

To: Police Accountability Board

Sponsor: Chief Superintendent Sherrie Nash

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COMPLAINTS REVIEW TEAM

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update the Police Accountability Board on complaints and trends identified through the Complaints Review Team (CRT).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report provides the Police Accountability Board with an overview of complaints, dissatisfaction reports and emerging trends identified through the Complaints Review Team (CRT) for April to June 2026, alongside wider CRT demand and performance pressures. A total of 325 complaints were recorded, compared with 238 in the same period in 2025. Although this represents an increase in recorded complaints, the number of individual allegations remained broadly stable at 396, compared with 400 in 2025. The Constabulary continues to monitor whether improved accessibility and reporting arrangements are influencing recorded demand.
- 2.2. At the time of writing, 12% of allegations had been assessed as involving service that was not acceptable, compared with 14% for the same period in 2025. A significant proportion had not received a final assessment at the reporting date, either because enquiries remained ongoing or because the available information did not enable a clear determination to be made.

- 2.3. The report also notes that CRT continues to resolve a substantial volume of dissatisfaction at first contact, with 1,236 “there and then” reports handled in 2026 to date, accounting for 61% of CRT activity.
- 2.4. The National Factor most consistently identified remains ‘Investigation’, with recurring themes linked to public understanding of investigative outcomes, the regularity and quality of victim updates, and perceptions about crime progress. Existing improvement work through the investigation’s strategy, Crime Standards Delivery Group, Project Sherlock guidance and Standards and Assurance activity continues to provide governance and support in this area.
- 2.5. Other issues highlighted include a June spike in call handling allegations, continued monitoring of repeat subject officers through enhanced CRT functionality, and a small number of organisational and departmental learning points. Organisational learning was identified in relation to the delayed service of a non-molestation order, requiring further review of policy and current unserved orders. Departmental learning was identified in Cyber and Fraud, and MASH/PVP. Direct learning feedback has been provided to the relevant departmental heads and fed into the Organisational Learning Group (OLG) for tracking and testing.
- 2.6. The CRT team is managing sustained demand, with 83 complaints awaiting initial handling as of 29 July 2026. Cases are prioritised according to risk and vulnerability, and demand and capacity are being actively monitored to support timely contact with complainants.
- 2.7. The report concludes by noting the pending 2026 HMIC inspection for PSD/Public Complaints.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 The CRT system facilitates the recording of force complaints/dissatisfaction reports which are received by the Constabulary through a variety of reporting methods. Upon finalisation of the complaint investigation and closure, complaints are classified by ‘National Factors’. National Factors were set by the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) to establish themes for all forces. These factors highlight the areas that complaints are centred around and assist with the identification of trends. Within each complaint there will likely be one or

more allegation, therefore allegation data will always be greater than complaint recording data.

Total number of complaints recorded on CRT April 2026 – June 2026:

	Complaints Logged	Allegations Logged
April to June 2026	325 (36% more complaints from same period last year)	396
April to June 2025	238	400

- 3.2 The reasons for the increase cannot be attributed to a single cause. Improved accessibility and the availability AI assistance as well as several reporting routes may have contributed to more people being able to raise concerns. No specific area or allegation has seen a significant increase. Of the 396 allegations against the Force in this period (April to June 2026), at the time of writing, 12% were resolved as “*the service provided was **not** acceptable*” compared to 14% for the same period in 2025.

3.3

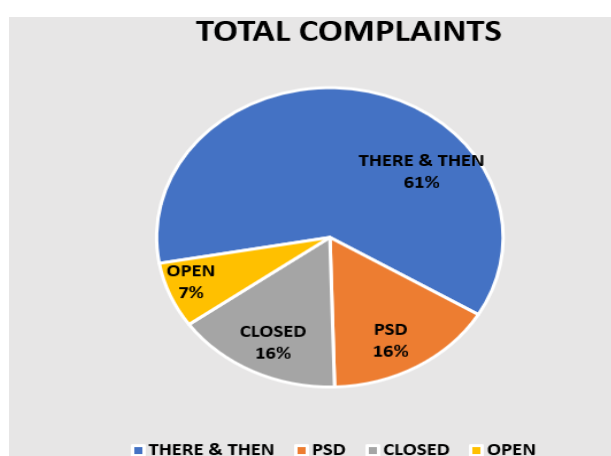
Validity Option	Allegations Logged (April to June 2026)
No (service acceptable)	120
Unknown (unable to determine if service was acceptable, i.e., no corroborating evidence to support allegation, or investigation is still ongoing and outcome yet to be determined)	227
Yes (service was not acceptable)	49
Total	396

- 3.4 A complaint will be closed as not acceptable when the service provided was not to a standard expected by the Constabulary, it has been recognised that something did not go as intended, an officer has made an error or expected

standards have not been met. From this, any identified learning will be addressed for action via the individual, operational or organisational routes.

