



NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

National Directorate

National Probation Service

Performance Report 10

NOVEMBER 2003

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DIRECTOR GENERAL

Introduction

The National Probation Service (NPS) was formed on 1 April 2001 under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act. Here I present high level reports on the NPS 3-year change programme entitled "A New Choreography". This fundamental reconstruction of the previous 54 area services and Home Office probation policy unit was intended to create a credible young adult and adult community corrections organisation. There are now 43 component parts of the NPS – 42 operational delivery areas coterminous with police boundaries, and a central probation directorate based in Horseferry House. The NPS 10 regions are mapped on those of the GORs and the Welsh Assembly.

The aim is to design cutting edge risk assessment tools and offender programmes and interventions based on the evidence of what is most likely to reduce predicted reconviction rates and give better public protection. At the same time, our imperative is to build capacity to operationalise and deliver these services.

A major collective achievement in Year 1 was the move from 54 different systems to a single, national monitoring system, enabling these regular, high level reports on key delivery indicators across all 42 operational areas. Validation arrangements around national standards are in place with HMI of Probation and we know from these that there is still more to be done to ensure greater accuracy and speed of reporting. But determination is high in an organisation that aspires to being "excellent", as is commitment to the expressed values of openness, transparency and accountability as a public service.

A section on the timeliness of information returns has been included as this was an improvement target for 2002/3. This has been largely accomplished with an outturn figure so far in 2003/4 of 98%.

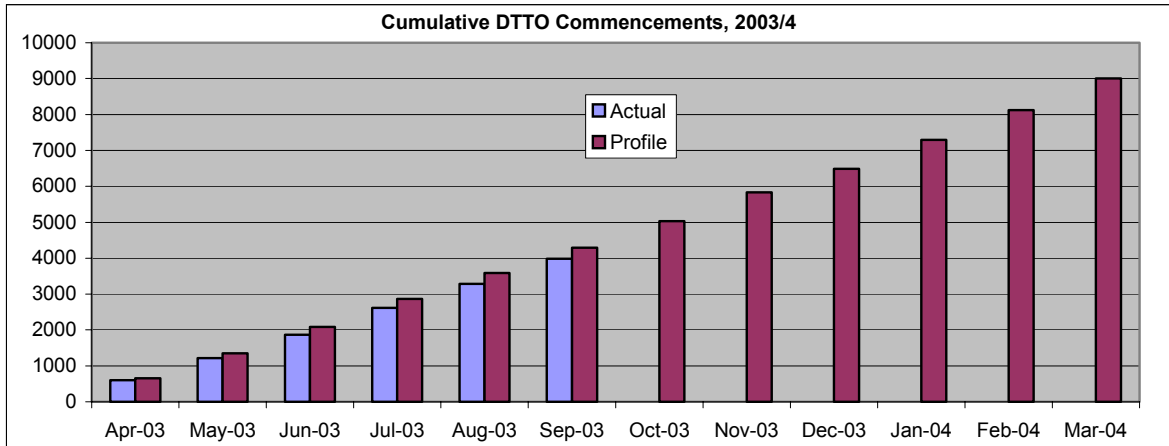
Performance Summary

This reports contains details of the NPS's performance in the key delivery indicators for the first half of 2003/4. The major achievements at this stage of the year are:

- **The 85% target for contacting victims within 8 weeks was exceeded for the first time as 90% of named victims were contacted within the national standard target time in the first quarter of 2003/4.**
- **Performing above target on basic skills awards following a 407% increase in awards compared to the same stage last year.**
- **A 60% increase in the number of basic skills starts over the same period last year.**
- **A 35% increase in the number of DTO commencements compared with April to September 2002.**
- **An 81% increase in the number of accredited programme completions over the equivalent period last year.**
- **A 20% increase in the enforcement rate (breached within 10 days) since September 2002.**

1. DTTO Commencements – April to September 2003

The DTTO is a recently established order now rolled-out to all courts in England and Wales. The target number of orders to be commenced in 2002-03 was 6,000. The total of actual commencements was 6,140, which exceeded the target of 6,000. **The 2002/3 year-end figure was therefore 102% of the annual target.**



With the experience of a full year of operations in 2002-03 we were able to profile the national target over the annual period 2003-04. The chart above shows this cumulative profile against actual in-year performance.

Details of area and regional performance are shown on the next page. By the end of 2002/3, the numbers of areas “in the red” had reduced to just 6. Given the higher targets for 2003/4, that number, for the period April – September 2003 has risen to 17. However **many areas now perform so strongly that the overall performance against the national profiled target is at 93%.**

