

The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

A follow-up review of the
inspection recommendations

October 2007





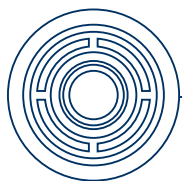
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**Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland**
a better justice system for all

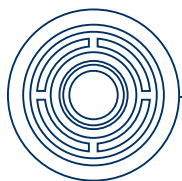






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List of abbreviations

ATP	Accredited Training Programme for Investigators with the University of Portsmouth
CAUSEWAY	The Causeway IT Programme
CID	Criminal Investigation Department (in police)
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CJU	Criminal Justice Unit (in police)
CO	Complaints Officer
CPD	Central Procurement Department
DCU	District Command Unit (in police)
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DPPs	District Policing Partnerships
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
GSOC	Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission
IIP	Investors In People
IO	Investigating Officer
IPCC	Independent Police Complaints Commission
JEGS	Job Evaluation and Grading Support
JNCC	Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body
NICCY	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
NICEM	Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
NIO	The Northern Ireland Office
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NIPSA	Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
OPONI	The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
PDP	Personal Development Plan
PSD	Professional Standards Department (in police)
PPS	Public Prosecution Service
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
QA	Quality Assurance
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SMT	Senior Management Team
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
TSG	Tactical Support Group (in police)



Chief Inspector's Foreword

This review reports on progress of the OPONI in implementing the recommendations made by Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI) following the publication of the inspection report into the Office of the Police Ombudsman in December 2005. The review was guided by the OPONI response to recommendations which was published as an appendix to the inspection report.

The review confirms that the OPONI has implemented the majority of the recommendations made in our report. Recommendations had been allocated to the appropriate Directors within the OPONI and a detailed progress report was provided to CJI prior to the follow-up inspection fieldwork. Only one minor recommendation was not accepted and reasoning was provided for this whilst just one major recommendation had not been achieved though there had been progress made with it.

Inspectors recognised the good work done by the OPONI in pursuing all the recommendations but were disappointed that despite much effort no real progress had been made in developing better relationships with the Policing Board. This should be a continuing aim for the new Police Ombudsman and for the Board.

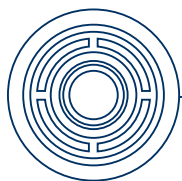
The Inspection team greatly appreciated the co-operation it received from the Police Ombudsman and her staff during this follow-up review.



Kit Chivers

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland

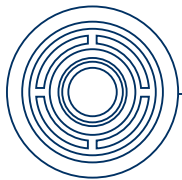




Section



Follow-Up Review



CHAPTER 1:

Introduction



The Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland is the independent complaints body established by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State and constituted and operated independently of the Policing Board and the Chief Constable. It is a Non-Departmental Public Body, (NDPB), financed by grant-in-aid from the Northern Ireland Office.

Its vision is:

‘Excellence in the provision of an independent impartial police complaints service in which the public and the police have confidence.’

Its stated missions are:

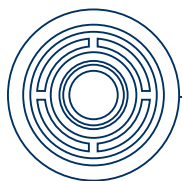
- To ensure maximum awareness of the Police Ombudsman complaints service;
- To ensure that it is fully accessible and responsive to the community;
- To provide a robust and effective investigation process leading to evidence based recommendations; and,
- To analyse and research the outcomes of complaints so as to inform and improve the policy and practice of policing.

Under Section 51(4) of the Police (NI) Act 1998 the Ombudsman is directed to:

- “exercise his powers under this Part in such manner and to such extent as appears to him to be best calculated to secure;
- the efficiency, effectiveness and independence of the police complaints system; and
- the confidence of the public and of members of the police force in that system.”

In December 2005 CJI published its report into the Office of the Police Ombudsman and included as an appendix to that report the response of the OPONI to 13 major and 14 minor recommendations. It was agreed that CJI would revisit the office 18 months after publication of the first report to assess progress against all of those recommendations.

In May 2007 CJI received from the OPONI a detailed written update of progress against those recommendations and on the basis of that report and with the assistance of the OPONI, formulated a short inspection review to validate progress. A summary of progress outlined by the OPONI against each recommendation is outlined in Chapter 2 together with Inspectors’ observations from two days of interviews with a wide range of OPONI staff representing all its directorates.



CHAPTER 2:

Progress on Major Recommendations

Recommendation 1

OPONI, as part of its outreach strategy, should, with the co-operation of Police District Commanders, establish a programme of targeted presentations specifically designed for C.I.D. officers under their command.

