

Press Notice

Embargoed until 00:00 13 December 2005



CPS Inspectorate Overall Performance Assessment of CPS Cumbria

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published their Overall Performance Assessment (OPA) of **CPS Cumbria**

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 overall performance assessment of **CPS Cumbria** was **Poor**

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

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.

The Area was successful, with its criminal justice partners in meeting its target for the number of offences brought to justice. In magistrates' court cases conviction rates were higher than the national average. In the Crown Court, performance was not as good, and there were more unsuccessful outcomes

in 2004-05 than in the previous year. More work needs to be done to analyse the reasons for this.

The Area experienced a number of difficulties in 2004-05 including staff sickness and changes to the management team. At the time of the assessment it had not yet resolved how best to implement statutory pre-charge decision-making and the management of resources and performance also needed attention. Statutory pre-charge decision-making has since been implemented. The Area has embarked on a substantial change programme to address the remaining issues, and although change was underway at the time of the assessment, it was too early to see all the benefits.

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 CPA Areas, and CPS HQ, will use this information to address issues at local and national level where this is necessary.

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

“Many aspects of the Area’s case handling is satisfactory, but equally some aspects need to be improved. The Area has approached the need for change enthusiastically and, with a settled management team now in place, we are confident that improvements will quickly be made.”

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