

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee – Public Session
Date	15 February 2018
Location	SPA Boardroom, Pacific Quay Glasgow
Title of Paper	Forensic Services Performance Report
Item number	5
Presented By	Tom Nelson
Recommendation to Members	For consultation
Appendix Attached	Business Performance Report Q3

PURPOSE

To present Forensic Services Performance Report, Q3 2017/18 for Committee consideration.

This paper is presented in line with;

- The Scottish Police Authority Scheme of Delegation

This paper is consultation.

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Forensic Services Business Performance Report is presented for Q3 2017/18.
- 1.2 This report captures activity conducted across SPA Forensic Services. This performance evidence also informs the content of the Authority's quarterly Strategic Police Plan Delivery Review and the Annual Review of Policing 2017/18.
- 1.3 The report demonstrates SPA Forensics Services delivery over the last three quarters through the following components:
 - Progress updates on Forensic Service commitments laid out in the annual business plan
 - Qualitative performance data;
 - Evidence of service initiatives and improvements

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Forensic Services are working to deliver on budget for the 2017/18 year with the quarter three results showing good progress in this regard. The forecast outturn for the full year is challenging and will be kept under review throughout the last quarter of the year.

3 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

4 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

5 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.

6 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

7 COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 7.1 There are no community impact implications associated with this paper.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

9 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the content of the Q3, 2017/18 Performance Report.

OFFICIAL

FORENSIC SERVICES

SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY

FORENSIC SERVICES

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Quarter 3, 2017-18

Introduction

Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services provides a Crime Scene to Court forensic service in Scotland and holds accreditation to the ISO 17025 standard as assessed by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). Forensic Services is organised into four distinct functions: Scene Examination, Biology, Physical Sciences, and Business Support. These national functions deliver forensic science technologies and expertise in the investigation of crime to Police Scotland, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and Police Independent Review Commission.

This performance report covers the October to December (Quarter 3) 2017 period unless otherwise stated.

1.1. Executive Summary

BUSINESS REVIEW

Operational performance over the last quarter has been relatively consistent with that of quarter 1 and 2 as shown within Section 3. Whilst a strong service is provided the backlog of casework is still high across many areas of the business.

The requirement to address casework backlog has been recognised and is a focus in the 2018-20 business plan. Additional resource is being sought to assist in this process however this will be dependent on the funding provided for the forthcoming financial year. The draft Forensic Services budget will be discussed by the Forensic Services Committee at the February 2018 Committee meeting.

The Forensics 2026 Strategy is nearing the end of the key stakeholder consultation process. This exercise has proved useful and allowed for strengthening of the strategic intent through a clearer articulation of the strategic vision. The finalised strategy and consultation paper will be taken forward to the SPA March 2018 Board meeting for review and approval.

The business plan supporting delivery of the short term Forensic 2026 Strategy has been developed for 2018-20 supported by the draft budget and capital plan. These documents will also be reviewed by the Forensic Services Committee and then the SPA March 2018 Board.

HMICS

Progress has been made across the recommendations identified in the HMICS report since the last committee as per the HMICS update paper presented to the February Forensic Services Committee.

The oversight and delivery arrangements outlined at the November 2017 Forensic Services Committee for the HMICS improvement work consisted of a collaborative Short Life Working Group (Forensic Services, Police Scotland and Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service), with associated sub-groups.

To date this has worked well, however with the clear direction of the Forensic 2026 Strategy and supporting 2 year business plan an opportunity has arisen to incorporate all the strategic, business as usual and HMICS activity into one plan. The governance arrangements established to manage the HMICS improvement work will now cover all business change activities.

HMICS recommendations, whilst being part of the Forensic Services 2018-20 business plan, will also be reported on separately on a quarterly basis. This will ensure continued visibility of work in this area and progress against recommendations.

Biometrics Advisory Group

As detailed in previous updates the Director of Forensic Services is a member of the Biometric Advisory Group which was set up in May 2017. The Cabinet Secretary for Justice has asked John Scott QC to chair this Independent Advisory Group to review the retention of custody images by Police Scotland. The Cabinet Secretary for Justice also asked that the Group consider the use and retention of biometric data more generally in policing, to establish an ethical and human rights based framework which could be applied to the use of existing, emergent and future biometrics in what is an important and fast-moving area of technology.

This group has convened a number of times and I am pleased to say that our report is now complete and will shortly be presented to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice. The Scottish Government has advised that it intends to undertake a public consultation later in 2018 which will include discussion of these recommendations.

FSAC Annual Report

The Forensic Science Regulator for England and Wales, Dr Gill Tully, published her Annual report on Forensic Science in January 2018. The Director of Forensic Services is a member of the Forensic Science Regulators Advisory Council and although the Forensic Regulator has no legal jurisdiction in Scotland this report ensures that Scotland is aware of recommendations being introduced in England and Wales and where appropriate will seek to introduce the equivalent in Scotland.

Below is the link to 2017 Annual Report of the Forensic Science Regulator.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674761/FSRAnnual_Report_2017_v1_01.pdf

The report highlights the importance of accreditation to recognised quality standards and the need for leadership and accountability in Policing to ensure that the timescales highlights for achieving accreditation across a range of important areas is recognised, invested in and implemented.