Progress reported by Agency:

Discussions were held with the PSNI about initiating such a programme but this has not been progressed. The matter remains under consideration.

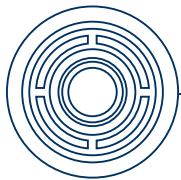
Status: Not Achieved

Other work that the OPONI was progressing with the PSNI ensured that coverage of CID officers was increased. Progress is still to be made with existing long-standing CID officers within police districts but a positive start has been made by accessing Detective officers whilst on training programmes.

OPONI had actively targeted PSNI Detective training to enhance their outreach work with this section of the Police Service. Detective training programmes were used to deliver presentations, gaining exposure to approximately 250 officers through 14 presentations:

- 4 presentations to Senior Investigation Officer courses (60 officers)
- 1 presentation PSNI Detective Foundation Course (64 officers)
- 9 presentations Initial CID training courses (125 officers).

While all presentations were delivered by senior staff most were fronted by the Ombudsman herself. Presentations were assessed as worthwhile even though during this period there had been damaged relations, mainly with the Police Federation, due to the publication of reports into some high profile cases. However, this did not appear to adversely affect the outreach programme. In terms of their overall outreach strategy OPONI had taken the view that “police officers are a sub set of the public”. They intended to target and inform police officers through the medium of public outreach e.g. through press and television coverage.



Recommendation 2

To further increase its openness and external scrutiny OPONI should develop the role of the non-executive members of the Audit Committee.

Progress reported by Agency:

Views from the independent members of the Audit Committee are that the role has become well established and adequately developed. In line with best practice, the Chairmanship of the Audit Committee is undertaken by an independent member of the Committee. The agenda and minutes of meetings are agreed by the Chairman before circulation. Update training is provided to independent members as appropriate.

Status: Achieved

The role for existing non-executive members had been extended for a further two years from July 2007. The members felt that they had been well-integrated while retaining their independence.

The role is a comprehensive one. It entails appointment of new internal auditors, quarterly meetings (which are very well attended), development of unit costs and reviewing the risk register.

Examples of the contribution of non-executive members beyond the audit committee include chairing meetings, commenting on the draft Annual Report and Business Plans, assisting with mediation of an internal issue, and advising on the new case management system.

The engagement of external people in these roles had helped spread responsibility beyond the Ombudsman and had strengthened governance for the OPONI.

Recommendation 3

The Ombudsman should take the opportunity of the forthcoming five-year review of legislation concerning the discharge of her functions to engage afresh with all the interested parties to establish better understandings about respective roles, objectives and methods of operation.

Progress reported by Agency:

The opportunity was taken to convene a stakeholders group at the outset of the five-year review. The list of stakeholders invited and the areas subject to consultation and notes on the consultation are available. This process was constructive and a high level of agreement reached as to possible focus for amendment in legislation in order to make the complaint system more effective and efficient. Two engagements, one Belfast based and one in Omagh were then organised in order to share in a wider context with members of the public and local police the areas under focus in the review. The final report to the NIO is also available for scrutiny.

Status: Achieved

The OPONI drove this review process forward during a difficult time for the office and its relationships in the wake of the publication of some high profile reports. Public meetings had limited response though they were reported as being constructive and useful. Stakeholders meetings were comprehensive and well attended and raised some core issues for OPONI which were included in their report to the NIO. The report, which included 25 recommendations, had been forwarded to the NIO and OPONI was awaiting their response at the time of the inspection fieldwork. The report was published before the summer Parliamentary recess.



Recommendation 4

OPONI should establish clear protocols with the police as to the notification of quality assurance research methods into police policy and practice. These should include a framework for developing these types of approaches.

Progress reported by Agency:

Agreement has been reached with the PSNI as to a protocol for the communication of the fact that quality assurance exercises are to take place. This protocol is now operational. In addition, there is now established a clear Gold, Silver and Bronze meeting structure between the OPONI and the PSNI to assist communication in such areas.

Status: Achieved

Silver group meetings involving OPONI and the PSNI deal with the running of any QA exercises and the implementation of the agreed protocol with the PSNI regarding these. Meetings are held monthly with the C/Supt and Supt from the police Professional Standards Department (PSD) and a good professional working relationship has been established. QA exercises remain at the discretion of the OPONI but there has not been one since the last 'mystery shopper' exercise which prompted the development of the current protocol.