DTTOs Commenced April 2003 - September 2003

<i>Region</i>	<i>Area name</i>	<i>Profiled Target</i>	<i>Starts</i>	<i>Target Achieved</i>	<i>Performance</i>
West Midlands	Staffordshire	82	66	81%	Below
	Warwickshire	32	29	91%	Near miss
	West Mercia	78	81	104%	Above
	West Midlands	281	280	100%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	472	456	97%	
North East	County Durham	59	53	89%	Below
	Northumbria	149	117	79%	Below
	Teesside	68	65	96%	Near miss
	Regional Sub Total	276	235	85%	
East	Bedfordshire	41	46	112%	Above
	Cambridgeshire	47	80	170%	Above
	Essex	101	75	74%	Below
	Hertfordshire	54	41	75%	Below
	Norfolk	57	60	106%	Above
	Suffolk	42	44	104%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	342	346	101%	
North West	Cheshire	77	53	69%	Below
	Cumbria	40	37	93%	Near miss
	Greater Manchester	270	253	94%	Near miss
	Lancashire	131	106	81%	Below
	Merseyside	161	119	74%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	679	568	84%	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	74	87	117%	Above
	Leicestershire & Rutland	75	65	87%	Below
	Lincolnshire	46	59	129%	Above
	Northamptonshire	46	56	123%	Above
	Nottinghamshire	98	117	120%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	338	384	114%	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	85	92	109%	Above
	North Yorkshire	48	44	92%	Near miss
	South Yorkshire	135	120	89%	Below
	West Yorkshire	218	215	99%	Near miss
	Regional Sub Total	485	471	97%	
South East	Hampshire	122	111	91%	Near miss
	Kent	109	98	90%	Near miss
	Surrey	43	41	95%	Near miss
	Sussex	89	89	100%	Above
	Thames Valley	117	103	88%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	479	442	92%	
South West	Avon & Somerset	102	75	74%	Below
	Devon/Cornwall	106	79	74%	Below
	Dorset	42	26	61%	Below
	Gloucestershire	36	19	53%	Below
	Wiltshire	39	31	79%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	326	230	71%	
London	London Sub Total	622	484	78%	Below
Wales	Dyfed/Powys	38	40	105%	Above
	Gwent	57	75	132%	Above
	North Wales	54	53	99%	Near miss
	South Wales	123	194	158%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	271	362	134%	
ENGLAND & WALES		4290	3978	93%	

2. Enforcement – April to September 2003

The HO Delivery plan target (and SDA target) is that the National Probation Service takes enforcement action in accordance with the National Standard in 90% of cases where the offender has breached his/her order. To fully meet the standard, three things must be achieved:

- breach action taken after a second absence assessed as unacceptable
- the court contacted for a hearing date
- all of this achieved within 10 days.

The performance for the period April 2002 to March 2003 showed incremental improvement. 64% of breaches were enforced within 10 days and 77% within or without 10 days. The breakdown by order type is shown below:

Enforcement by Order/Licence April 2002 - March 2003				Enforcement by Order/Licence October 2001 - March 2002			
Order / Licence	Breached			Order / Licence	Breached		
	Breached within 10 days				Breached within 10 days		
CPO	69%	84%		CPO	59%	78%	
CPRO	61%	75%		CPRO	47%	65%	
CRO	60%	73%		CRO	50%	64%	
Licence	63%	74%		Licences	58%	66%	
Total	64%	77%		Total	53%	69%	

The introduction of the National Probation Service in April 2001 has put the emphasis firmly on performance management. The cultural issues about enforcement have been addressed. It is worth recording that the National Standards monitoring uses a sample of files and that the sample includes cases which would have been terminated for over 6 months. Assessing this historical data does mean that these results do not always reflect recent changes in practice. Our objective in Year 2 was to try to bridge the time gap between enforcement events and national monitoring.

Details of area and regional performance follow. **This shows that 39 areas met the “all breaches” target or were very close to it in the first half of 2003/4 as opposed to 24 during 2002/3 – a sign of continuing progress. However, progress on the more important 10-day measure is slower, although the 70% barrier has now been surpassed on a sustained basis.** The breakdown by order type is shown below:

Enforcement by Order/Licence April - September 2003				Enforcement by Order/Licence April-September 2002			
Order / Licence	Breached	Breached	Compliance	Order / Licence	Breached	Breached	
	within 10 days				within 10 days		
CPO	77%	89%	55%	CPO	66%	81%	
CPRO	72%	85%	47%	CPRO	58%	72%	
CRO	70%	81%	59%	CRO	57%	71%	
Licence	77%	80%	89%	Licences	63%	73%	
Total	73%	85%	62%	Total	61%	75%	

Compliance for April – September, nationally, stands at 62% (based on the following definition - orders where there are no second unacceptable failures to comply and licences where there are no third unacceptable failures to comply i.e. the national standard upon which enforcement is based).

