

# Press Notice

Embargoed until 00:01 14 March 2006



## CPS Nottinghamshire

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published its Overall Performance Assessment (OPA) of CPS Nottinghamshire.

The OPA process provides a benchmark for each CPS Area's performance in fourteen aspects of work, five of which are categorised as critical. Each of the aspects 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 Nottinghamshire was **Fair**.

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

<b>Critical Aspects</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Pre-charge decision-making	Good
Ensuring successful outcomes	Good
Leadership	Good
The service to victims and witnesses	Fair
Managing resources	Fair
<b>Other Defining Aspects</b>	
Managing magistrates' courts cases	Fair
Managing Crown Court cases	Good
Handling sensitive cases and hate crimes	Good
Custody time limits	Fair
Disclosure	Poor
Presenting and progressing cases at court	Good
Delivering change	Good
Managing performance to improve	Fair
Securing community confidence	Good

The critical aspects are those which have a particularly significant impact on the overall performance of a CPS Area. They are weighted differently from the other aspects in determining the overall performance of an Area.

CPS Nottinghamshire manages its Crown Court cases well, but some aspects of the handling of magistrates' courts cases and the monitoring of sensitive cases (including hate crimes) require further attention. The handling of the disclosure of unused material, itself the subject of a recommendation in a previous report, remains unsatisfactory. Case outcomes are generally good, and most performance measures show an improvement over the previous year and throughout the period of the assessment.

The Area has been successful in implementing the statutory charging regime. It has also rolled out the Effective Trial Management Programme, working well with criminal justice partners. Further work is needed to ensure a better service to witnesses through the delivery of improvements to meet minimum standards for witness care units and to comply with the Direct Communication with Victims scheme.

Limited savings have been achieved by the use of in-house advocates in the Crown Court and designated caseworkers in the magistrates' courts. However, the Area has taken steps to achieve value-for-money with improved accounting procedures and training for managers. This should lead to improved resource management and complement the improvements in performance management noted since the last inspection.

Stephen Wooler, HM Chief Inspector of the CPS, said:

**“CPS Nottinghamshire has benefited from a stable senior management team after a number of changes in the previous year. They have worked well to implement initiatives that will take the Area forward and embed a constructive approach in work with its criminal justice partners. Whilst steps have been taken to improve performance on disclosure, the Area needs assure itself that action taken has been effective.”**

The report is now available to journalists on an embargoed basis by visiting the Inspectorate's website ([www.hmcpsi.gov.uk](http://www.hmcpsi.gov.uk)) which contains an embargoed section for the media. It may be accessed by using the following details:

- Username: MEDIA
- Password: OPAS2

For further information, please contact HMCPSI Communications Section, on 020 7210 1143. If the query relates to the CPS, contact David Marley, Area Communications Manager, on 0115 852 3568.

## **Notes to Editors**

Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPsi) was established as an independent statutory body by the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate Act 2000, on 1 October 2000. The Chief Inspector is appointed by, and reports to, the Attorney General.

The Overall Performance Assessment (OPA) report is based on assessments and judgments that have been made by HMCPsi using a combination of absolute and comparative assessments of performance. These came from national data, CPS self-assessment, HMCPsi assessments, and by assessment under the criteria and indicators of good performance set out in the OPA framework. The exercise included visits to all 42 CPS Areas over a seven month period between June and December 2005.

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 aspects, 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. The inspectorate will use this information to determine where best to focus its resources in order to promote improvement within the CPS and the criminal justice system as a whole. It is also hoped that the CPS Areas, and CPS HQ, will use this information to address issues at local and national level where this is necessary.

CPS Nottinghamshire serves the area covered by the Nottinghamshire Police. Its main office is based at Nottingham. In the year ended March 2005 the Area employed 157.8 full time equivalent staff, and handled 36,898 cases, which included 10,110 (27.4%) where advice was given to the police before charge.

This press release and the report in relation to CPS Nottinghamshire should be read in conjunction with HMCPsi's national press release and the summative report which provides an overall performance assessment in relation to all 42 CPS Areas. These are also available on HMCPsi's website in the embargoed sections. Twenty-two of the reports were published in December 2005 to avoid an unacceptably long lapse between assessment and publication. Those relating to the remaining twenty Areas are published today.