Recommendation 5

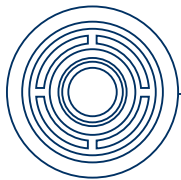
OPONI should appoint an independent community consultative group to provide a structured method of securing the community and stakeholder perspective on its work.

Progress reported by Agency:

OPONI has established a working group made up of representatives of the NI Tenants Association. The group was set up in consequence of research conducted by the Office into complainant non co-operation. Its main role is to develop an action plan aimed at increasing complainant co-operation with the Office.

Status: Achieved

The Northern Ireland Tenants Association represents a wide cross section of the public. OPONI had already established contact with them through earlier outreach work and decided to use that contact to propose a wider consultative body to enable them to address this recommendation and to involve a community consultative group in its work. At the time of the inspection fieldwork there had been two meetings of this group which had focused on complainant co-operation. It is expected that the work of the group will develop further as it becomes better established.



Recommendation 6

OPONI should continue to review its internal communications policy and develop the strategy to enable the effective dissemination of information throughout the organisation. This should include a framework of meetings at all levels with 'organisational information' as a standing agenda item.

Progress reported by Agency:

The Intranet continues to provide a mainstream framework for the communication of information supported by Team and Directorate meetings. The Directors' Meeting and Team meetings are a central feature of communicating executive decisions. The development of the Information Bulletin has also strengthened the scope and quality of information now available to staff at all levels within the organisation. The Chief Executive also provides staff with a summary of key business decisions.

Status: Achieved

Staff commented that communication within the organisation had improved and that the regular updates by the CEO had helped in this respect. Staff in most directorates felt that they were kept well informed by the organisation but that communication was variable within the very busy investigations directorate. There was an established framework for monthly meetings, however, communication within the busiest directorate, investigations, was less good than in others due to work pressures.

Recommendation 7

OPONI should gather the views of all staff prior to any future planned away days. It should also review the methodology employed in the last staff away days so that at future such events the methodology used encourages all staff, but in particular those at C and D grades, to contribute their feelings freely.

Progress reported by Agency:

The Chief Executive organised particular events for C and D Grades over the past year in order to ensure their issues and interests were more fully considered within the scope of staff events. Minutes of these events, one held at the Cathedral Training Room and one at the Holiday Inn Express are available for inspection and again show the extent to which this Recommendation was acknowledged and progressed.

Status: Achieved

Events for C and D grades had been organised and delivered and these were described by staff as being useful. There had been away days and team building for staff and the meetings were described as informative. Staff felt that they were encouraged to raise any issues without there being consequences for them if they did so.



Recommendation 8

OPONI should take positive action to inform staff of the findings of, and actions arising from, the corporate cultural survey by extracting the executive summary of the document and circulating this to all staff whilst drawing their attention to the full report on the staff intranet. The corporate cultural survey should be made an annual event so that trends can be detected.

Progress reported by Agency:

All staff had been made aware of the findings of the 2006 Staff Attitude Survey. An Action Plan was agreed with staff representatives and communicated to staff via the monthly Office Information Bulletin. Review meetings with staff representatives are planned and it is proposed, with staff representative agreement, to issue staff with a further update on the progress of the Action Plan. Following discussion with staff representatives the next Staff Attitude Survey is scheduled to take place early in 2008.

Status: Achieved

Staff commented on how seriously the results of the survey had been taken. They were all aware of the Action Plans arising. A guide to all line managers was issued as a result of the findings of the staff attitude survey and this was seen as a positive outcome by all the staff spoken to during the inspection.

Recommendation 9

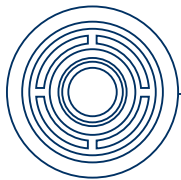
OPONI should re-state its commitment to reducing the numbers of seconded police officers. Long-term targets should be set, recognising that management will always have to respond to changing demands year by year.

Progress reported by Agency:

The use of seconded officers is under continual review. They will continue to be used as required for operational needs. The long term goal is to reduce the numbers of seconded officers contingent upon key roles and skills being developed and sustainable succession planning.

Status: Achieved

The numbers of seconded officers had been kept under constant review. At the time of the review fieldwork there were 14 seconded staff. As the work of the Office had expanded and its staff had increased, use had been made of agency investigators. The OPONI baseline was 128 posts. This has been increased to 151 posts with 13 posts given over to dealing with historic enquiries.



Recommendation 10

OPONI should actively promote to its staff the support offered to them by the harassment officers and should ensure that staff in every department are made aware of their details and procedures for contacting them. OPONI should publish contact details on the staff intranet as a follow up to any awareness raising initiative.