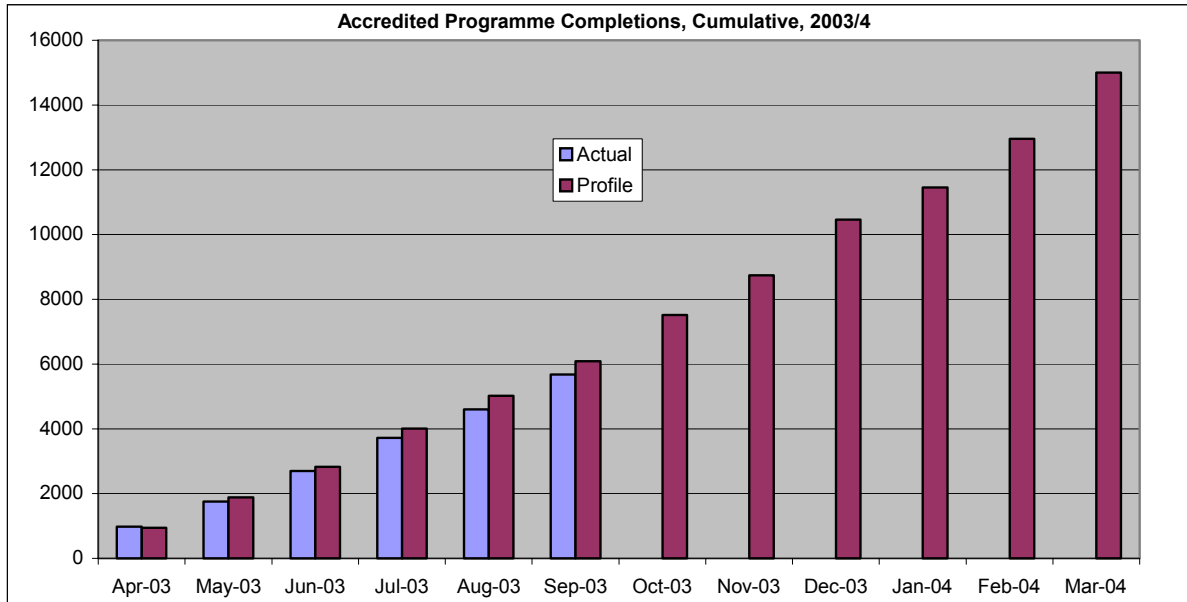
Enforcement April - September 2003

Region	Area name	Proportion breached within 10 days	Proportion breached whether or not within 10 days	Compliance
West Midlands	Staffordshire	77%	81%	66%
	Warwickshire	82%	90%	63%
	West Mercia	85%	92%	71%
	West Midlands	70%	81%	58%
	Regional Sub Total	75%	84%	63%
North East	County Durham	91%	98%	77%
	Northumbria	79%	90%	65%
	Teesside	82%	90%	67%
	Regional Sub Total	81%	91%	68%
East	Bedfordshire	70%	90%	62%
	Cambridgeshire	88%	89%	69%
	Essex	73%	84%	68%
	Hertfordshire	51%	62%	65%
	Norfolk	82%	97%	63%
	Suffolk	69%	83%	55%
	Regional Sub Total	72%	84%	65%
North West	Cheshire	85%	89%	65%
	Cumbria	88%	96%	76%
	Greater Manchester	90%	95%	65%
	Lancashire	85%	91%	70%
	Merseyside	76%	83%	69%
	Regional Sub Total	86%	91%	68%
East Midlands	Derbyshire	95%	99%	58%
	Leicestershire & Rutland	90%	95%	68%
	Lincolnshire	97%	97%	65%
	Northamptonshire	91%	95%	65%
	Nottinghamshire	70%	84%	62%
	Regional Sub Total	85%	93%	63%
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	89%	94%	54%
	North Yorkshire	87%	95%	67%
	South Yorkshire	81%	90%	55%
	West Yorkshire	88%	91%	56%
	Regional Sub Total	86%	92%	57%
South East	Hampshire	83%	91%	68%
	Kent	71%	86%	64%
	Surrey	91%	93%	64%
	Sussex	90%	94%	61%
	Thames Valley	50%	79%	58%
	Regional Sub Total	73%	87%	63%
South West	Avon & Somerset	70%	89%	56%
	Devon/Cornwall	71%	87%	60%
	Dorset	83%	92%	68%
	Gloucestershire	70%	88%	69%
	Wiltshire	66%	91%	62%
	Regional Sub Total	73%	89%	62%
London	London Sub Total	35%	57%	52%
Wales	Dyfed/Powys	91%	98%	75%
	Gwent	73%	87%	68%
	North Wales	94%	96%	62%
	South Wales	82%	88%	62%
	Regional Sub Total	84%	91%	66%
ENGLAND & WALES		73%	85%	62%

3. Accredited Programmes - April to September 2003

Information from areas on accredited programme completions was collected quarterly, although we commenced collecting headline data monthly from July 2002 onwards.

Using experience from this we are now able to profile the completions over the year. The chart below shows the actual completions against those predicted.



The total completion target for 2002/03 was rescheduled to provide a more reasonable but still challenging target of 12,000 completions. The target for 2003/4 is to achieve 15,000 completions.

The overall completions for 2002/3 were at 64% of the national target, which represented a 125% increase compared with the number of completions in 2001/2. **The first half of 2003/4 shows 93% achievement of the profiled higher target with three fifths of areas performing at above or very close to 100%.**

