***October to December 2006***

- 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 Acting National Coordinator (46 6042) or Director Corporate Planning (46 5706).

## Introduction

This report provides statistical data for complaints and compliments received during the period October to December 2006. All statistical data included in this report was extracted on 15 January 2007. Where appropriate, comparative tables and graphs are provided for previous reporting periods.

## Executive summary

### Complaints

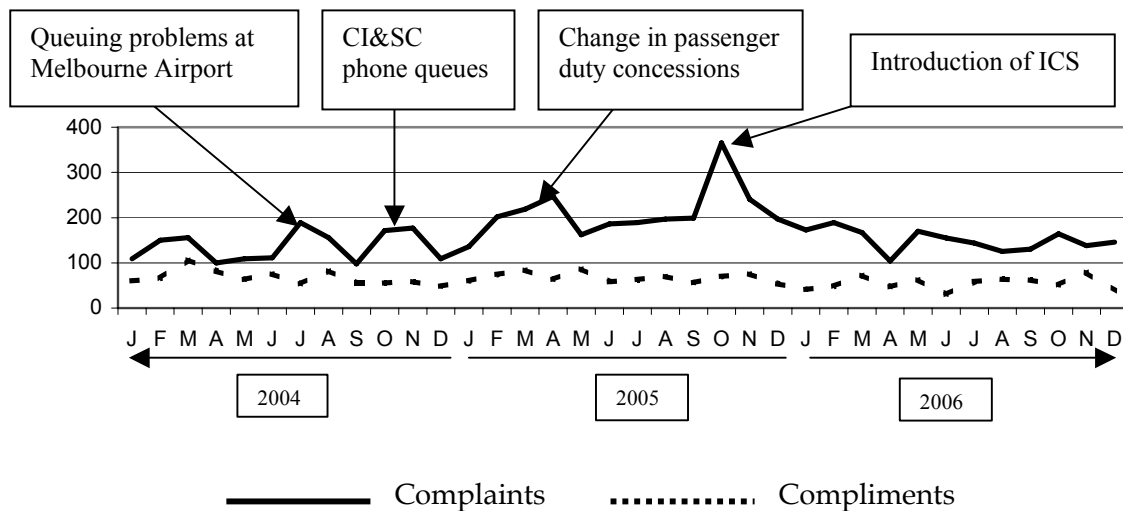


Figure 1. National trends for complaints and compliments from January 2004 to December 2006 by month

A total number of **448** complaints, excluding referrals, were reported compared with **398** in the previous quarter.

The top four complaint issues were:

- **Process took too long (58):** Of these complaints, **32** related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B), **8** related to Passengers (see Annex A) and **4** related to Postal Operations.
- **Didn't expect duty or tax (53):** These complaints occurred primarily in Passengers (**36**) and Postal Operations (**11**).
- **Officer was rude (35):** This occurred **28** times in Passengers, **8** of which were at Melbourne Airport, **7** at Perth Airport and **6** at Sydney Airport (see Annex D).
- **Didn't Expect Fees (35):** Most complaints (**23**) related to Container Examination Facilities (see Annex B)

In addition to the above, Customs referred **67** 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**

#### ***'Queue Delay'***

The complaint 'Queue Delay' increased nationally from **6** to **24**. These complaints all relate to Passengers (see Annex D). **12** related to Perth Airport and **10** to Sydney Airport.

#### ***'Goods were damaged'***

The complaint 'goods were damaged' increased nationally from **14** to **25**. **8** of these complaints related to New South Wales postal operations (Cargo Assurance Branch).

#### ***'Goods were missing'***

The complaint 'Goods were missing' increased nationally from **9** to **20**. **9** of these complaints related to postal operations and **6** to container examination facilities.

#### ***'Always Searched'***

The complaint 'Always Searched' increased nationally from **21** to **31**. **20** of these related to container examination facilities.

### Compliments

A total number of **169** compliments were reported about Customs compared with **185** in the previous quarter. The top three compliments were:

- "Officer/s was helpful" (**36**),
- "Appreciated assistance" (**54**), and
- "Officer/s was professional" (**24**).

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

# 1. National Trends

## 1.1 National Trends by Region

### Complaints

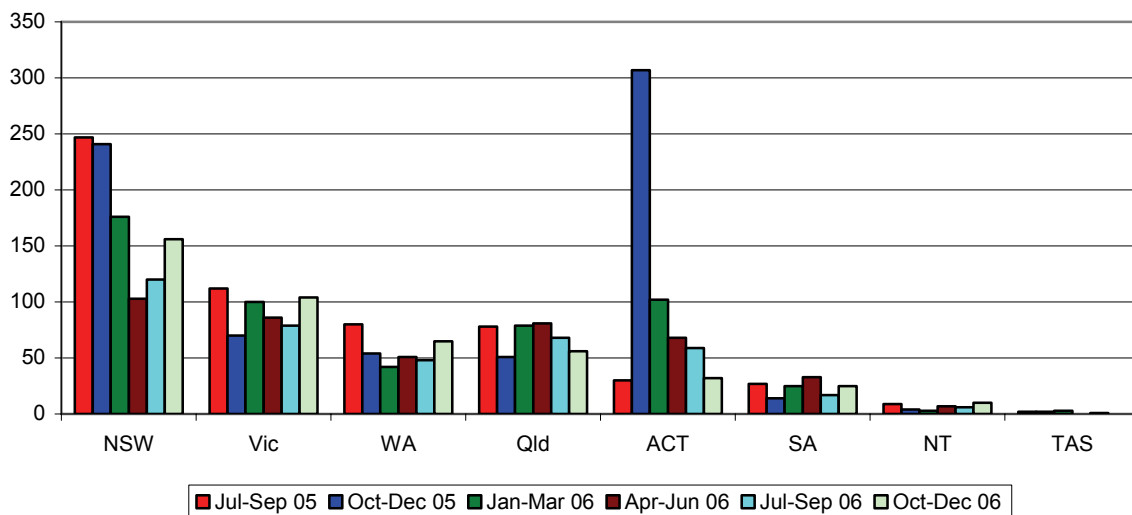


Figure 2. Total number of complaints by region comparing each quarter from July-September 2005 to October-December 2006

Comparing against the previous quarterly figures (excluding referrals), the complaint differences are: New South Wales (+36), Victoria (+25), Western Australia (+17), Queensland (-12), Australian Capital Territory (-27), South Australia (+8), Northern Territory (+4), and Tasmania (-1).