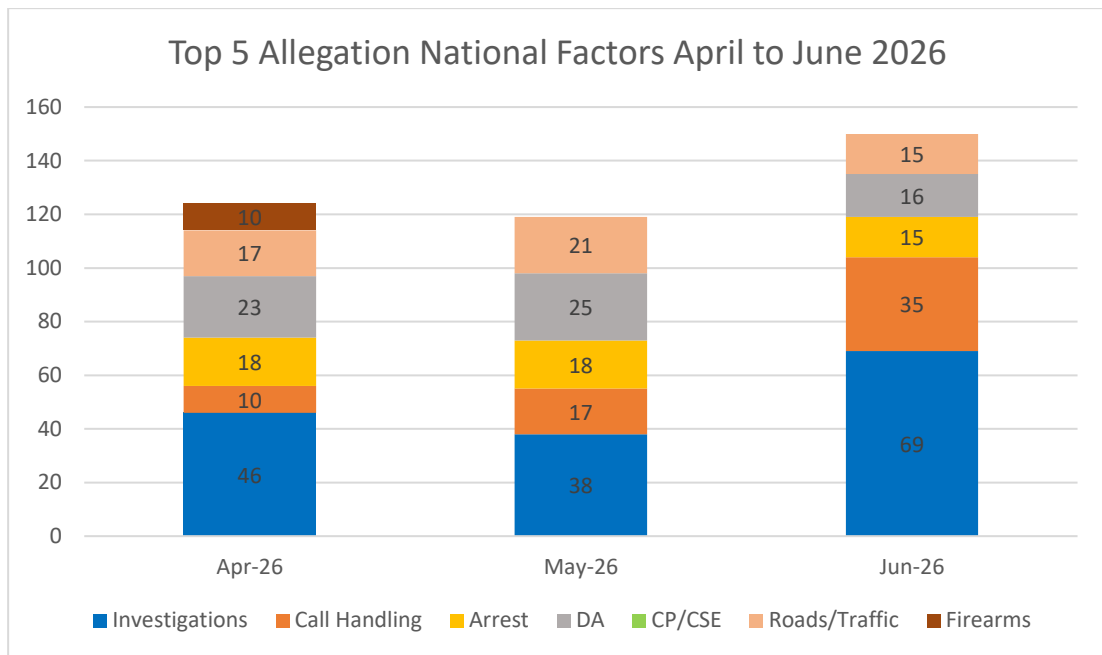
- 3.5 If a complaint or allegation is investigated and it is found that '*the service provided was acceptable*', the complainant will be updated and the record closed, notwithstanding individual or organisational learning/understanding may still be beneficial to mitigate further complaints.

