

1st Quarter Organisational Performance Report 2006/07

Executive Summary

Overview

Data for the first quarter of 2006/07 reveals significant increases in referral activity and Reporter workload across the board. In addition to recorded increases in the volume of referrals (with the exception of offence referrals) there are marked increases in specific areas of Reporter casework which demand significant input due to the complexity of the issues involved and the level of risk to children (e.g. child protection orders and court work.) This first quarter performance report confirms expectations that referrals to the Reporter would continue to rise in the short-term ahead of the impact of any initiatives to address referral practice by the principal referring agencies. However, what this first quarter performance report also shows is that SCRA has commenced its reporting year (2006/07) with the highest-ever level of referrals recorded in any one quarter since records began.

In summary:

■ Referrals to the Reporter:	up 20%*	[up 4.7%]**
■ Children referred to the Reporter:	up 17%*	[up 4%]**
■ Children referred on non-offence grounds (<i>care and protection concerns</i>):	up 29.5%*	[up 3.2%]**
■ Children referred on offence grounds:	down 6.4%*	[up 5%]**
■ Child Protection Orders:	up 75%*	[up 32%]**
■ The number of Children's Hearings held:	up 10%*	[up 7.5%]**
■ The number of Court Applications:	up 27%*	[up 18.3%]**

(* when comparing Q1 of 06/07 with Q1 of 05/06)
(** when comparing Q1 of 06/07 with Q4 of 05/06)

Context

While further detailed analysis is required to understand fully the context of such increases, it is likely that the prominence of a number of high profile child protection incidents and the concerns voiced about the number of children living in households of drug-abusing parents/adults has likely influenced the increases in referrals to the Reporter.

Forecasts

While it can be anticipated (on the basis of previous years' data) that referral activity will drop slightly in the second quarter from July 06 through to September 06, this will only be temporary. The pattern established in recent years means that it is reasonable to assume that referrals to the Reporter in the second half of the year (between October 06 and March 07) will exceed levels recorded in this first quarterly report. The level of operational risk facing SCRA therefore continues to rise.

Performance

Despite increased levels of casework in all areas reported, performance continued to improve on several key measures reflecting changes to working practices and innovative solutions to managing the increasing workload. The effect of the increased workload, however, can be seen in performances beginning to dip on 'time related' measures (in percentage terms) and the fact that the number of referrals received in this quarter has exceeded the number of referrals disposed of in the same quarter. It seems likely that organisational performance will not improve in the short term as referrals increase (in volume and complexity) and as re-prioritised resources become fully stretched.

In summary:

1st Quarter

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| ▪ % of Hearings scheduled within 20 working days:
<i>(target for the year 75%)</i> | 70% |
| ▪ % of Hearings scheduled within 30 working days:
<i>(target for the year 90%)</i> | 91% |
| ▪ % of children/families sent notification of outcome
of a referral within 5 working days
<i>(target for the year 60%)</i> | 58% |
| ▪ % of children/families sent notification of outcome
of a Hearing within 5 working days
<i>(target for the year 85%)</i> | 89% |
| ▪ % of non-offence Applications established at Court
<i>(target for the year 95%)</i> | 93% |

Financial Performance

The total available revenue resources for 2006/07 is £24,407k (including funds carried forward from 2005/06 and allocated against the SPP, Phase 1 Victim Information funding and local authority income for partnership posts.) Revenue expenditure in the period to June 2006 was £5,689k, £227k (3.8%) less than budget. The forecast for the year at July 2006 was for a net overspend of £396k. This does not take account of additional resources now available and makes no allowance for likely staff turnover. Finance have met with budget holders to critically review forecasts and it is anticipated that revised budget forecasts will identify additional flexibility in the budget to allow further reallocation of resources to SPP priorities. In addition, the Scottish Executive has now agreed that the receipt (£388k) from the sale of 8 Albyn Place can be retained by SCRA. A revised revenue budget reflecting the agreed additional resources and SPP plans will be submitted to the Board in October 2006.

Management Response

The Service Prioritisation Plan (SPP) is SCRA's response to the challenging operational context. Further re-prioritisation of activity and resources will almost certainly be required if the level of operational risk, facing children and families, is to be brought down to a manageable and acceptable level in the short-term, ahead of the impact of the range of SPP projects now underway and any related change in referral practice by referring agencies.

The Executive Management Team has initiated a comprehensive financial planning and business review covering 2006/07 and 2007/08 to identify further changes which will need to be made to current plans to manage the increasing levels of operational risk. A report detailing the outcome of the financial and business review will proceed to the Board in October 2006.

In November 2006, SCRA will commence its strategic planning exercise for the next three years (2007-2010) informed by the outcome of the short-term financial and business review; the progress and anticipated impact of the SPP; the availability of any additional resources; an up to date analysis of referral activity and related workload pressures; and an assessment of the likely impact and timing of any national initiative designed to ensure only appropriate referrals are made to the Reporter.