### Compliments

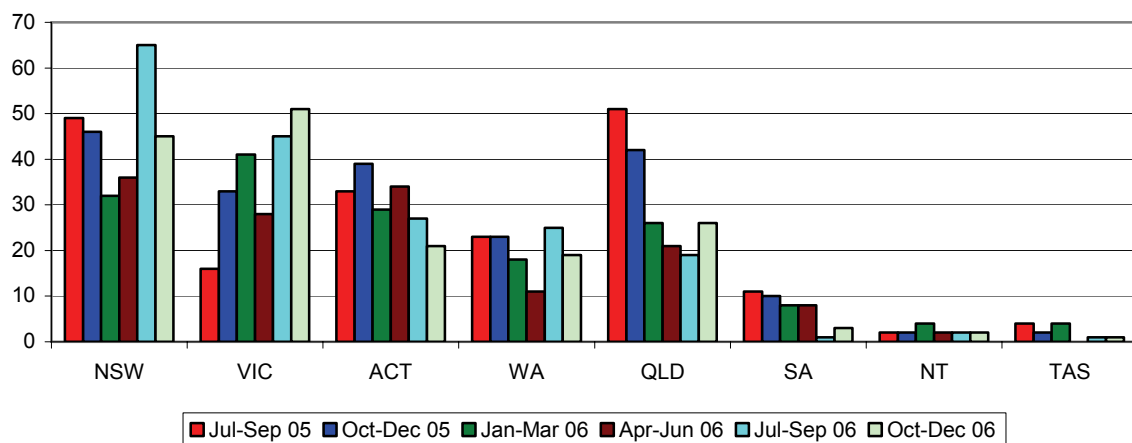


Figure 3. Total number of compliments by region comparing each quarter from July-September 2005 to October-December 2006

Comparing against the previous quarterly figures (excluding referrals), the compliment differences are:

New South Wales (-21), Western Australia (-6), Tasmania (equal), Northern Territory (equal), Victoria (+ 6), Australian Capital Territory (-6), South Australia (+2), and Queensland (+7).

## National Trends by Function

### Complaints

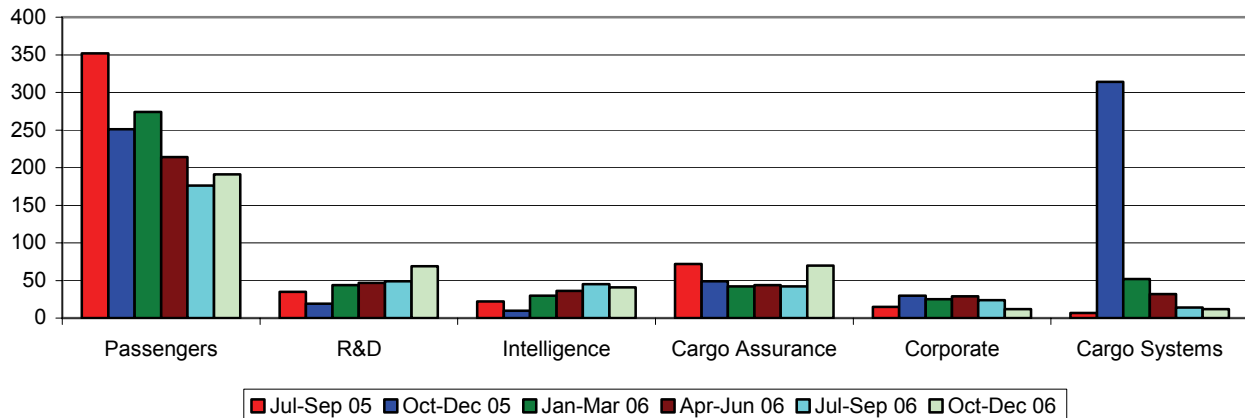


Figure 4. Total number of complaints for the six larger branches or divisions comparing the last six quarters

Comparing against the previous quarter (excluding referrals), the complaint differences are: Passengers (+15), R&D (+20), Intelligence (-4), Cargo Assurance (+28), Corporate (-14), Cargo Systems (-2).

