

## HM CPSI overall performance assessment of CPS Greater Manchester

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published the overall performance assessment (OPA) of CPS Greater Manchester (the Area).

The OPA process provides a benchmark for each CPS Area's performance in 13 key aspects of work, each of which is assessed as being 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Fair' or 'Poor'. The Area is then assessed on its overall performance in the light of these markings.

The overall performance assessment of CPS Greater Manchester was Good.

The table below provides a breakdown of the assessed level of performance against the 13 aspects and provides a comparison with the 2005 exercise:

<b>Critical aspects</b>	<b>Assessment level</b>		
	<b>OPA 2005</b>	<b>OPA 2007</b>	<b>Direction of travel</b>
Pre-charge decision-making	Good	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Ensuring successful outcomes in the magistrates' courts	Good	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Ensuring successful outcomes in the Crown Court	Good	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
The service to victims and witnesses	Good	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Declined</b>
Leadership	Fair	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Overall critical assessment level</b>		<b>GOOD</b>	
Progressing cases at court	Good	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b> <sup>1</sup>
Sensitive cases and hate crime	Good	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Disclosure	Fair	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Custody time limits	Fair	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Delivering change	Fair	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Managing resources	Fair	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Managing performance to improve	Fair	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Securing community confidence	Fair	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
<b>OVERALL ASSESSMENT</b>	Good	<b>GOOD</b>	

<sup>1</sup> The direction of travel reflects the fact that the last OPA assessed different criteria in progressing cases at court. Where there is an overlap of criteria performance has remained stable but overall for the criteria the assessment is fair whereas previously it was good.

Some aspects have been categorised as critical; this is due to the significant impact that they have on the overall performance of a CPS Area and the service it delivers to the public.

CPS Greater Manchester has maintained its overall 'Good' assessment. Within this, it has improved performance in four of the underlying aspects since the last OPA in 2005 and maintained performance in eight. The aspect which has declined is the service which the CPS, working in conjunction with other agencies, provides to victims and witnesses. The Area is fully aware of where improvements are needed in all aspects of its work and manages performance well. The appointment of a new senior team provides a real opportunity to revisit the current structure and ensure it is best placed to deliver the business in the future.

The Area performs consistently well in terms of casework outcomes. The conviction rates in the Crown Court and magistrates' courts are better than national averages and Crown Court cases are generally handled well.

Statutory charging (a national scheme under which the CPS has assumed responsibility from the police for the initial decision whether to charge in contested and more serious cases) has been implemented successfully, and the Area performs better than national average for all expected outcomes. The handling of sensitive cases and hate crime is also sound with performance again better than national levels.

Success has been slower coming in relation to joint victim and witness care. The majority of the ten Witness Care Units are achieving at least half of the national minimum requirements, although only one of those is being fully met across the whole Area. Nevertheless the CPS works well and co-operatively with its partner criminal justice agencies to bring about improvements.

Stephen Wooler CB, HM Chief Inspector, said:

*"CPS Greater Manchester has performed at a consistently good level since the last overall performance assessment and has improved the supporting management structures enabling it to continue to deliver good outcomes for the community it serves. However, it is also important improvements are made in the service provided to victims and witnesses."*

The Inspectorate is visiting all 42 CPS Areas over a six month period in order to provide a benchmark from which future work can be informed. A summative report will be published in early 2008 which will set out on a comparative basis the assessments for all the Areas. The outcomes of these assessments will be used to determine where best to focus Inspectorate resources in order to promote improvement within the CPS and the criminal justice system as a whole. It is also hoped that the Areas, and CPS Headquarters, will use this information to address issues at local and national level where this is necessary.

This Press Release should be read in conjunction with the Report itself (which contains an integral summary) and is available on our website at [www.hmcp.si.gov.uk](http://www.hmcp.si.gov.uk).

## **Notes to Editors**

HMCPSP 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.

The OPA report is based on judgements that have been made by HMCPSP using a combination of absolute and comparative assessments of performance. These came from national data, CPS self-assessment, HMCPSP findings and by measurement under the criteria and indicators of good performance set out in the OPA framework. The exercise will include visits to all 42 CPS Areas over a six month period, between June-December 2007. Each Area is rated 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Fair' or 'Poor'.

The Inspectorate uses an assessment model which is designed to give pre-eminence to the ratings for 'critical' aspects of work as drivers for the final overall performance level. Assessments for the critical aspects are overlaid by ratings in relation to the other defining ones, in order to arrive at the OPA. This assessment model is included in the framework and is available to all Areas.

This exercise is not a full inspection and differs from traditional inspection activity. While it is designed to set out comprehensively the positive aspects of performance and those requiring improvement, it intentionally avoids being a detailed analysis of the processes underpinning performance. However, it is designed to provide a benchmark from which future work can be informed.

CPS Greater Manchester serves the area covered by the Greater Manchester Police. Its main office is based at Manchester. In the year ended March 2007 the Area employed 448.3 full-time equivalent staff and handled 66,591 cases before the magistrates' courts and 9,219 in the Crown Court. Advice was also given to the police in 12,987 cases which did not result in proceedings.

This Press Release and the Report in relation to CPS Greater Manchester are part of a block of nine reports published today. HMCPSP has already published two tranches relating to 22 Areas, and will publish one further tranche of reports covering the remaining Areas.