12 October 2006

Progress against Key Performance Measures 2006/07

Key performance measures	Full Year 2005/06	Target 2006/07	2005/06				2006/07
			Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1
National performance target							
The number of persistent young offenders	1,388	1,027	564	828	1,105	1,388	654
Hearings System Targets							
The percentage of re-referrals to the Reporter on offence grounds	40%	40%	45%	48%	48%	47%	48%
The average number of days for referrals on offence grounds from date of receipt of referral to Hearing decision*	70 days	68	70	69	69	65	68
The average number of days for referrals on non-offence grounds from date of receipt of referral to Hearing decision	130 days	130	139	131	124	127	126
The percentage of decisions on all referrals in the year that were made within 50 working days	63%	60%	61%	60%	66%	65%	65%
SCRA Targets							
The percentage of Hearings scheduled to take place within 20 working days	77%	75%	76%	73%	80%	77%	70%
The percentage of Hearings scheduled to take place within 30 working days	92%	90%	93%	89%	95%	93%	91%
The percentage of children and their families who are sent written notification of the outcome of a referral in the year within 5 working days*	61%	60%	63%	59%	60%	60%	58%
The percentage of children and their families who are sent written notification of the outcome of a Hearing in the year within 5 working days*	86%	85%	85%	86%	86%	88%	89%
The percentage of non-offence applications established at court	94%	95%	92%	94%	95%	95%	93%
The degree to which SCRA core properties comply with SCRA property standards	73%	75%	72%	73%	73%	73%	75%
The percentage of staff attendance	95%	95%	95%	94%	95%	94%	96%
The average number of training days per member of staff	4.5 days	4	1.0	0.8	1.8	1.0	1.0
The percentage of expenditure that is within budget	97%	97%	95%	96%	96%	97%	96%

* National figure (2006/07) is taken from YJ report Regional figure from operational DM report

Service Casework Statistics – National and Regional

Service casework statistics	Quarter 1 2005/06					Q4 05/06	Year End 2005/06	Quarter 1 2006/07																
	SCRA	Central West	East	North	West			SCRA	change to Q4		change to last yr Q1		Central West	change to last yr Q1		East	change to last yr Q1		North	change to last yr Q1		West	change to last yr Q1	
Children referred (receipt)	16,747	5,451	4,428	1,927	4,944	18,924	53,883	19,609	685	3.6%	2862	17.1%	6,690	1239	22.7%	4,978	550	12.4%	2,331	404	21.0%	5,612	668	13.5%
Children referred on offence grounds*	6,989	2,244	1,866	830	1,759	6,230	17,624	6,543	313	5%	-446	-6.4%	2,046	-198	-8.8%	1,839	-27	-1.4%	784	-46	-5.5%	1,870	111	6.3%
Children referred on non-offence grounds	10,860	3,478	2,813	1,214	3,377	13,656	40,931	14,087	431	3.2%	3207	29.5%	5,007	1529	44.0%	3,378	565	20.1%	1,681	467	38.5%	4,020	643	19.0%
Referrals (receipt)	22,323	7,255	6,074	2,594	6,399	25,623	97,607	26,833	1,210	4.7%	4510	20.2%	9,441	2186	30.1%	6,604	530	8.7%	3,235	641	24.7%	7,532	1133	17.7%
Referrals (disposal)	25,009	8,166	6,809	3,134	6,900	27,215	98,649	25,995	-1,220	-4.5%	986	3.9%	9,659	1493	18.3%	6,352	-457	-6.7%	2,937	-197	-6.3%	7,046	146	2.1%
CPO (child protection order)	109					145	541	191	46	31.7%	82	75.2%												
Current Supervision Requirements	11,319	3,092	3,021	1,381	3,825	11,892	11,894	12,138	246	2.1%	819	7.2%	3,235	143	4.6%	3,184	163	5.4%	1,454	73	5.3%	4,265	440	11.5%
Hearings (all)	9,641	2,884	2,423	1,170	3,164	9,896	38,617	10,638	742	7.5%	997	10.3%	2,958	74	2.6%	2,748	325	13.4%	1,284	114	9.7%	3,648	484	15.3%
Court Applications	811	210	241	87	273	875	3,435	1,032	157	17.9%	221	27.3%	263	53	25.2%	299	58	24.1%	105	18	20.7%	365	92	33.7%
Court Applications Led	104					101	402	109	8	7.9%	5	4.8%												
Number of Appeals (all)	122	38	33	16	35	100	508	111	11	11.0%	-11	-9.0%	38	0	0.0%	24	-9	-27.3%	24	8	50.0%	25	-10	-28.6%

* National figure (2006/07) is taken from YJ report Regional figure from operational DM report