### Compliments

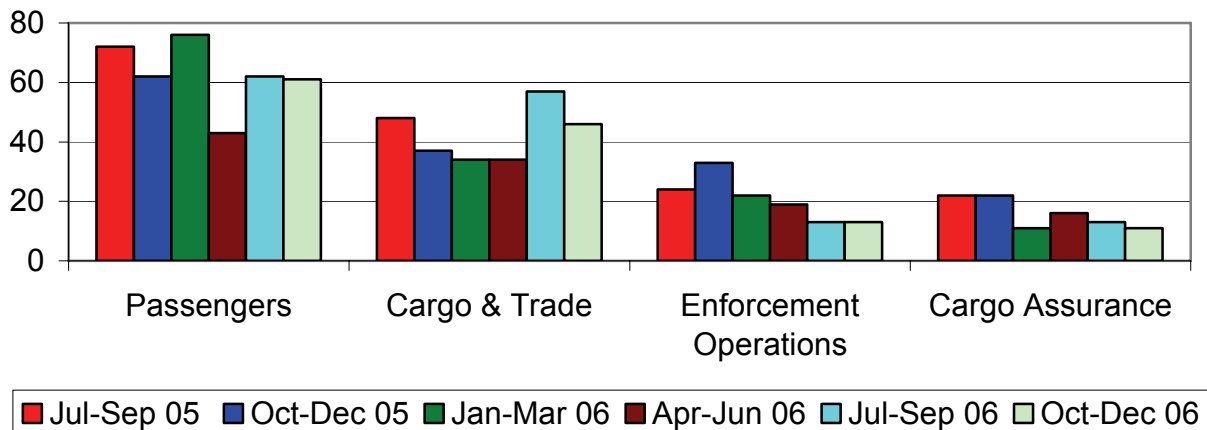


Figure 5. The trend in compliments for the four larger divisions comparing the last six quarters

Comparing against the previous quarter (excluding referrals) compliment differences are:

Cargo & Trade (-11), Passengers (-1), Enforcement Operations (NIL) and Cargo Assurance (-2).

#### **Notes for the above 2 figures:**

- Cargo Assurance mainly includes air cargo and postal operations. Cargo and Trade includes the broker licensing, cargo systems, CI&SC, entry processing, import clearance, sea cargo, temporary imports and valuation;**
- CEF complaints are recorded under R&D;**

**3. Corporate includes Corporate Communication, Financial Services Division and Recruitment;**

**4. Cargo Systems include all ICS/CMR complaints.**

A more detailed analysis of complaints and compliments for Passengers, the Container Examination Facility (CEF), the Customs Information and Support Centre (CI&SC) and Rude Officers are provided in Annexes A-D.

**2. Type of Complaint**

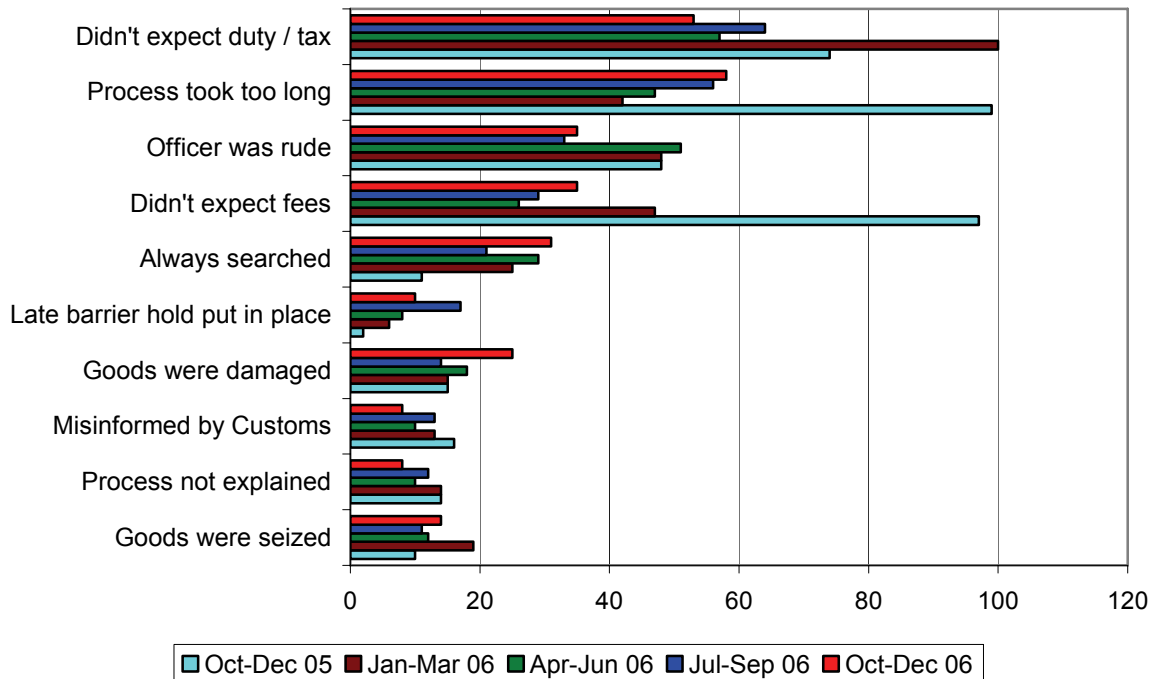


Figure 6. National Top 10 Complaints (excluding referrals) for the last four quarters

A total number of **448** complaints were made for this quarter (excluding referrals). This compares to **398** for the previous quarter and represents a **12.6%** increase.

