

# Press Release

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## HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate

### CPS London Borough Performance Assessment

#### Haringey Borough

Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published their performance assessment of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) London, Haringey 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, Haringey 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	0	Poor
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	0	Poor
Disclosure	0	Poor
Custody time limits	3	Good
The service to victims and witnesses	0	Poor
Managing performance to improve	2	Fair
Managing resources	Not scored	
Management and partnership working	2	Fair
<b>Overall assessment</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Poor</b>

The quality of decision-making is generally sound. However, this needs to be accompanied at the pre-charge stage by more thorough and consistent provision of advice to police to assist the building of strong cases. There needs to be consideration of ancillary issues such as the need to apply for special measures to assist vulnerable and/or intimidated witnesses in giving evidence. The standard of case preparation in both magistrates' court cases

and Crown Court cases is very variable, and this is reflected in case outcomes.

In the magistrates' court successful outcomes (convictions) in the year to September 2009 were 82.1% which was significantly below the CPS London average of 86.1% and the national average of 87.1%.

In Crown Court cases in the year to September 2009 the borough's successful outcomes rate at 62.7% was significantly worse than the CPS London average of 72.7% and the national average of 80.7%. Outcomes in cases of serious violence and sexual offences were also significantly below the London average.

Compliance with the prosecution's duties of disclosure of unused material was neither thorough nor timely, and instructions to advocates in the Crown Court lacked detailed analysis of case issues. However, custody time limits were monitored well.

The service to victims and witnesses needs to improve, both in relation to improving communication generally, and if charges were dropped or significantly altered explanatory letters were not always sent, although when they were the quality was generally good.

The move to an integrated prosecution team with police is regarded as positive, and borough managers will now need to focus on joint performance management; they appreciate the need to improve case preparation but have yet to identify the root causes.

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

**“There are weaknesses across the board in relation to the borough's management of its casework. These need to be tackled if the low level of successful outcomes in relation to both magistrates' court and Crown Court cases is to improve. It is important that managers build on the relationships with partners in the criminal justice system and the closer working relationship with police. Performance has suffered particularly during a period of “imitative overload” and now needs to improve in order to provide an acceptable standard of service to the courts and the public in Haringey.”**

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. 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.
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.