Accredited Programmes Completions April 2003 - September 2003

<i>Region</i>	<i>Area name</i>	<i>Profiled completion target</i>	<i>Referrals</i>	<i>Orders / Licences made</i>	<i>Actual completions achieved</i>	<i>Percent of completion target</i>	<i>Performance</i>
West Midlands	Staffordshire	118	280	272	131	111%	Above
	Warwickshire	46	146	95	61	132%	Above
	West Mercia	113	283	212	75	66%	Below
	West Midlands	408	817	800	205	50%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	686	1526	1379	472	69%	
North East	County Durham	86	185	151	117	136%	Above
	Northumbria	216	639	399	294	136%	Above
	Teesside	98	363	196	131	134%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	400	1187	746	542	135%	
East	Bedfordshire	60	92	87	81	135%	Above
	Cambridgeshire	69	260	160	53	77%	Below
	Essex	146	583	375	141	96%	Near miss
	Hertfordshire	79	210	123	104	131%	Above
	Norfolk	82	214	139	67	81%	Below
	Suffolk	61	218	144	43	70%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	497	1577	1028	489	98%	
North West	Cheshire	112	635	237	154	138%	Above
	Cumbria	58	312	254	66	114%	Above
	Greater Manchester	392	1784	1213	476	121%	Above
	Lancashire	191	821	685	165	87%	Below
	Merseyside	233	704	566	329	141%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	985	4256	2955	1190	121%	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	108	415	272	49	45%	Below
	Leicestershire & Rutland	109	518	352	129	118%	Above
	Lincolnshire	67	408	380	81	121%	Above
	Northamptonshire	66	264	227	67	101%	Above
	Nottinghamshire	142	407	470	78	55%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	492	2012	1701	404	82%	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	123	671	505	163	133%	Above
	North Yorkshire	70	156	127	96	138%	Above
	South Yorkshire	195	844	409	110	56%	Below
	West Yorkshire	317	1663	1251	347	110%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	704	3334	2292	716	102%	
South East	Hampshire	177	500	367	153	86%	Below
	Kent	158	378	270	107	68%	Below
	Surrey	63	189	140	48	76%	Below
	Sussex	129	305	228	130	101%	Above
	Thames Valley	170	541	405	216	127%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	697	1913	1410	654	94%	
South West	Avon & Somerset	148	573	735	109	74%	Below
	Devon/Cornwall	155	434	451	141	91%	Near miss
	Dorset	62	246	177	67	109%	Above
	Gloucestershire	52	112	187	36	69%	Below
	Wiltshire	57	113	80	85	148%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	474	1478	1630	438	92%	
London	London Sub Total	761	1294	1673	437	57%	Below
Wales	Dyfed/Powys	55	177	177	51	93%	Near miss
	Gwent	83	237	247	70	84%	Below
	North Wales	78	368	16	69	89%	Below
	South Wales	178	778	555	148	83%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	394	1560	995	338	86%	
ENGLAND & WALES		6091	20137	15809	5680	93%	

4. Home Secretary's Race Equality Targets – Monitoring at March 2003

At the end of December 2000, 9.8% of probation staff were from minority ethnic backgrounds (see regional breakdown below) compared with a target of 8.4% set for 2009. Probation Statistics to be published for the year ending March 2003 will show that overall the representation of minority ethnic groups in NPS staff for England and Wales, was 11.2% against 9% in the Labour Force Survey 2001 (LFS).

All but one of the regional targets have already been met across the NPS with some significant improvements since 2000. Some additional achievements have been made:

- The first minority ethnic chief officer was appointed in 2001.
- There are 6 minority ethnic board chairs. (None of the previous 54 committee chairs were.)
- There are presently 84 minority ethnic board members (there were only a handful previously on probation committees).
- There are particularly encouraging trends in specific probation areas. Bedfordshire, Greater Manchester, Leicestershire & Rutland, London, Merseyside, Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands & West Yorkshire all indicate that over 10% of their staff are from minority ethnic groups. As these are local areas with significant clusters of people from minority ethnic communities, it reflects a Service that is increasingly representative of the communities it seeks to serve.
- ACO/Area Manager grades have seen a small rise from 13 at the end of 2001 to 15 at the end of March 2003. A scheme to provide for development needs such as mentoring and coaching is being implemented to identify and develop talented minority ethnic staff.
- 9.2% of senior probation officers (middle managers) are from ethnic minorities. This has increased from 8.6% in 2001 and exceeds the March 2009 target of 6.5%.
- Overall the March 2003 figures show the proportion minority ethnic main grade probation officers at 12.1%.
- Each of the 42 probation boards published a Race Equality Scheme by 31st May 2002. The Actions Plans within each of these Schemes will help to ensure that the NPS, as an organisation, fulfils its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and promotes race equality and equality of opportunity for all staff.
- Implementation of race and ethnic monitoring according to the Census 2001 16+1 categorisation is on schedule for March 2003.
- More focussed approaches to work with racially motivated offenders are being developed. Interventions are being tailored to minority ethnic offenders and community safety work with minority ethnic groups is being reviewed.

The table below shows performance against regional targets as at December 2000 and March 2003 along with the 2009 targets.

Region	Target set	2000 Achieved	2003 Achieved	Above/Below Target
West Midlands	11.6	13.3	18.0	Above
North East	1.4	1.7	4.0	Above
East	4.9	4.9	4.3	Below
North West	5.4	6.1	8.4	Above
East Midlands	7.2	8.6	10.2	Above
Yorks & Humber	5.1	8.4	9.7	Above
South East	3.6	4	5.0	Above
South West	2.6	3.3	3.6	Above
London	26.5	30.2	26.6	Above
Wales	1.7	2.3	3.9	Above
England & Wales	8.4	9.8	11.2	Above

5. Sickness Absence April - September 2003

Since 1st July 2001, local areas have been required to monitor sickness absence using a standard format and provide quarterly monitoring returns to the NPD. Reporting was increased to monthly in July 2002.

The target for 2002-03 was 10 days or fewer sickness absences per employee; the national average for the year was 11.9 days as opposed to the 2001/2 year-end figure of 12.6 days. It also compared favourably with the prison service (14.7 days), and the police (12.4 days for 2001/2). The survey 'Sickness Absence in Local Government 2001' showed Social Services' sickness rates at an average of 15 days per employee.

Many areas already have good systems for monitoring and managing absence and such good practice is being shared across the national HR network.

This includes:

- A 'Case Management' approach to tackling long term absence.
- Monthly statistical feedback to line managers.
- Return to work interviews.
- Probation Board reports.
- Automatic referral to occupational health.
- Healthy Roadshows.
- Stress counselling/health care services.
- **Constant chasing.**

The Home Office internal audit of these arrangements across England & Wales has been completed. Further guidance on monitoring sickness absence has been issued. This will encourage greater consistency in counting and reporting back separately on short term and long term sickness.