**3. Type of Compliment**

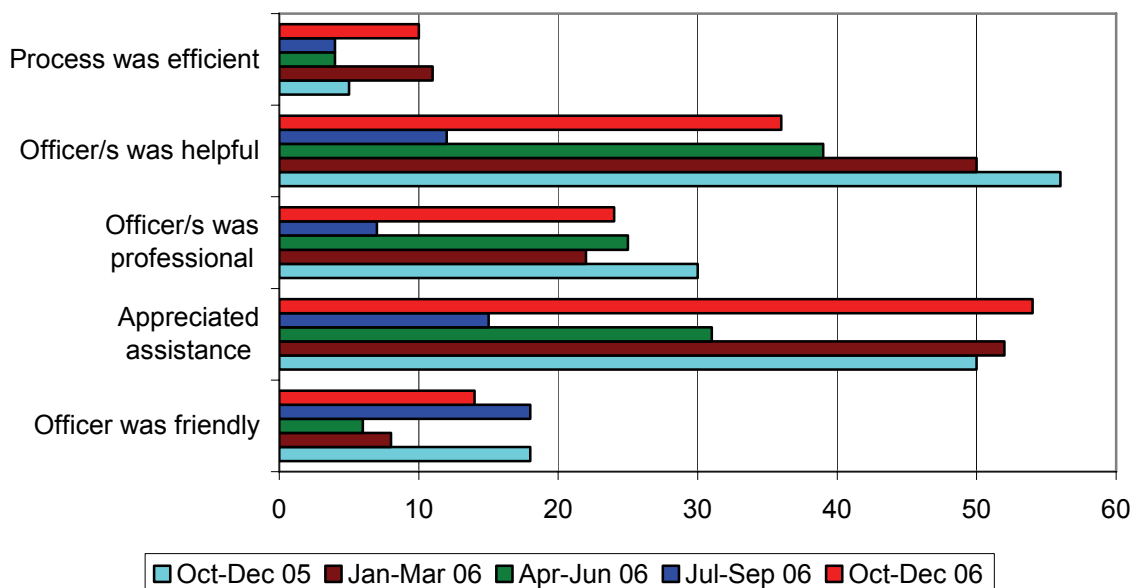


Figure 7. National top 5 compliments (excluding referrals) for the last five quarters

A total of **169** compliments were registered for this quarter (excluding referrals). This compares to **185** for the previous quarter and represents a **8.6%** decrease.

The top three compliment issues were:

- **Appreciated assistance (54):** Passengers received this compliment most frequently (**30**), **13** of which occurred at Sydney Airport.
- **Officer/s was helpful (36):** Cargo & Trade received this compliment most frequently with **19**. **10** of these compliments were for Sydney Customs House.
- **Officer was professional (24):** This compliment occurred **10** times in Cargo & Trade, including **4** times for both Fremantle and Melbourne City Customs House.

#### **4. Referrals to other agencies**

Where complaints or compliments are not related to Customs operations or procedures, the Complaints and Compliments Network refer them to the relevant agencies. During this quarter Customs referred **67** complaints and **1** compliment. The main agencies receiving referrals were AQIS (**30**), Australia Post (**13**), Airport Operator (**5**), and Security operators (**4**).

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

The average compliment resolution time of **1.39** working days reported in the previous quarter has decreased to **1.07** working days.

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

Out of a total of **685** cases received, **32** cases opened during the December quarter did not meet the 15 working day benchmark (**4.67%**). Last quarter **3.72%** of cases did not meet this criteria.

## 6. How People Contact Us

The main methods for contacting Customs during this quarter were by email (**319**), phone (including the 1800 number) (**127**), letter/fax (**75**), brochure (**92**) and remote entry (**51**), Ministerial **21**.

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 by email have decreased this quarter from **352** to **319**.

The number of complaints or compliments received has varied by:

- 1800 228227 phone (increased from **102** to **119**),
- brochure (increased from **52** to **92**).
- Ministerial (increased from **2** to **21**)
- letter or fax (increased from **71** to **75**),
- remote entry (decreased from **55** to **51**).

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](mailto:ben.hickey@customs.gov.au)

Name: Graham Leonard, Acting National Coordinator, Complaints and Compliments Network, 02 6275 6042

Email: [graham.leonard@customs.gov.au](mailto:graham.leonard@customs.gov.au)

## Passengers Division

### Complaints

The number of complaints received nationally was **191** (excluding referrals) during this quarter (compared to **176** in the previous quarter) which is equivalent to 1 complaint for every **15,454** passengers arriving in Australia. This compares with one complaint for every **15,922** passengers in the July to September 2006 quarter.

During the period 1 October to 31 December 2006 **2,951,769** passengers arrived through international airports nationally. Numbers of passengers arriving through each major airport are shown in Table 1 below.

Major Airports	Number of Airport Complaints	Passenger Arrival Numbers	Number of Passengers for Every Complaint
Sydney	66	1,311,385	19,869
Melbourne	41	597,681	14,578
Brisbane	15	512,960	34,197
Perth	40	310,663	7,767
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>2,732,689</b>	<b>16,868</b>

Table 1. Number of complaints lodged at the **four major airports** compared to the number of passengers arriving during October to December 2006

