

# Press Release

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## HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate

### CPS London Borough Performance Assessment

#### Enfield Borough

Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published their performance assessment of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) London, Enfield borough. It should be read in conjunction with the London-wide report also published today.

This is one of a planned series of borough performance assessments of the units in CPS London.

The overall performance assessment of CPS London, Enfield borough was **POOR**.

The table below provides a breakdown of the assessed level of performance against the ten aspects:

Aspect	Score	Assessment
Pre-charge advice and decisions	2	Fair
Decision-making, preparation and progression in magistrates' court cases	0	Poor
Decision-making, preparation and progression in Crown Court cases	0	Poor
The prosecution of cases at court	2	Fair
Serious violent and sexual offences, and hate crimes	2	Fair
Disclosure	0	Poor
Custody time limits	2	Fair
The service to victims and witnesses	0	Poor
Managing performance to improve	0	Poor
Managing resources	Not scored	
Management and partnership working	0	Poor
<b>Overall assessment</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Poor</b>

Casework decisions are generally sound, although the quality and depth of the consideration of cases could be improved so that more detailed advice is provided to police to assist in building strong cases and ancillary issues such as the need for special measures to assist vulnerable and/or intimidated witnesses are addressed. However case progression and preparation

systems in both the magistrates' court and the Crown Court are weak and this is reflected in the conviction rates.

In the magistrates' courts the successful outcome rate in the year to September 2009 was 79.5%, having declined significantly during the year to fall below the CPS London average of 86.1% and the national average of 87.1%.

In the Crown Court the successful outcomes rate for the same period was 69.5% which was again below the CPS London average of 72.7% and the national average of 80.7%. The conviction rates in serious and sensitive cases had also deteriorated in the last year.

The ineffective trial rate (i.e. the proportion of contested cases which do not proceed on the day fixed for trial) was commendably low, but largely due to robust systems in the courts themselves. Weak aspects of case preparation included the undertaking of the duties of disclosure of unused material to the defence which was neither thorough nor timely.

The quality of service provided to victims and witnesses generally was mixed. Crown prosecutors liaised well with them at court, but their notification to attend court could be late. If charges were dropped or substantially altered the quality and timeliness of letters varied and were not always sent.

Positive relationships had been maintained with partners in the criminal justice system. However performance management within the unit needs to be strengthened considerably.

Stephen Wooler, HM Chief Inspector of the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, said:

**“CPS Enfield has struggled to cope with a period of change. Case preparation needs to be strengthened considerably, and weaknesses have been reflected in deteriorating case outcomes at court. The borough needs to build upon its good relationships with partners within the criminal justice system. It will need to improve performance across a range of aspects if it is to deliver the quality of service which the public is entitled to expect.”**

This press release should be read in conjunction with the executive summary which is attached.

For further information please contact Anisha Visram, HMCPSI's media contact, on 020 7210 1187/07901 856 348.

## Notes to editors

1. HMCPST was established as an independent statutory body on 1 October 2000 by the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate Act 2000. The Chief Inspector is appointed by, and reports to, the Attorney General.
2. The pilot performance assessment of Croydon borough, published in May 2009, was the first of a planned series of performance assessments of the individual borough units in CPS London.
3. There are 33 geographical units based on London boroughs and the cities of London and Westminster. CPS London also has a dedicated traffic unit and a complex casework centre which handles serious and complex cases and those at the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey). CPS London provides advice to police and charging decisions through a telephone service, CPS London Direct, or where a face-to-face meeting is needed through the local borough units. The units are gathered into six districts based on Crown Court centres.
4. The borough performance assessment (BPA) process provides a benchmark for the performance of the boroughs in ten key aspects of work, each of which is assessed as being Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor. The unit is then assessed on its overall performance in the light of these markings. The process also evaluates the management of resources at borough level.
5. The scoring mechanism is described in annex C of the report. This provides some limiters that apply in addition to the total of points scored. This is because of the significant impact that some aspects will have on the delivery of the borough's core business, or because of the impact of a number of Poor aspects.
6. The performance assessment included examination of finalised case files; interviews with representatives of partner criminal justice agencies and the judiciary; discussions with borough staff; observations at the office; and observations at the magistrates' court and the Crown Court.
7. The findings from the borough performance assessments undertaken have been drawn together in a pan-CPS London report which addresses the significant issues that have emerged as the assessments have progressed in order to provide an overall picture of the performance of the area. The report has also been published today along with nine other boroughs and the report relating to the traffic unit.