Details of area and regional performance are shown on the next page.

The first half of 2003/4 indicates that the national headline figure has reduced to 11.4 days – significant progress but still some distance away from the new target of 9 days

Sickness Absence, April 2003 - September 2003

Region	Area	Short term sickness	Long term sickness	DDA - related sickness	Total days lost	Total staff years	Average days absence	Performance (target = 9 days)
West Midlands	Staffordshire	1000	1077	16	2093	193	10.8	Above
	Warwickshire	242	397	0	639	84	7.6	Below
	West Mercia	664	419	107	1190	170	7.0	Below
	West Midlands	4312	4217	0	8529	578	14.7	Above
	Regional Sub Total	6217	6110	123	12450	1025	12.1	
North East	County Durham	435	811	0	1246	125	10.0	Near miss
	Northumbria	1331	1681	74	3085	297	10.4	Above
	Teesside	905	601	123	1630	153	10.7	Above
	Regional Sub Total	2671	3093	197	5961	575	10.4	
East	Bedfordshire	528	717	0	1245	116	10.7	Above
	Cambridgeshire	494	501	273	1268	97	13.0	Above
	Essex	1244	757	0	2000	192	10.4	Above
	Hertfordshire	693	341	131	1165	106	11.0	Above
	Norfolk	672	467	87	1226	119	10.3	Above
	Suffolk	483	443	52	978	103	9.5	Near miss
	Regional Sub Total	4113	3226	543	7882	734	10.7	
North West	Cheshire	578	1034	65	1677	162	10.4	Above
	Cumbria	489	514	163	1167	76	15.4	Above
	Greater Manchester	2417	3636	0	6053	567	10.7	Above
	Lancashire	1491	1639	0	3130	287	10.9	Above
	Merseyside	1532	3030	428	4990	352	14.2	Above
	Regional Sub Total	6508	9852	656	17016	1444	11.8	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	824	673	35	1532	156	9.8	Near miss
	Leicestershire & Rutland	1294	713	114	2121	212	10.0	Near miss
	Lincolnshire	576	104	0	680	99	6.8	Below
	Northamptonshire	2202	3260	18	5480	510	10.7	Above
	Nottinghamshire	1254	2286	118	3658	252	14.5	Above
	Regional Sub Total	6150	7036	285	13470	1229	11.0	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	813	982	123	1918	196	9.8	Near miss
	North Yorkshire	514	494	0	1008	105	9.6	Near miss
	South Yorkshire	1714	2013	538	4265	304	14.0	Above
	West Yorkshire	2815	2842	0	5657	560	10.1	Above
	Regional Sub Total	5856	6330	661	12848	1165	11.0	
South East	Hampshire	1354	719	306	2379	258	9.2	Near miss
	Kent	769	1871	0	2639	225	11.8	Above
	Surrey	350	436	9	795	114	7.0	Below
	Sussex	854	970	80	1904	146	13.0	Above
	Thames Valley	1409	1373	0	2782	275	10.1	Above
	Regional Sub Total	4735	5369	395	10499	1017	10.3	
South West	Avon & Somerset	1631	2269	20	3920	246	16.0	Above
	Devon & Cornwall	765	1372	0	2138	219	9.8	Near miss
	Dorset	472	640	273	1385	91	15.3	Above
	Gloucestershire	275	426	0	701	74	9.5	Near miss
	Wiltshire	260	597	101	958	69	13.8	Above
	Regional Sub Total	3403	5304	394	9101	699	13.0	
London	London Sub Total	9588	2931	358	12877	1111	11.6	Above
Wales	Dyfed/Powys	372	368	0	740	70	10.6	Above
	Gwent	853	1033	0	1886	109	17.4	Above
	North Wales	512	963	0	1474	107	13.8	Above
	South Wales	940	1916	20	2876	256	11.2	Above
	Regional Sub Total	2676	4280	20	6976	542	12.9	
ENGLAND & WALES		42328	50600	3274	96202	8429	11.4	

6. Victim Contact – April 2002 to March 2003

The New Choreography makes it clear that the National Probation Service delivers services to victims as well as offenders. The development of this area of practice is included under Stretch Objective II, namely “more contact and involvement with the victims of serious sexual and other violent crime”.

The performance figures for the year, 2002/3 showed further significant improvements in performance against the National Standard target as compared with performance during previous monitoring periods.

In comparison to the same period the previous year, the monitoring figures show substantial increases in the numbers of named victims and in the proportion of them who were contacted within 8 weeks of sentence, as indicated below:

Period covered	Number of named victims	Number of victims contacted	Percentage of victims contacted
April-01 to March-02	15,041	9,523	63%
April-02 to March-03	15,904	12,949	81%

The recognition that victims often felt ill-informed about criminal justice processes led to the creation of a new statutory duty to offer contact to a specific group of victims in Section 69 of the Criminal and Court Services Act 2000. Under the Act, local probation boards have a statutory duty to offer contact, consult and notify victims, if they so wish, about important aspects of the release arrangements of offenders convicted of a sexual or violent offence leading to a sentence of imprisonment of 12 months or more. This statutory duty reflects a significant improvement on the previous non-statutory arrangements. It was the first legislative framework for victim work, and therefore an important step towards ensuring that the interests of victims are respected within the criminal justice process.

The National Standard for victim contact work is that probation areas should offer face-to-face contact between the victim (or family) and a member of the probation service (or agent) within 8 weeks of the offender being sentenced. The NPS target is to make initial contact within that timescale in 85% of all eligible cases.