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

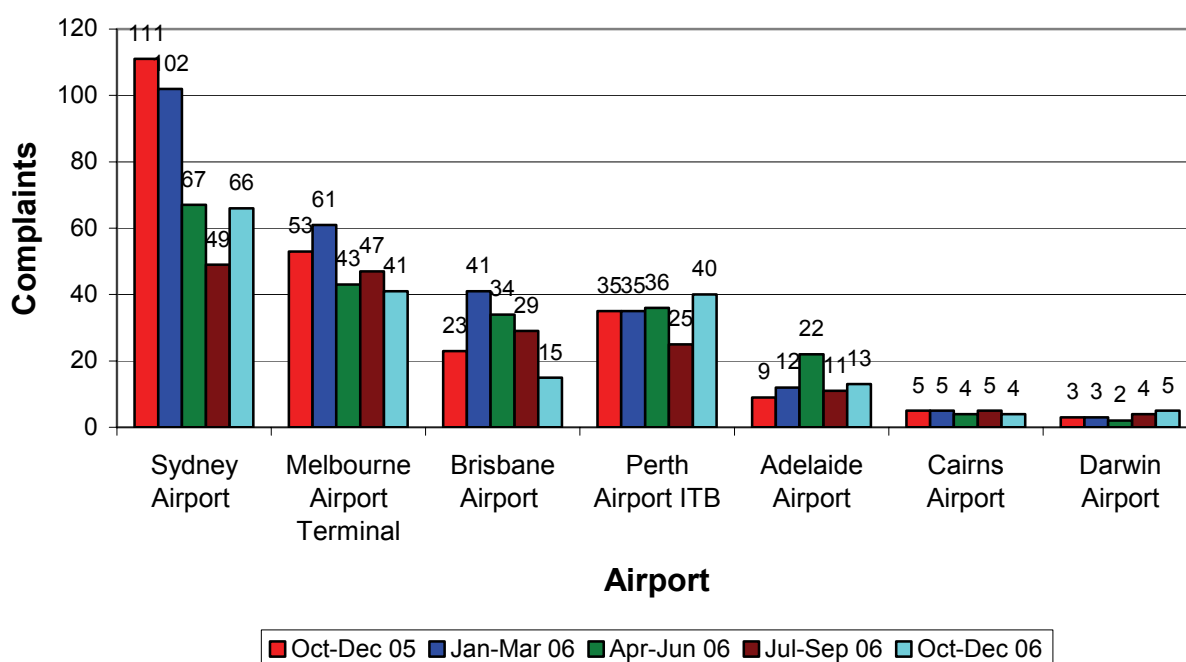


Figure 1. Passenger Complaints at each Airport for October – December 2005, January – March 2006, April – June 2006, July – September 2006 and October – December 2006.

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

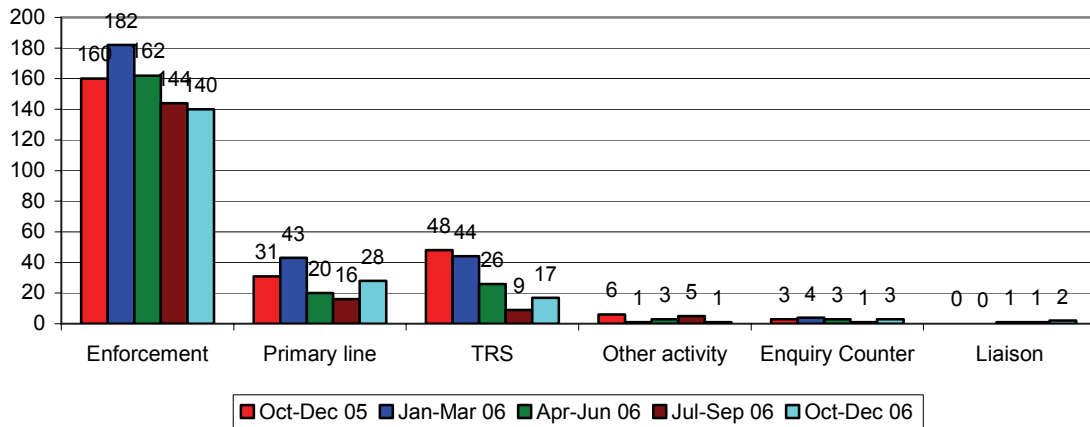


Figure 2. Passengers complaints - comparative assessment by region for October to December 2005, January to March 2006, April to June 2006, July to September 2006 and October to December 2006

The increase in complaints mainly concerned:

Primary Line: up from **16** to **28**. The main increases being, Queue related (**12**, up from **3** during the previous quarter) and 'Documentation' (**5**, up from **1**).

TRS: up from **9** to **17**. The main increases being 'Queue Delay' (**4** up from **1**) and 'Officer was Rude' (**4** up from **2**).

### Passenger Concessions

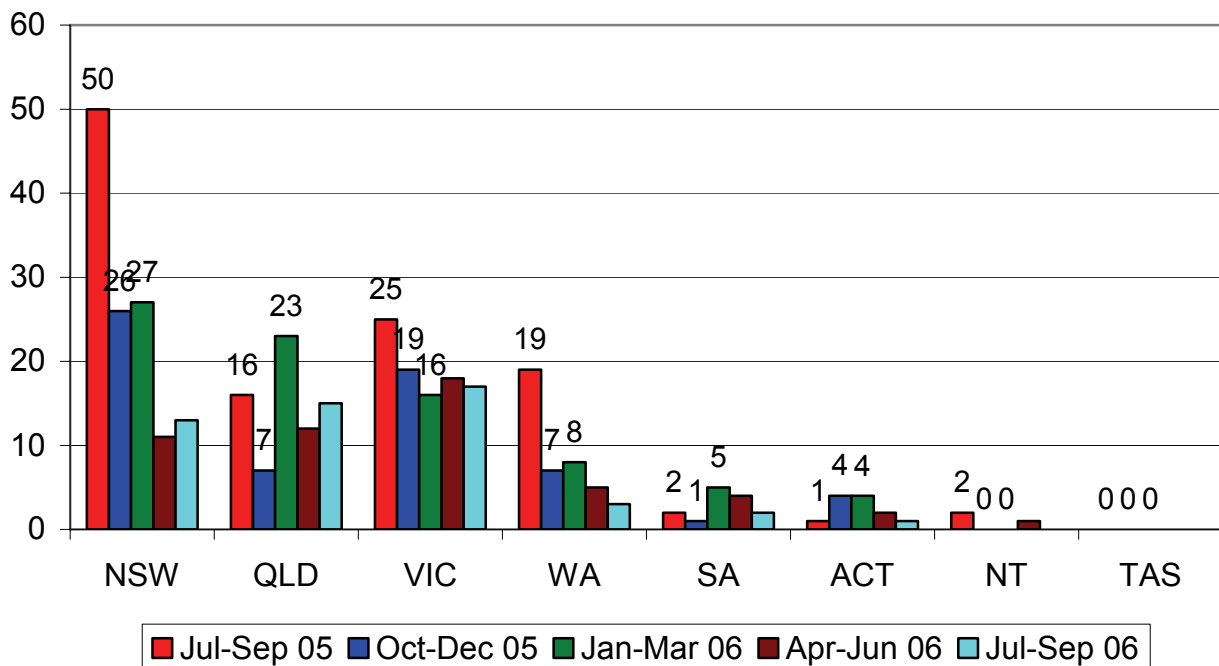


Figure 3. Passenger concessions complaints - comparative assessment by region for October to December 2005, January to March 2006, April to June 2006, July to September 2006 and October to December 2006.