Progress reported by Agency:

Diversity, Bullying & Harassment Training was provided to all staff in Oct/Nov 2006. During this training the role of the harassment officer was highlighted. Updated Harassment Adviser training was delivered to new advisers in March 2007 and the names of the new current harassment officers is available to staff on the intranet. All staff were advised by e-mail of the names of the harassment advisers and that the up to date list would be retained on the intranet.

Status: Achieved

Staff spoken to during the inspection fieldwork were very aware of their harassment advisers and the work that had been done in training them. Staff saw the relaunching of harassment advisers as a positive step and stated that the diversity, bullying and harassment training all staff had received had been very good. Usage of the harassment advisers was minimal, those advisers spoken to stated that they had been used in an informal way as a first point of advice and contact but that to their knowledge no formal complaints about harassment had been made since their appointment.

Recommendation 11

OPONI should continue its accredited training programme for investigators and should work together with the University of Portsmouth to publicise to the PSNI and other stakeholders the status and benefits of the programme.

Progress reported by Agency:

The OPONI accredited training programme continues to be the core element for the development of Trainee Investigation Officers. A graduation ceremony has been held for the first cohort of students, with press releases issued to the relevant media. The course is also subject to ongoing reference in Police Ombudsman statements/speeches and Corporate Plans including Annual Reports.

Status: Achieved

The training programme is now well established within the Office and new investigators are required to undertake it as part of their development. OPONI are now keen to advertise to the public and therefore police officers that their investigation staff are well qualified and skilled to undertake searching and objective investigations. When investigators complete the accredited training programme OPONI recognise the achievement through a graduation ceremony. They continue to use a high profile person to present certificates. The programme developed by OPONI and Portsmouth University has been adopted by the IPCC and by the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) for the development of their own investigators.



Recommendation 12

OPONI should review the process by which training needs are identified so that training remains current and appropriate to the organisation, the role and the individual.

Progress reported by Agency:

Effective training has been a priority for the Office since it was established. Training needs are identified for all staff as part of the annual performance appraisals and objective setting process. An initial Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is prepared in June which forms the basis of discussions with managers/Directors across the organisation to ensure delivery of training is relevant, necessary and on-going and that training can be identified and delivered. The TNA is kept under review throughout the year.

Status: Achieved

The training officer performs a very useful role and individual needs are identified through the Personal Development Plan (PDP) system. This requires staff to take some personal responsibility for their own training and this strategy appears to be working effectively. The production of a full training prospectus for OPONI would be difficult given the diversity of roles within the organisation. However, a list of all the courses attended by staff was published in the information bulletin to keep staff informed of opportunities for their development.

OPONI had recognised the need to secure a consistent approach to management. Staff had been recruited from many backgrounds with different practices and management experiences and the organisation recognised the need to ensure that they

conform to a corporate standard. For this purpose a Middle Management Training Initiative was being tendered and planned for in different cohorts to secure wide coverage in a planned sequence to minimise disruption to OPONI work.

Recommendation 13

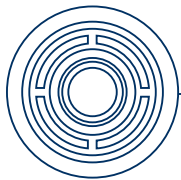
OPONI should closely support and monitor the new procurement processes and ensure that all parts of the organisation are fully aware of their procurement responsibilities.

Progress reported by Agency:

Procurement procedures are now well established and available to all staff on the intranet. Additionally a procurement workshop was delivered to all managers and procurement forms part of core induction training. The Procurement Unit within the Office has developed and maintains good relationships both externally with NIO, Central Procurement Department (CPD) and suppliers but also internally within all teams and Directorates.

Status: Achieved

Staff at all levels were aware of the Procurement Unit and procurement processes. A workshop had been held for all staff involved with procurement issues and this had been very successful in raising the profile of the Procurement Unit. Procedures are flexible enough to enable the Office to function effectively whilst maintaining control over procurement practices. Some form of best/good practice guide in procurement issued by the NIO would be useful to consolidate practices for the future.



CHAPTER 3:

Progress on Minor Recommendations

Recommendation 1

When delivering presentations to the police as part of the outreach strategy it would be useful to analyse participants' responses so as to compare the impact on newly recruited officers as against more experienced DCU staff.

Progress reported by Agency:

Such a comparison over a trial period has been carried out and analysis is nearing completion.

