

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS 2005/06 AND 2006/07

1 Purpose of Report

To advise Members of summary details regarding the compliments and complaints received during 2005/06 and the first six months of 2006/07 (April – September)

2 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of this report.

3 Background

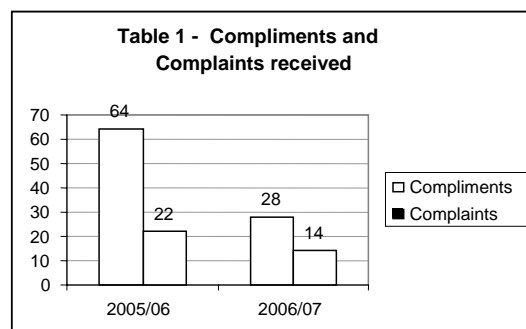
The Fire Authority's vision and strategic aims stress a commitment to providing high quality services to the community of Shropshire. The Service takes seriously both compliments and complaints made about the quality, nature or delivery of the services provided. Comments are also used to review the effectiveness of the provision of these services. All compliments and complaints are recorded.

The Fire Authority has in place a Comments and Complaints Procedure to ensure complaints are handled in a fair and objective way and that views expressed about the quality of services provided are acknowledged.

4 Summary of Compliments and Complaints Received during 2005/06 and 2006/07 (April – September)

Table 1 opposite illustrates the number of compliments and complaints received during 2005/06 and for the first six month period of 2006/07.

The variety of compliments received makes it difficult to categorise and benchmark specific areas of performance over a given period of time.



Where appropriate, compliments are summarised and posted on the Service's website: <http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/Management/compliments.htm>

Appendix A provides a breakdown of complaints received. There are no nationally prescribed categories for recording of complaints, but to facilitate local benchmarking between 2005/06 and 2006/07 complaints received have been segregated into five key areas, namely:

- 1 Damage to property
- 2 Poor driving behaviour
- 3 Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service
- 4 Failure to deal correctly with an incident/inspection
- 5 Other

5 Management of Compliments and Complaints

All complaints are fully investigated, with a written report provided to the complainant advising of the outcome of the inquiry undertaken. The Authority sets a performance standard of 28 working days, in which to furnish the complainant with a written response. This standard has consistently been achieved.

Complainants dissatisfied with the outcome of the inquiry undertaken are entitled to appeal to the Chief Fire Officer and/or the Chair of the Authority. Should the complainant still remain dissatisfied, an appeal may be directed to the Local Government Ombudsman. During 2005/06 and 2006/07 no appeals were lodged.

All lessons learned from complaints are communicated in the most appropriate manner to staff, with remedial action taken as necessary.

Within 4 to 6 weeks from the completion of an investigation the complainant is forwarded a Complaint Satisfaction Survey form. The number of completed and returned survey forms is indicated in Table 2 opposite.

The survey seeks complainants' views on several areas concerning the management of the investigation. Appendix B provides a summary of the results received.

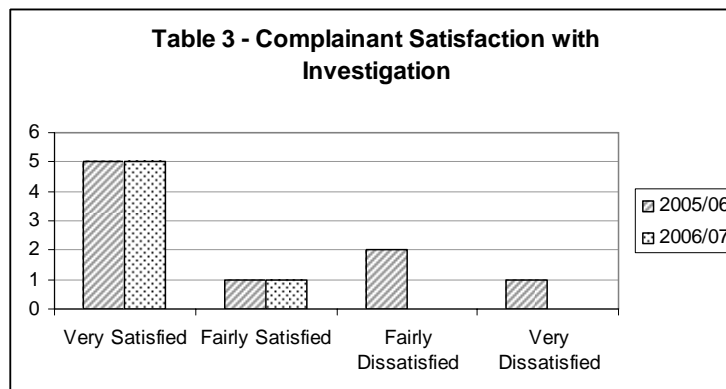
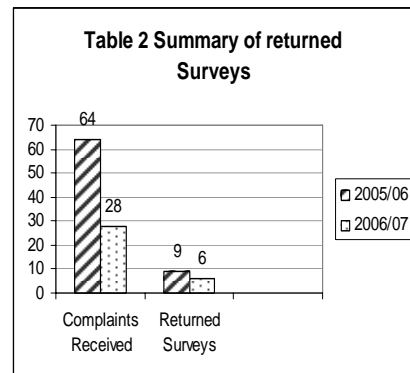


Table 3 left summarises the respondents' overall satisfaction with the manner in which their complaints have been dealt with.



There are currently no arrangements in place to publicise complaints on the Service's website in a similar manner to compliments.

Indicative of the Authority's endeavours continuously to improve performance, a review is currently underway to identify further areas for improvement in the management of both compliments and complaints. The review will include exploring the summarising of complaints and, where appropriate, posting them on the website. This approach will reinforce to the community the Authority's open approach to learning from experiences, which do not always meet with the community's satisfaction. Any new procedures identified and developed will be introduced on 1 April 2006.

6 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report.