## Compliments

There were **61** compliments for Passengers during this quarter, **62** the previous quarter.

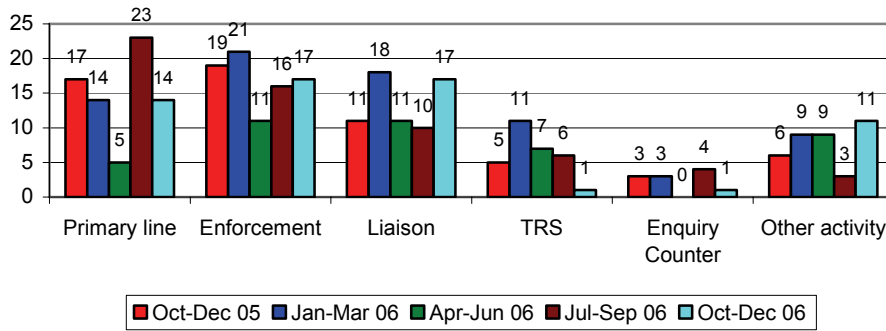


Figure 4. Passenger compliments - comparative assessment for October to December 2005, January to March 2006, April to June 2006 and July to September 2005 and October to December 2006.

## Annex B

### Cargo Division Container Examinations

CEF related complaints have *increased* from **92** to **105** during the quarter.

The **105** CEF related complaints consist of **69** operationally based complaints, **31** search related complaints (Profiling and Alerts) and **5** classified to CTO/Wharf/ Stevedores and Brokers.

During the quarter Customs inspected **34,351 TEU**. This is equivalent to **1** complaint for every **321 TEU** (previous quarter **393 TEU**).

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

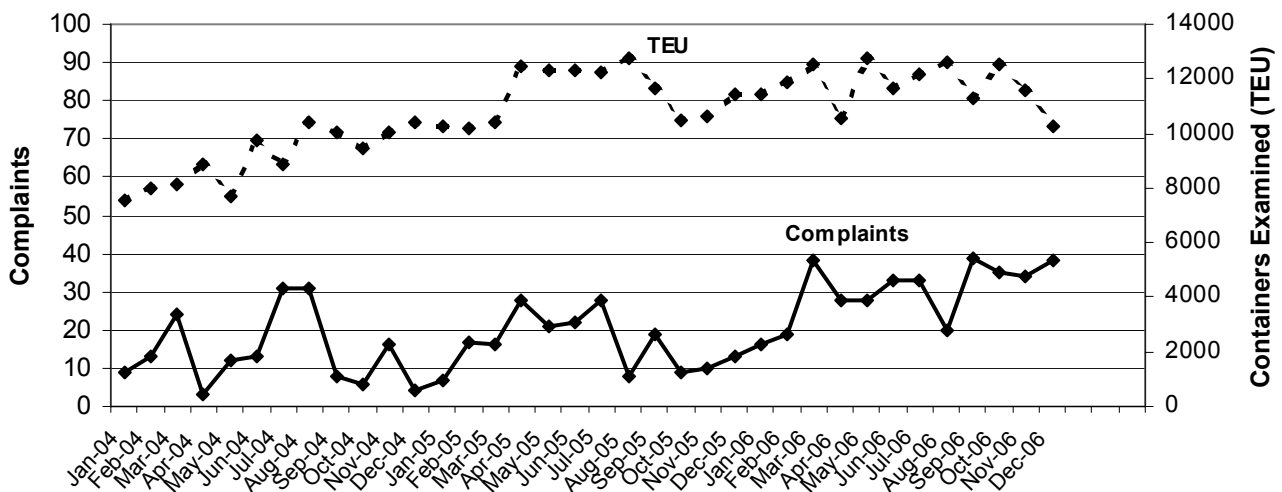


Figure 1. Trend of complaints against TEU x-rayed by Customs since Jan 04

The increase in complaints during this quarter occurred largely in **Victoria** with an additional **16** complaints. (**27** up from **11**)

Of the total **105** complaints, the three main complaint issues were:

Issue: “Process took too long” (**32**) equal to the last quarter.

Issue: “Didn’t expect fees” (**23**) - an increase from **19** during the last quarter.

Issue: “Always searched” (**20**) – an increase from **17** during the last quarter.

The following table details CEF complaints registered for each CEF for the December quarter (**69** compared to **49** for last quarter). This is an *increase* of **40.81%**. This table *excludes* complaints recorded against CTO/Wharf/Stevedores, Brokers, or Profiling and Alerts.

Issues	Brisbane	Melbourne	Fremantle	Sydney	Canberra	Adelaide	Total
Didn't expect fees	3	11	5	4			23
Goods were damaged	1		1				2
Goods were not repacked			1				1
Process not explained		1			1		2
Process took too long	7	14	3	6		2	32
Goods were missing	1	1	1	2		1	6
Other	1						1
Pre-emptive				2			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>69</b>

Table 1. National CEF complaints by region for October to December 2006  
*Note: Issues for Canberra are policy related*

