

## 2017-18 Q2 Organisation Learning from Customer Service Complaints

From: **John Stevenson, Head of Complaints Standards Authority**

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### Purpose

To provide a summary of Customer Service Complaints (CSCs) received and responded to by the SPSO and where appropriate to provide a summary of outcomes, trends and actions taken as a result of these complaints including key learning points for SPSO service improvement.

### Reporting customer service complaints

Details of all CSCs are recorded (on WorkPro) and we publish on a quarterly basis the outcome of complaints and the actions we have taken in response. These are then analysed for trend information to ensure we identify areas where our service could improve and take appropriate action.

We publish this report on a quarterly basis to help ensure transparency in our complaints handling and to demonstrate to our customers that complaints can influence our service. We also publish, on an annual basis, more detailed information on our performance in handling complaints. This includes statistics showing the volumes and types of complaints and key performance details, including the time taken and the stage at which complaints were resolved.

### Q2 statistics for customer service complaints

#### *Received & closed*

Table 1 provides a breakdown of complaints received and closed

<b>Summary</b>	<b><i>Received</i></b>	<b><i>Closed</i></b>
<b>Stage 1 - Frontline resolution</b>	11	11
<b>Stage 2 - Investigation</b>	4	2
<b>Escalated Complaints</b> (escalated from stage 1 to stage 2)	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>

Where a difference exists in the number of cases received in the quarter and the number of cases closed in the quarter, this is due to cases received in an earlier quarter being closed in Q2. Specifically, of the 5 escalated complaints closed in Q2, one was received in Q1 and 4 were received in Q2.

## Upheld/Not upheld

Table 2 provides a breakdown of complaints upheld and not upheld

<b>Summary</b>	<b><i>Upheld</i></b>	<b><i>Not Upheld</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>% upheld</i></b>
<b>Stage 1 - Frontline resolution</b>	0	11	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Stage 2 - Investigation</b>	0	2	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Escalated Complaints</b>	2	3	<b>5</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	

## ***Timescales***

The timescales to close complaints are:

- 5 working days at stage 1
- 20 working days at stage 2
- 20 working days for 'escalated complaints'.

Table 3 provides further information in relation to our performance in relation to timescales.

<b>Timescales</b>	<b><i>Met timescale (cases)</i></b>	<b><i>Did not meet timescale (cases)</i></b>	<b><i>Total number of working days</i></b>	<b><i>Average time in working days to close</i></b>
<b>Stage 1 - Frontline resolution</b>	10	1	<b>32</b>	<b>2.67</b>
<b>Stage 2 - Investigation</b>	2	0	<b>29</b>	<b>14.5</b>
<b>Escalated Complaints</b>	5	0	<b>60</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

With the exception of one case, we met the timescale requirements at each stage of the CSC procedure during Q2. The case that did not meet the timescale at stage one, was closed in 6 working days.

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## **Summary of complaints outcomes and service failures**

### ***Stage 1 upheld complaints***

No complaints were upheld at stage 1

### ***Stage 2 upheld complaints***

No complaints were upheld at stage 2

### ***Escalated complaints***

In case reference number 201609357 we upheld complaint about a delay which resulted from an unexpected, and prolonged, absence of two members of staff. We explained that, in normal circumstances, we have robust systems for monitoring and reallocating cases in instances staff absences, but acknowledged that on this particular occasion, it had not become clear that the progression of the case would be so significantly impacted by concurrent staff absences.

*Learning:* The learning in this case stems from this case is the requirement for earlier intervention to reallocate and progress cases impacted by staff absences.

In case reference number 201604178 we mistakenly advised our customer that he had concluded the CSC process when he had not; he then went to the Independent Customer Complaints Reviewer who noted our position was inconsistent with the information that we had previously provided. We decided it would be appropriate to consider this issue via the CSC process. We apologised to the customer for providing incorrect information and we provided feedback to the staff involved.

### **Independent Customer Complaints Reviewer (ICCR)**

During Q2 the ICCR closed 2 CSC cases, upholding one (case reference number 201608902), which related to a communication failure on our part. We apologised to our customer for this service failure and provided feedback to the staff concerned.

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### **Next steps**

This report has been prepared to update the Service Improvement Group (SIG) and Audit and Advisory Committee of the SPSO performance in relation to Customer Service Complaints.

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