4.0 CRT Handling of Dissatisfaction 2026 to date

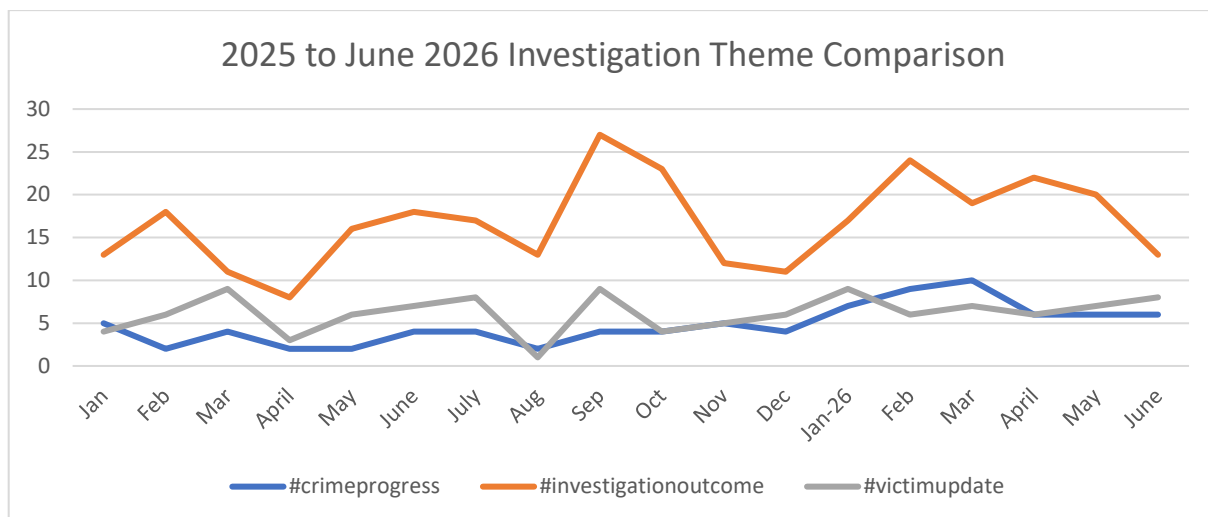


- 4.1 In addition to the recorded complaints / allegations in 2026, to date CRT have initially handled 1236 "*there and then*" reports of dissatisfaction and queries. 'There and then' are reported dissatisfactions which have been resolved promptly by the intervention of CRT. 61% of CRT's work (Comparison: 1164 for the same period 2025).

5.0 Key National Factors identified in complaints by month (April to June 2026)



- 5.1 Notable spikes in dissatisfactions recorded against a specific National Factor are researched to identify any area of concerns and feedback provided to the department or business area concerned, where appropriate. This supports the early identification of recurring concerns, enables learning to be shared and helps promote consistent professional standards.
- 5.2 Investigation remained the most frequently recorded complaint factor, although levels were within the usual reporting range during the quarter.
- 5.3 There are consistent themes identified from an overview of the National Factor 'Investigation'. Public understanding / perception / expectation of the outcome of an investigation, the level of and regularity of contact and time taken deal with an investigation regardless of whether the service provided was acceptable or not. These themes arise consistently to date.



Breakdown below:

	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	Mar 2026	Total		April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	Total
All Complaint Allegations	173	162	206	541		133	105	158	396
Number of Allegations with National Factor 'Investigation'	72	63	103	238		46	38	69	153
<i>Victim Update</i>	9	6	10	25		6	7	8	21
<i>Crime progress</i>	7	9	10	26		6	6	6	18
<i>Investigation outcome.</i>	16	25	19	60		22	20	13	55
Total	32	40	39	111		34	33	27	94

5.5 Other key themes identified are:

- Concerns that all relevant lines of enquiry had not been pursued.
- The complainant disagrees with the NFA rationale.
- Key evidence has not been considered or missed by the OIC.

5.6 Recorded investigation-related allegations were higher in the South of the county; however, both areas showed improvement compared with the previous reporting period. This period has shown an improvement in both areas with a reduction from 47 and 93 for North and South respectively.

Investigation	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	Totals
CID North	7	7	17	31
Response North	4	1	5	10
				41
CID South	20	13	16	49
Response South	4	1	2	7
				56

5.7 Call-handling allegations increased to 35 in June 2026. The data has been shared with the relevant senior manager to support analysis of the underlying causes and identify any appropriate service improvements.

6.0 Monitoring recurring complaint patterns

6.1 The Constabulary monitors recurring complaint patterns to identify potential learning, provide appropriate support and promote professional standards.

7.0 Organisational/Department/Team Learning Identified

7.1 Organisational learning:

A complaint identified organisational learning concerning the notification, recording and service of a protective order. A review found that the order had not been visible to responding officers when contact was reported. Once identified, the record was updated and action taken. Work is under way with relevant partners to strengthen notification, escalation and oversight arrangements and to reduce the risk of recurrence.

7.2 Department learning was identified in 2 allegations for this period:

- **CYBER & FRAUD** – A complex fraud investigation involving a substantial volume of property identified learning concerning the recording, review and timely return of seized items. The service provided was assessed as acceptable, and procedural learning has been implemented within the department.

- MASH, PVP – A complaint identified an issue concerning the accuracy of information recorded during a safeguarding disclosure process. The matter was reviewed and relevant learning has been shared and implemented.

7.3 No team learning was identified in this period.

8.0 CRT Performance

Jun-26	New Complaints awaiting initial handling	July-26	New Complaints awaiting initial handling
05/06/2026	89	03/07/2026	93
08/06/2026	64	06/07/2026	102
12/06/2026	62	10/07/2026	108
15/06/2026	68	13/07/2026	114
19/06/2026	73	17/07/2026	103
22/06/2026	81	20/07/2026	121
26/06/2026	88	24/07/2026	100
29/06/2026	103	27/07/2026	83

Live complaints awaiting initial handling: **83 (27/07/2026)**

9. Updates / Recommendations

9.1. HMIC inspection pending 2026 for PSD/Public Complaints.