In the first quarter of 2003/4 the target was exceeded, with 90% of victims contacted within the 8-week national standard. Further analysis of the figures shows that:

For all cases:

- 3,352 victims were contacted out of 3,719 named victims (90%)
- 33 areas met or exceeded the 85% target and are classed as green
- 5 areas made contact within 5% of the target and are amber
- Only 4 areas fell more than 5% short of the target
- Only 1 area made contact in less than 60% of cases.

The detailed breakdown of figures on an area by area basis combines those over 4 year figures and those sentenced between 1-4 years into a single table that compares overall performance for victims. A near miss is an area that achieved at least 80% but fell short of the 85%

Victim Contact
All Cases, April 2003 - June 2003

Region	Area	Number of named victims	No. contacted within 8 weeks	Target achieved	Performance
West Midlands	Staffordshire	75	74	99%	On or Above
	Warwickshire	39	39	100%	On or Above
	West Mercia	56	45	80%	Near miss
	West Midlands	302	289	96%	On or Above
	West Midlands Total	472	447	95%	
North East	Northumbria	105	105	100%	On or Above
	Teesside	82	80	98%	On or Above
	County Durham	18	17	94%	On or Above
	North East Total	205	202	99%	
East	Bedfordshire	63	57	90%	On or Above
	Cambridgeshire	43	42	98%	On or Above
	Essex	43	35	81%	Near miss
	Hertfordshire	34	31	91%	On or Above
	Norfolk	38	21	55%	Below
	Suffolk	25	21	84%	Near miss
	East Total	246	207	84%	
North West	Cheshire	89	84	94%	On or Above
	Cumbria	30	24	80%	Near miss
	Lancashire	116	103	89%	On or Above
	Merseyside	129	117	91%	On or Above
	Greater Manchester	297	272	92%	On or Above
	North West Total	661	600	91%	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	90	83	92%	On or Above
	Leicestershire & Rutland	73	73	100%	On or Above
	Lincolnshire	50	49	98%	On or Above
	Northamptonshire	35	35	100%	On or Above
	Nottinghamshire	111	110	99%	On or Above
	East Midlands Total	359	350	97%	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	69	67	97%	On or Above
	North Yorkshire	60	57	95%	On or Above
	South Yorkshire	170	122	72%	Below
	West Yorkshire	173	168	97%	On or Above
	Yorkshire & Humberside Total	472	414	88%	
South East	Hampshire	128	107	84%	Near miss
	Kent	70	51	73%	Below
	Surrey	15	14	93%	On or Above
	Sussex	95	85	89%	On or Above
	Thames Valley	115	113	98%	On or Above
South East Total	423	370	87%		
South West	Avon & Somerset	90	83	92%	On or Above
	Dorset	23	23	100%	On or Above
	Gloucestershire	31	29	94%	On or Above
	Wiltshire	29	27	93%	On or Above
	Devon/Cornwall	95	94	99%	On or Above
	South West Total	268	256	96%	
	London Total	472	373	79%	Below
Wales	Gwent	32	32	100%	On or Above
	North Wales	21	20	95%	On or Above
	South Wales	87	80	92%	On or Above
	Dyfed/Powys	1	1	100%	On or Above
	Wales Total	141	133	94%	
England & Wales Total		3719	3352	90%	

7. Basic Skills

What is happening?

The NPS had a revised SDA target of 16,000 basic skills programmes starts and 4,000 qualifications for 2003-04. These targets are realistic yet challenging for probation areas during this second year of basic skills implementation. In 2002/3 areas achieved 100% of the starts target and 85% of the qualifications target. Significant progress was made during the back end of last year as basic skills provision within areas bedded-in and offenders progressed towards qualifications. **Nationally, between April and September 2003, performance was at 66% of the profiled starts target and 103% of the profiled awards target.** The individual area breakdown for the period is shown on the next page.

All probation areas have submitted a basic skills improvement action plan. These plans detail the necessary actions to improve performance and increase achievement against the increased targets. NPD basic skills team members have also made visits to those areas who failed to achieve their qualification target last year. Areas have been receiving feedback on their plans and further visits will be organised to regions or areas as necessary. This year's targets will require a significant step-change to improve upon previous performance. The importance of the basic skills targets has been reinforced by their inclusion in the performance link for 2003/4.

Why is it happening?

Basic skills activity is a relatively new area of business for probation areas, requiring new business processes and procedures. Significant progress has been made by areas in England in developing partnerships with local Learning & Skills Councils and local providers. It is clear from a recent national survey carried out by the Learning & Skills Development Agency (LSDA) that basic skills activities within areas has increased. LSDA's survey also highlights that activities other than tuition are crucial to successful provision. In Wales there remain issues with the basic skills infrastructure across the country. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has its own basic skills strategy and streams funding through Education and Learning in Wales (ELWa).

What is being done?

In England, NPD and the national office of the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) have jointly developed a working together protocol. There has been a great improvement in working relationships between NPS areas and local LSCs in England. The WAG has a basic skills strategy which differs greatly from the English strategy in that there is no specific focus on priority groups such as offenders within the community. However, the WAG commissioned a scoping report on the basic skills infrastructure within Wales. As a result of the report, the WAG will contribute to an all Wales basic skills planning group which will be chaired by the NPS regional manager for Wales, Ian Fox. This planning group will replicate the work undertaken in the joint OLSU/NPD project and will make recommendations on future funding, targets, delivery, quality, communications and HR matters.

