

Press Notice

Embargoed until 00:00 13 December 2005



CPS Inspectorate Overall Performance Assessment of CPS Devon and Cornwall

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published their Overall Performance Assessment (OPA) of **CPS Devon and Cornwall**.

The OPA process provides a benchmark for each CPS Area's performance in fourteen key aspects of work. 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 table below provides a breakdown of the assessed level of performance against the fourteen aspects:

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

Some aspects have been categorised as critical, and these aspects are weighted differently to the other aspects in determining the overall performance of an Area. This is due to the significant impact that these aspects will have on the overall performance of a CPS Area. As a result, the overall performance assessment of CPS Devon and Cornwall was **Poor**.

Overall the Area's casework performance remains sound but it needs to be supported by stronger planning and management of its business. In conjunction with its criminal justice partners, the Area met its targets for reducing the level of ineffective trials and processing persistent young offenders. It only narrowly missed the target for increasing the number of

offences brought to justice. Sensitive cases and hate crime are dealt with effectively and the Area shares relevant information with local interest groups.

The Area has struggled to manage its resources effectively, and this aspect of performance is in particular need of urgent attention. The capacity to deliver change needs to be improved, and in particular the plans for the move to statutory charging.

The inspectorate has visited all 42 CPS Areas over a six month period in order 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.

Stephen Wooler, Chief Inspector of the CPS, said:

“In many aspects the work of CPS Devon and Cornwall is quite sound, with casework dealt with appropriately and wide ranging community engagement. The Area, however, faces a number of challenges, not least of which is the need for stronger planning and performance management, as well as to balance its budget. The management team’s need to focus effort on those problematic aspects if it is to achieve a better performance rating. “

For further information, please contact Michael Fogg, HMCPSI Communications Manager, on 020 7210 1143 or 07901 856 346.