Status: Achieved

Awaiting full analysis

Recommendation 2

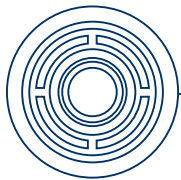
Where an incident is subject to a complaint and OPONI investigation has resulted in change to police policy or practice, it should be possible to include a review of these changes and publish this alongside the results of the investigation.

Progress reported by Agency:

The Office is currently conducting a research project aimed at identifying changes in police policies and practices arising from reports submitted under Regulation 20 of the RUC (Complaints etc) Regulations 2000.

Status: Achieved

OPONI has published such reviews in a number of reports and the research project outlined above is currently under way with publication anticipated before the end of 2007.



Recommendation 3

To improve the efficiency of OPONI with regard to the investigation of complaints it would be useful to develop a protocol with the PSNI concerning the timely supply of documentation from CJUs.

Progress reported by Agency:

The OPONI and the PSNI have developed an electronic exchange of information protocol to improve timeliness and efficiency in respect of obtaining documentary material.

Status: Achieved

Much information is now transferred electronically between the PSNI and OPONI and the relationship with CJUs was good. Time limits were being complied with and there were fewer cases where information had not been supplied in good time.

Recommendation 4

There should be more regular meetings between OPONI and the full Policing Board in an effort to improve relationships.

Progress reported by Agency:

The Office struggled to progress this recommendation. The Policing Board never conceded in acknowledging that a formal meeting once a year was less than adequate. A protocol was agreed and is available for inspection. It allowed the Ombudsman to initiate, in her own right, a meeting for Board members coinciding with the release of the Annual Report. Again, documentation is available for inspection. A disappointingly small number of members attended the additional Board meeting last July.

Status: Not achieved

Inspectors believe that little else can be done by OPONI to address this recommendation. This issue may now have to be taken forward by the new Police Ombudsman following his appointment in November 2007.



Recommendation 5

It would be useful if the OPONI were to review its closure system for complaints and introduce a more user friendly service with the option of personal explanation of the reasons for closure.

Progress reported by Agency:

Closure letters are the standard procedure used to inform complainants of case closure. The Investigation Directorate is working closely with the Director of Information to improve the quality of closure documentation. Each case is considered on its merits as to whether or not a personal meeting with the complainant is required. In cases involving death personal meetings with the next of kin are the norm. Currently resource levels do not facilitate personal meetings with all complainants at closure stage.

Status: Achieved

Following the review of the closure system improvements were made to the quality of closure letters and a monitoring system was put in place so that the Director of Investigations could plan for any upcoming closures that would merit special attention. Letters now include a résumé of actions taken by the OPONI during the investigation of a complaint though there is acknowledgement that work still needs to be done to ensure consistency of approach in all cases.

Recommendation 6

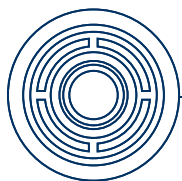
The provision of information leaflets translated into the main ethnic minority languages used in Northern Ireland for use by organisations such as NICEM would be positive step in promoting the services offered by the OPONI to people who have a different first language.

Progress reported by Agency:

The Office will make information available in various languages, upon request. New information leaflets due to be issued in September 2007 will be supplied in various languages.

Status: Achieved

OPONI consulted with a range of people identified under s.75 and concluded that to maintain their previous success in engaging harder to reach communities required a change in methodology reflective of an increasingly diverse society. Plans have been drawn up to deliver presentations at times suitable to various diverse communities and OPONI will be consulting NICEM in this regard. They also plan to attend AGMs of local Housing Groups Tennant Associations and place adverts in their promotional booklets. Leaflets are being revised again and will be reissued in the autumn. These will be available on request in other languages.



Recommendation 7

It would be a useful additional method of reporting to the community if answers to Parliamentary Questions were published on the OPONI internet site as well as to the staff intranet.

Progress reported by Agency:

The OPONI has decided not to publish such information on either its website or intranet. Such information is available on the HANSARD website.

Status: Not accepted

OPONI considered this recommendation and decided against implementing it due mainly to the political nature of the vast majority of Parliamentary Questions tabled about the office. Answers to parliamentary questions are available through the HANSARD website.

Recommendation 8

Where possible the publication of minutes of meetings, for example, SMT and JNCC, on the intranet would be useful to staff and may help to improve internal communications.

Progress reported by Agency:

This recommendation was acknowledged and comments in major recommendation 6 indicate progress in relation to this matter.

Status: Achieved

See comments under major recommendation 6.