The area basic skills action plans have been reviewed by NPD staff and have been returned to areas with appropriate feedback. A national milestone register has been developed from the area action plans and will be distributed shortly to areas via their Regional What Works Manager. The national milestone register will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by Regional What Works Managers and NPD for exceptions. Further visits are planned to areas to support better performance towards basic skills targets. A National Probation Service basic skills conference was held in Nottingham on 23rd October 2003. The conference focussed on raising the profile of basic skills and planning for the future.

Basic Skills, April 2003 - September 2003

Region	Area	Starts	Profiled Starts Target	% Profiled Target Achieved	Performance against starts	Awards	Profiled Awards Target	% Profiled Target Achieved	Performance against awards
West Midlands	Staffordshire	40	133	30%	Below	9	19	48%	Below
	Warwickshire	51	52	98%	Near miss	0	7	0%	Below
	West Mercia	32	128	25%	Below	0	18	0%	Below
	West Midlands	360	459	78%	Below	39	64	61%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	483	773	63%		48	108	44%	
North East	County Durham	62	97	64%	Below	4	14	30%	Below
	Northumbria	452	244	185%	Above	72	34	211%	Above
	Teesside	48	110	44%	Below	29	15	188%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	562	451	125%		105	63	167%	
East	Bedfordshire	14	67	21%	Below	0	9	0%	Below
	Cambridgeshire	28	77	36%	Below	4	11	37%	Below
	Essex	89	165	54%	Below	9	23	39%	Below
	Hertfordshire	59	89	66%	Below	1	12	8%	Below
	Norfolk	87	93	94%	Near miss	6	13	46%	Below
	Suffolk	19	69	28%	Below	0	10	0%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	296	561	53%		20	78	26%	
North West	Cheshire	60	126	48%	Below	3	18	17%	Below
	Cumbria	133	65	204%	Above	8	9	88%	Below
	Greater Manchester	474	442	107%	Above	56	62	91%	Near miss
	Lancashire	164	215	76%	Below	25	30	83%	Below
	Merseyside	231	263	88%	Below	124	37	338%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	1062	1111	96%		216	155	139%	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	37	122	30%	Below	17	17	100%	Above
	Leicestershire & Rutland	78	123	63%	Below	3	17	17%	Below
	Lincolnshire	95	75	126%	Above	32	11	305%	Above
	Northamptonshire	49	74	66%	Below	1	10	10%	Below
	Nottinghamshire	119	160	74%	Below	51	22	228%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	378	554	68%		104	77	134%	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	194	138	140%	Above	13	19	67%	Below
	North Yorkshire	26	79	33%	Below	41	11	373%	Above
	South Yorkshire	148	220	67%	Below	14	31	46%	Below
	West Yorkshire	167	357	47%	Below	90	50	180%	Above
	Regional Sub Total	535	794	67%		158	111	142%	
South East	Hampshire	142	199	71%	Below	22	28	79%	Below
	Kent	91	178	51%	Below	37	25	148%	Above
	Surrey	29	71	41%	Below	0	10	0%	Below
	Sussex	179	145	123%	Above	69	20	340%	Above
	Thames Valley	87	191	46%	Below	3	27	11%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	528	785	67%		131	110	119%	
South West	Avon & Somerset	48	166	29%	Below	0	23	0%	Below
	Devon/Cornwall	34	174	20%	Below	0	24	0%	Below
	Dorset	71	70	102%	Above	32	10	329%	Above
	Gloucestershire	60	59	102%	Above	17	8	206%	Above
	Wiltshire	21	65	32%	Below	2	9	22%	Below
	Regional Sub Total	234	534	44%		51	75	68%	
London	London Sub Total	230	1019	23%	Below	131	142	92%	Near miss
Wales	Dyfed/Powys	17	30	57%	Below	0	4	0%	Below
	Gwent	44	45	98%	Near miss	0	6	0%	Below
	North Wales	75	42	177%	Above	12	6	202%	Above
	South Wales	43	97	44%	Below	7	14	52%	Below
		Regional Sub Total	179	214	83%		19	30	63%
ENGLAND & WALES		4487	6795	66%		983	950	103%	

8. Pre-Sentence Reports (PSRs) – Timeliness in Magistrates Courts April to September 2003

This national standard is monitored as part of Home Office Aim 3. It is to improve the timeliness of the NPS reports (PSRs) to the magistrates' courts. The standard is within 15 working days.

The table below indicates that performance has slipped back by five percentage points from the year-end position in 2002/03. The figures do not reflect the increasing occasions on which courts adjourn for longer than 15 days i.e., where the court's timetable is satisfied but the National Standard isn't.

In some local areas, discussions with sentencers continue to try to ensure that PSRs are only sought on cases where a community penalty or imprisonment is the likely outcome. Capacity issues are increasingly important in the light of OASys and local workload agreements.

1996-97	55%
1997-98	58%
1998-99	63%
1999-00	68%
2000-01	75%
2001-02	79%
2002-03	78%
2003-04*	73%

* April – September 2003

Details of area and regional performance are shown on the next page.