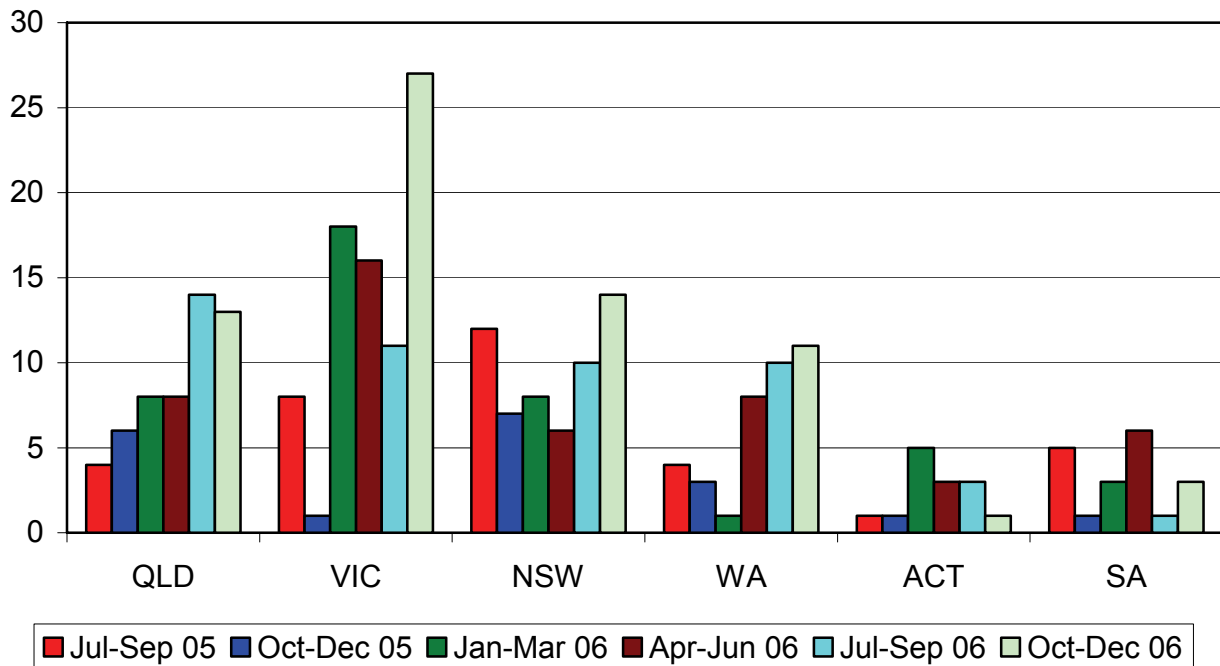


Figure 2. Comparison of Complaints relating to CEF operations by region for the previous six quarters

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

### CEF Operations Complaints Only

CEF Location	Number of Complaints	TEUs Inspected	Number of TEUs for Every Complaint
Melbourne	27	10,045	372
Brisbane	13	9,593	738
Fremantle	11	5,247	477
Adelaide	3	410	137
Sydney	14	9,019	644
Darwin	0	37	N/A
ACT	1	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>34,351</b>	<b>498</b>

Table 2. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs<sup>2</sup> inspected for October to December 2006

### Profiling & Alerts and Wharf Related Complaints

<u>In Addition:</u> Number of 'CEF related' complaints classified to Profiling and Alerts	<u>In Addition:</u> Number of 'CEF related' complaints classified to CTO/Wharf/ Stevedores and Brokers
6	2
7	3
5	0
0	0
13	0
0	0
0	0
<b>31</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 3: Number of CEF related complaints for October to December 2006

### 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	10,045	287
Brisbane	23	9,593	417
Fremantle	16	5,247	328
Adelaide	3	410	137
Sydney	27	9,019	334
Darwin	0	37	N/A
ACT	1	0	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>34,351</b>	<b>327</b>

Table 4. Number of complaints lodged compared to the number of TEUs<sup>2</sup> inspected for October to December 2006 (excluding Canberra)

### Compliments

From December 2002 to 31 December 2006, since the first CEF was established, **31** compliments have been received for CEF operations. During this time Customs has examined **451,866 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 2 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 (Profiling and Alerts). These are included because, from the complainants perspective, their complaints are about the CEF process in general, regardless of the specific area of Customs which has responsibility to respond.

## Customs Information and Support Centre

### Complaints

During this quarter **11** complaints were recorded about the CI&SC, compared with **12** for the previous quarter. This is a decrease of **8.33%**.

The most common complaint related to 'Misinformed by Customs' (**5**). This *increased* from **3** during the previous quarter.