Recommendation 9

It would be useful if a page counter system was implemented so that usage of the staff intranet could be monitored and adjustments made to information as appropriate.

Progress reported by Agency:

Implemented.

Status: Achieved

This recommendation has been fully implemented.

Recommendation 10

There is a strong case for explaining policies at team meetings to reinforce staff understanding of them and to enhance deployment, as well as giving staff another opportunity to voice any concerns.

Progress reported by Agency:

This is good management practice and issues are shared with staff during team meetings. Two way dialogue is always encouraged at staff meetings.

Status: Achieved

Staff spoken to during the inspection said that their team briefings were good and that they felt well informed. Staff from the investigations directorate said that some team meetings had to be postponed due to pressure of work and some information had therefore not been passed on. Staff were aware that policies are available on their intranet but reaffirmed their preference for such information to be passed on in person by line management which enabled staff to ask questions.



Recommendation 11

CJI would encourage OPONI's aspiration to consider the use of the EFQM excellence model to aid further development.

Progress reported by Agency:

Resources have not permitted advancement in this area but the issue remains under consideration.

Status: Not achieved

The progress towards EFQM following on from being awarded IIP status remains a long term aspiration.

Recommendation 12

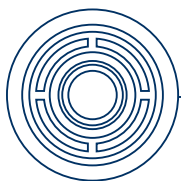
CJI does not propose that training should be reduced, however, other incentives should be researched in an attempt to encourage retention of a skilful workforce.

Progress reported by Agency:

The Office undertook a review of pay and grading which resulted in enhanced entry points on pay bands for core grades. However, the Office is constrained within the public sector pay and benefits regime. The Office continues to develop relationships within teams and to maintain a harmonious working environment to encourage staff to stay and is proactive in encouraging appropriate team building events within the Office. In addition, the Office has concentrated its training on targeting core skills in key areas.

Status: Achieved

The review of pay and grading resulted in OPONI staff benefiting from a fairer application of the NIO pay and grading structure. Overlapping pay between grades, which had been a major cause of discontent, has been eliminated.



Recommendation 13

OPONI should find a way to reinforce to its complaint officers considerations for their own health and safety. For example, during team briefings and providing written guidance.

Progress reported by Agency:

There is a requirement on all staff to ensure they undertake dynamic risk assessment of situations they work in. This area has been the subject of a training morning with complaint officer staff.

Status: Achieved

Complaints officers were aware of the risk assessments and policies as regards their own personal safety. The training had been viewed as useful. It was suggested that the Maybin door staff could be more active in screening people who come to the office, for example, those who attend under the influence of alcohol.

Recommendation 14

It would be useful if NISRA staff were provided with an induction package upon their arrival at OPONI.

Progress reported by Agency:

All staff are provided with corporate and role specific induction on joining the Office. A wider in-depth induction programme is run periodically when a sufficient number of staff join as this induction incorporates external speakers etc.

Status: Achieved

Because of the increase in staff numbers induction has been delivered regularly. During periods where recruitment was low and new joiners had to wait for the induction course, there had been informal induction in each of the directorates.

Conclusion

The OPONI has achieved the majority of recommendations set out in the inspection report of December 2005. Of the 13 major recommendations, 12 had been achieved whilst one had not been achieved though some progress had been made with it. Of the 14 minor recommendations, 11 had been achieved, two had not been achieved whilst one had not been accepted.

The major recommendation that had not been achieved was;

- targeted presentations to Detective officers in police districts.

Some progress had been made towards increasing the numbers of Detectives given OPONI presentations by delivering these to Detective training courses.

The minor recommendations that had not been achieved were;

- better engagement with the Policing Board; and,
- usage of the EFQM.

With regard to the Policing Board, Inspectors believe that as much progress has been made by OPONI as possible in the current circumstances. The usage of EFQM within OPONI remains a long term aspiration.

Staff were upbeat about the progress that had been made with internal communication and with the review of pay starting points. Both of these had impacted positively on staff whose continued strong commitment to their role was obvious to Inspectors during the fieldwork interviews.

Inspectors found that there had been good commitment throughout all levels of the OPONI to achieving recommendations made and repeat our findings set out in the inspection report that, *'Inspectors' overall assessment is that OPONI is an effective and efficient organisation which is keen to improve further.'*

Inspectors are satisfied that there is sufficient impetus within OPONI to carry through those recommendations assessed as 'not achieved' or 'partly achieved' without any further inspection review.



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