PSR Timeliness, April 2003 - September 2003

<i>Region</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>No. provided in response to request</i>	<i>No. provided within 15 working days of request</i>	<i>% meeting standard</i>	<i>Performance (90% target)</i>
West Midlands	Staffordshire	1182	984	83%	Near miss
	Warwickshire	416	280	67%	Below
	West Mercia	1053	697	66%	Below
	West Midlands *	0	0	--	Below
	West Midlands Total	2651	1961	74%	
North East	Northumbria	2334	1910	82%	Near miss
	Teesside	1091	915	84%	Near miss
	County Durham	762	625	82%	Near miss
	North East Total	4187	3450	82%	
East	Bedfordshire	726	481	66%	Below
	Cambridgeshire	726	598	82%	Near miss
	Essex	1264	818	65%	Below
	Hertfordshire	782	505	65%	Below
	Norfolk	938	411	44%	Below
	Suffolk	663	533	80%	Near miss
	East Total	5099	3346	66%	
North West	Cheshire	761	617	81%	Near miss
	Cumbria	492	331	67%	Below
	Lancashire	1712	1096	64%	Below
	Merseyside	1860	1489	80%	Near miss
	Greater Manchester	2775	2340	84%	Near miss
	North West Total	7600	5873	77%	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	1036	910	88%	Near miss
	Leicestershire & Rutland	1055	952	90%	Above
	Lincolnshire	648	449	69%	Below
	Northamptonshire	746	623	84%	Near miss
	Nottinghamshire	1248	748	60%	Below
	East Midlands Total	4733	3682	78%	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	1105	948	86%	Near miss
	North Yorkshire	714	630	88%	Near miss
	South Yorkshire	1943	1521	78%	Below
	West Yorkshire	2561	1984	77%	Below
	Yorkshire & Humberside Total	6323	5083	80%	
South East	Hampshire	1670	1122	67%	Below
	Kent	1567	1260	80%	Near miss
	Surrey	598	432	72%	Below
	Sussex	1114	807	72%	Below
	Thames Valley	1898	1438	76%	Below
	South East Total	6847	5059	74%	
South West	Avon & Somerset	1098	683	62%	Below
	Dorset	459	248	54%	Below
	Gloucestershire	409	161	39%	Below
	Wiltshire	386	294	76%	Below
	Devon/Cornwall	1335	929	70%	Below
	South West Total	3687	2315	63%	
London	London Total	5749	3280	57%	Below
Wales	Gwent	788	594	75%	Below
	North Wales	480	297	62%	Below
	South Wales	1904	1460	77%	Below
	Dyfed/Powys	609	556	91%	Above
	Wales Total	3781	2907	77%	
England & Wales Total		50657	36956	73%	

9. Timeliness of Information Returns

The target, which was announced in the area business plan guidance for 2002-03, is for areas to ensure complete and timely information in at least 95% of returns.

It was initially thought that this would be a straightforward count of the number of times a deadline was missed, as a proportion of the number of returns due. However, it became apparent that some areas, having missed a deadline, had no incentive to return the required information as early as possible after that deadline. This led to situations where we had to delay reports or publish them with incomplete information because deadlines were being missed by weeks and, in some cases, months.

The following methodology resolved this. It only applied to returns since October 2002 and was not applied retrospectively.

Methodology

Each data return had a deadline. For data that arrived on or before the deadline, we awarded 100%. For every working day after the deadline, i.e. every day late, we subtracted 5%. We then averaged the percentage timeliness for each of the 27 data returns that relate to the six-month period, October 2002 to March 2003, to give the year-end timeliness score.

Performance

The year-end national performance for 2002/3 was 94%. This has continued to improve in 2003/04. **In the first half of 2003/4, performance has risen to 98%. Many areas achieved 100%; only two areas were outside the target of 95%; missing it by just two percentage points.**

Timeliness of Information Returns, April 2003 - September 2003

<i>Region</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Overall timeliness</i>	<i>Performance (95% target)</i>
West Midlands	Staffordshire	95%	Above
	Warwickshire	100%	Above
	West Mercia	100%	Above
	West Midlands	99%	Above
	West Midlands Total	98%	
North East	Northumbria	99%	Above
	Teesside	100%	Above
	County Durham	100%	Above
	North East Total	100%	
East	Bedfordshire	100%	Above
	Cambridgeshire	97%	Above
	Essex	100%	Above
	Hertfordshire	99%	Above
	Norfolk	100%	Above
	Suffolk	100%	Above
	East Total	99%	
North West	Cheshire	100%	Above
	Cumbria	100%	Above
	Lancashire	100%	Above
	Merseyside	97%	Above
	Greater Manchester	97%	Above
	North West Total	99%	
East Midlands	Derbyshire	95%	Above
	Leicestershire & Rutland	100%	Above
	Lincolnshire	100%	Above
	Northamptonshire	98%	Above
	Nottinghamshire	99%	Above
	East Midlands Total	98%	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside	98%	Above
	North Yorkshire	100%	Above
	South Yorkshire	100%	Above
	West Yorkshire	99%	Above
	Yorkshire & Humberside Total	99%	
South East	Hampshire	99%	Above
	Kent	99%	Above
	Surrey	99%	Above
	Sussex	98%	Above
	Thames Valley	98%	Above
	South East Total	99%	
South West	Avon & Somerset	93%	Near miss
	Dorset	100%	Above
	Gloucestershire	99%	Above
	Wiltshire	99%	Above
	Devon/Cornwall	95%	Above
	South West Total	97%	
London	London Total	93%	Near miss
Wales	Gwent	100%	Above
	North Wales	100%	Above
	South Wales	100%	Above
	Dyfed/Powys	97%	Above
	Wales Total	99%	
England & Wales Total		98%	