8 Appendices

Appendix A Summary of Complaints Received 2005/06 and 2006/07 (six months)

Appendix B Summary of Results from Complaint Survey Questionnaire

9 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balance Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Equality and Diversity	*	Retained	
Efficiency Savings		Risk and Insurance	*
Environmental		Staff	*
Financial		Strategic Planning	
Fire Control/Fire Link		West Midlands Regional Management Board	

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Steve Worrall, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260204.



Summary of Complaints Received 2005/06 and 2006/07 (six months)

Type of Complaint	Total 2005/06	Outcomes		Total 2006/07 (six months)	Outcomes	
Damage to property	2	2	Complaints upheld	2	2	Complaints upheld
			Complaints Overturned			Complaints Overturned
			Complaints withdrawn			Complaints withdrawn
Poor driving behaviour	2	2	Complaints upheld	4	4	Complaints upheld
			Complaints Overturned			Complaints Overturned
			Complaints withdrawn			Complaints withdrawn
Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service	8	4	Complaints upheld	5	4	Complaints upheld
		4	Complaints Overturned		1	Complaints Overturned
			Complaints withdrawn			Complaints withdrawn
Failure to deal correctly with an incident/inspection	3	2	Complaints upheld	1	1	Complaints upheld
			Complaints Overturned			Complaints Overturned
		1	Complaints withdrawn			Complaints withdrawn
Other:	7	5	Complaints upheld	2	1	Complaints upheld
		1	Complaints Overturned			Complaints Overturned
		1	Complaints withdrawn		1	Complaints withdrawn
Total:	22			14		



Summary of Results from Complaint Survey Questionnaire

COMPLAINTS SURVEY: 2005/06

A Making your complaint

A1 How did you contact the Brigade to make your complaint?

Respondents' feedback:

By completing a complaints leaflet	0	In person at Headquarters	1
By letter	3	In person at local Fire Station	0
By telephone to Headquarters	3	By email	1
By telephone to local Fire Station	1	Other (please tell us)	1

A2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the ease with which you could make a complaint?

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
<i>Respondents' feedback:</i>	6	3	0	0

A3 Thinking about your initial contact with the Brigade regarding your complaint, would you agree or disagree that the person you spoke to about your complaint

Respondents' feedback:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Was polite	6	2	1	0
Was helpful	6	2	0	1
Made sure they understood your complaint	6	2	0	1
Told you their name	5	3	0	1
Told you what would happen next	6	2	1	0



B**Processing your complaint**

- B1** Thinking about the person who looked into your complaint, would you agree or disagree that he/she

Respondents' feedback:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Was polite	6	2	0	1
Was helpful	6	2	0	1
Was easy to contact	6	3	0	0
Kept you informed	5	3	0	1

- B2** Thinking about the written correspondence you received from us regarding your complaint, do you agree/disagree that

Respondents' feedback:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Plain English was used in the correspondence.	7	2	0	0
The correspondence was accurate.	6	1	1	1
The tone of the letter was good.	6	2	0	1
Clear guidance was given on what would happen next.	6	1	1	1
Clear guidance was given on what you could do, if you were unhappy with the final response.	6	3	0	0

- B3** How satisfied were you with the outcome of your complaint?

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Respondents' feedback:	5	1	0	3

- B4** Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which your complaint was handled?

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Respondents' feedback:	5	1	2	1



COMPLAINTS SURVEY: 2006/07 (six months)

A

Making your complaint

A1 How did you contact the Brigade to make your complaint?

Respondents' feedback:

By completing a complaints leaflet	0	In person at Headquarters	0
By letter	1	In person at local Fire Station	0
By telephone to Headquarters	2	By email	0
By telephone to local Fire Station	3	Other (please tell us)	0

A2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the ease with which you could make a complaint?

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
<i>Respondents' feedback:</i>	4	2	0	0

A3 Thinking about your initial contact with the Brigade regarding your complaint, would you agree or disagree that the person you spoke to about your complaint

Respondents' feedback:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Was polite	6	0	0	0
Was helpful	5	1	0	0
Made sure they understood your complaint	5	1	0	0
Told you their name	6	0	0	0
Told you what would happen next	5	1	0	0



B**Processing your complaint**

B1 Thinking about the person who looked into your complaint, would you agree or disagree that he/she

Respondents' feedback:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Was polite	6	0	0	0
Was helpful	6	1	0	0
Was easy to contact	6	0	0	0
Kept you informed	6	0	0	0

B2 Thinking about the written correspondence you received from us regarding your complaint, do you agree/disagree that

Respondents' feedback:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Plain English was used in the correspondence.	6	0	0	0
The correspondence was accurate.	6	0	0	0
The tone of the letter was good.	6	0	0	0
Clear guidance was given on what would happen next.	6	0	0	0
Clear guidance was given on what you could do if you were unhappy with the final response.	4	2	0	0

B3 How satisfied were you with the outcome of your complaint?

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Respondents' feedback:	4	2	0	0

B4 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which your complaint was handled?

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Respondents' feedback:	5	1	0	0