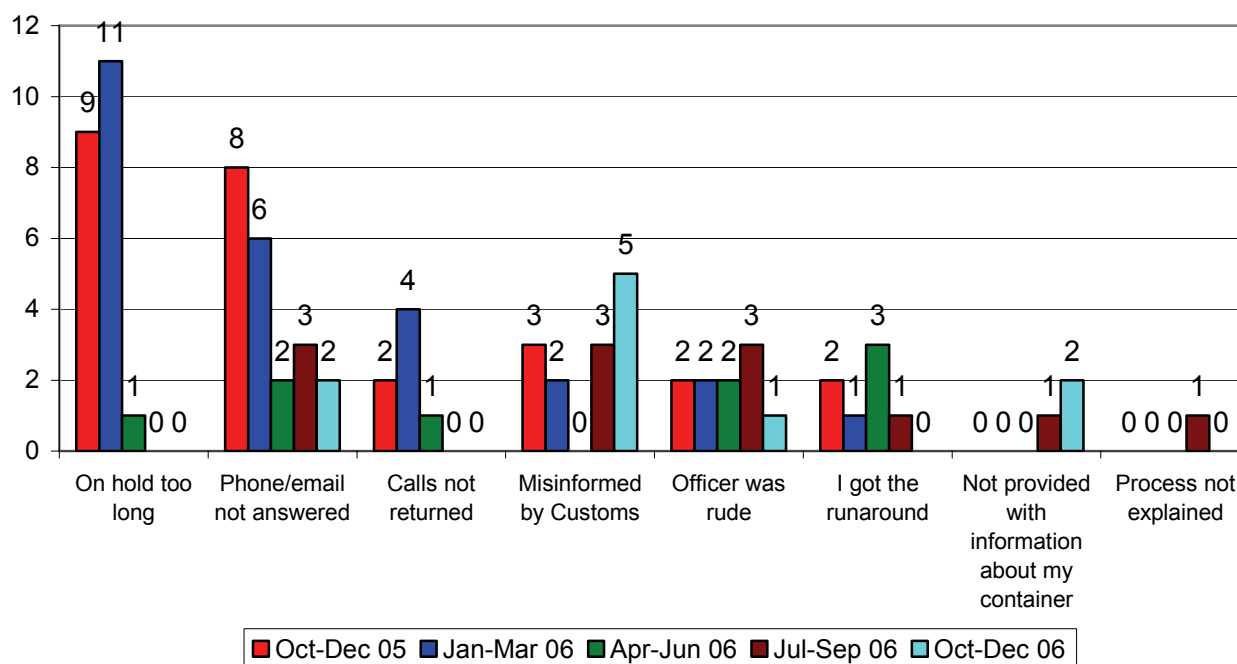


Figure 1. Comparison of the main CI&SC complaints for the previous five quarters

During the quarter **128,454** enquiries were dealt with by the CI&SC.

The number of complaints received was **11** during this quarter which is **1** complaint for every **11,678** 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	3	42,636	3,454	82	46,172	15,391
November	2	40,944	3,115	129	44,238	22,119
December	6	35,267	2,660	167	38,094	6,349

Table 1. Number of complaints lodged at the CI&SC compared to the number of calls received for October to December 2006

### Compliments

The CI&SC received **14** compliments this quarter (compared to **29** which last quarter). **8** of the compliments related to officers being helpful.

**Issue – “Officer was rude”**

“Officer was rude” was the third highest complaint in the quarter with **35** complaints nationally (**33** for the previous quarter).

Work Area	Jul-Sep 06	Oct-Dec 06
Enforcement	16	15
Primary line	5	8
CI&SC	3	1
Postal Operations	2	2
TRS	2	4
Broker Licensing	1	0
Counter	1	2
DDU	1	0
Internal Affairs Unit	1	0
Liaison	1	0
Air Cargo	0	0
Client Services	0	0
Corporate Communication	0	0
Enquiry Counter	0	1
HR	0	1
Other	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>35</b>

Table 1. Number of complaints received nationally for ‘Officer was rude’ by work area comparative assessment: July to September 2006 and October to December 2006

Note: Complaints recorded against Corporate Communication related to the “Border Security” television series

**Officer was rude**

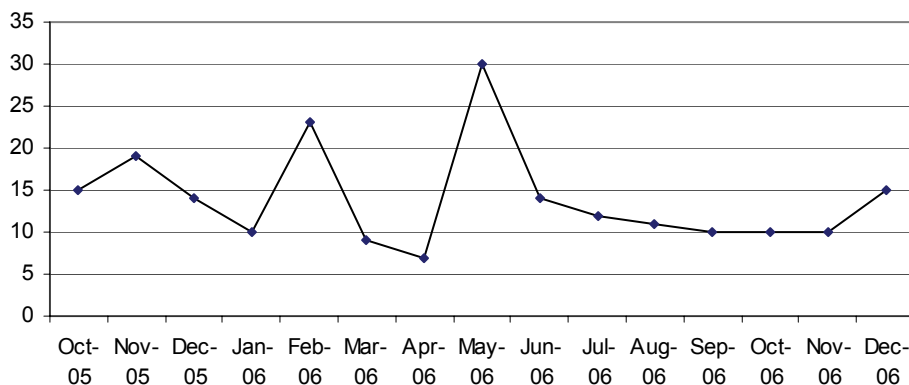


Chart 1. Line graph of complaints received for ‘Officer was rude’ in Passengers by month from October to December 2006

## Cargo Division Cargo Systems

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

### ICS Complaints

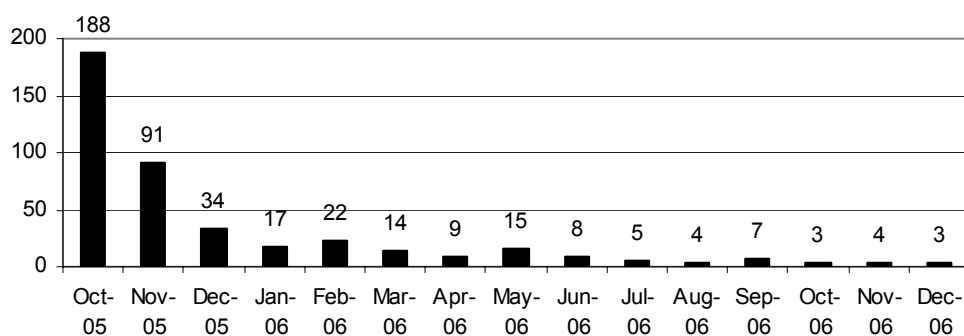


Figure 1. Number of ICS complaints received during October 2005 to December 2006

The reason for complaints in the December quarter were:

Issue	Jan-Mar 06	Apr-Jun 06	Jul-Sep 06	Oct-Dec 06
Didn't expect fees	28	13	7	3
System Too Slow	1	1	4	2
Poor Design	9	8	3	2
System Down	4	4	1	1
Documentation	0	2	0	0
Self Assessed Clearance	2	2	0	0
Implementation	1	1	0	1
Process took too long	6	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

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

### **ICS Compliments**

During the quarter **2** compliments were received stating "ICS System is working well".

# 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:

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## Other Comments

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

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