Information Commissioner Audit

In Quarter 2 2017/18 SPA Forensic Services were subject to an audit by the Scottish Information Commissioner. Forensic Services will be engaging in a joint programme with SPA Corporate to deliver on the recommendations with progress reporting to the SPA Audit and Risk Committee.

The Value of Forensic Science

On 29th January Nicola Marchant (Deputy Chair SPA Board), Tom Nelson (Director of Forensic Services) and Fiona Douglas (Head of Biology) attended a meeting at Stormont, Belfast, Northern Ireland to discuss a proposed project to measure the public value of Forensic Science.

The project is being established to complete one of the agreed deliverables of the Forensic Services Strategy in Northern Ireland which was agreed by the Minister of Justice and the Criminal Justice Board in Northern Ireland in 2016. The aim of the project is to critically assess the efficiency and overall effectiveness of forensic processes across the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland (NI). Forensic Services have been liaising with our colleagues in NI to see if there is benefit in our involvement in this project or indeed if we can share best practice from our crime scene to court forensic delivery model.

There are a number of options in how Forensic Services can offer support:

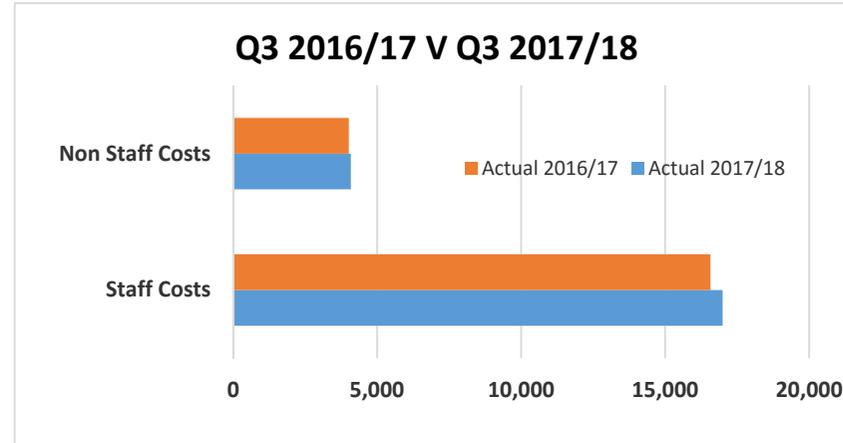
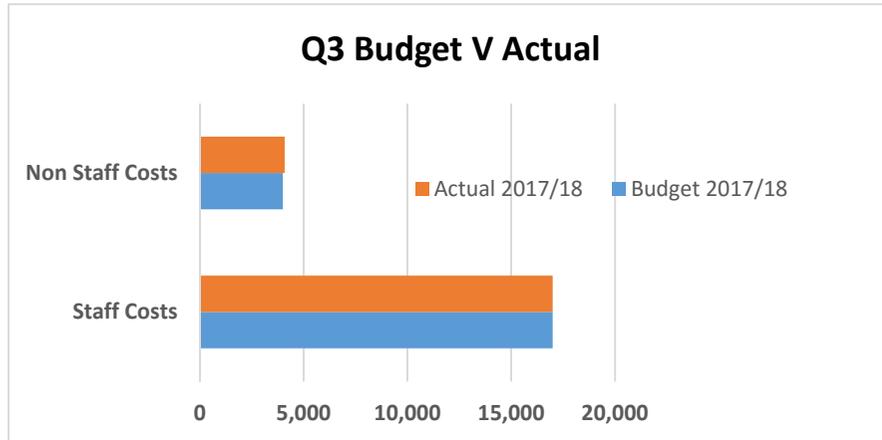
1. Play full part in project and contribute to cost of the three year project
2. Support the project and contribute data and learning from the Scottish model
3. Engage with Scottish Institute of Policing Research to understand what research is currently planned in this area and to build on that.

A paper will be developed to provide further detail on each option along with associated benefits for consideration by the Forensic Service Committee.

2. FINANCE

Quarter 3 2017/18 – Summary

The financial position at the end of quarter 3 indicates a strong performance against budget with expenditure of £21,079k against a budget of £20,896k. Actual expenditure versus budget is in balance while demand for forensic services remains high.



	Budget 2017/18	Actual 2017/18	Budget 2016/17	Actual 2016/17	Yr on Yr Actual Variance
Staff Costs	16,996	16,993	16,759	16,572	421
Supplies and Services	2,832	3,053	2,995	3,198	(146)
Ict Costs	587	520	336	275	245
Transport Related	282	258	180	281	(23)
Third Party Payments	264	218	170	181	37
Administration Expenses	133	116	102	120	(4)
Premises Costs	39	29	8	26	2
Income	(80)	(106)	(67)	(68)	(38)
Unallocated Expenses	(68)	-	-	-	-
Total	20,986	21,079	20,484	20,585	494

A comparison against the same period last year provides the following:

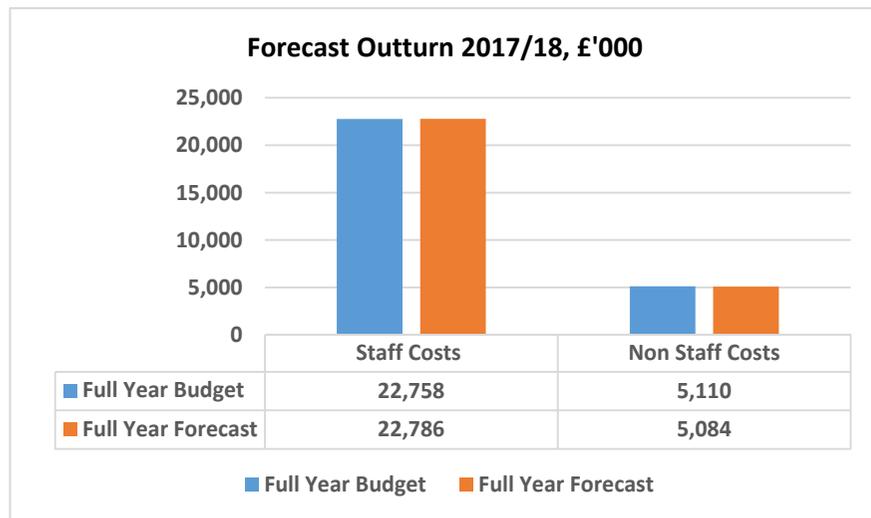
- Supplies and services are £146k lower due to the timing of invoices of DNA testing consumables, not the usage which is consistent.
- ICT Costs are £245k higher due to timing of the annual invoice for the National DNA Database Software charges issued by the Home Office.
- Transport costs are £23k lower due to a combination of reductions in relocation expenditure £17k and vehicle fuel costs, £6k – timing of invoices.

Staff cost analysis against budget, £'000s

Staff costs	Q3 Budget	Q3 Actuals	Variance	Full Year Budget	Full Year Forecast	Variance
Salaries and on costs	15,667	15,603	64	20,910	20,865	44
Overtime	269	406	(137)	403	564	(161)
Allowances	1,060	984	76	1,446	1,357	89
Total	16,996	16,993	2	22,758	22,786	(28)

Staff costs are in line with budget with the exception of overtime at £137k over budget - activity has been higher due to operational requirements which is expected to continue to the year end which is consistent with levels of demand.

2017/18 Outturn Position

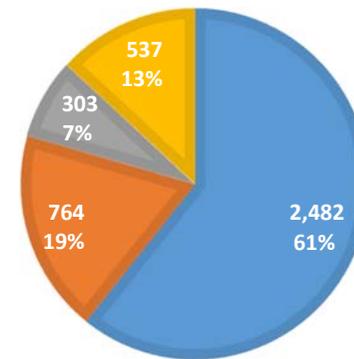


The forecast year end outturn position is a breakeven result.

Quarterly Expenditure per area - The tables below provide details of the quarter's expenditure per Forensic Area.

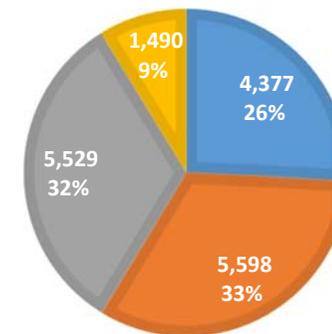
QUARTER 3 NON-STAFF COSTS, £ 000'S

■ Biology ■ Physical Science ■ Scene Examination ■ Business Support



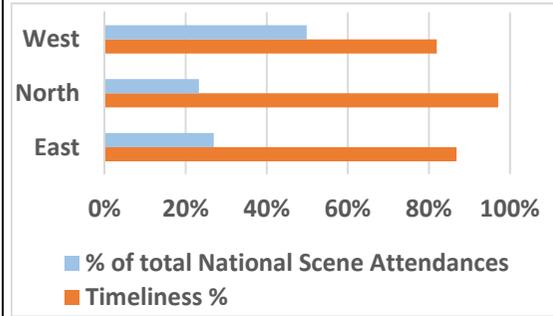
QUARTER 3 STAFF COSTS, £ 000'S

■ Biology ■ Physical Science ■ Scene Examination ■ Business Support

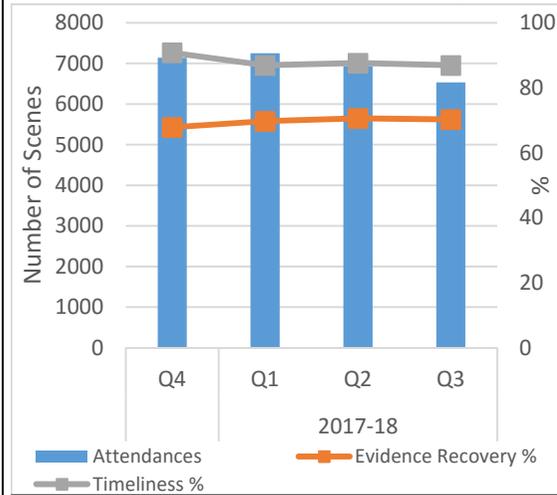


SERVICE DELIVERY

Scene Attendance – Timeliness



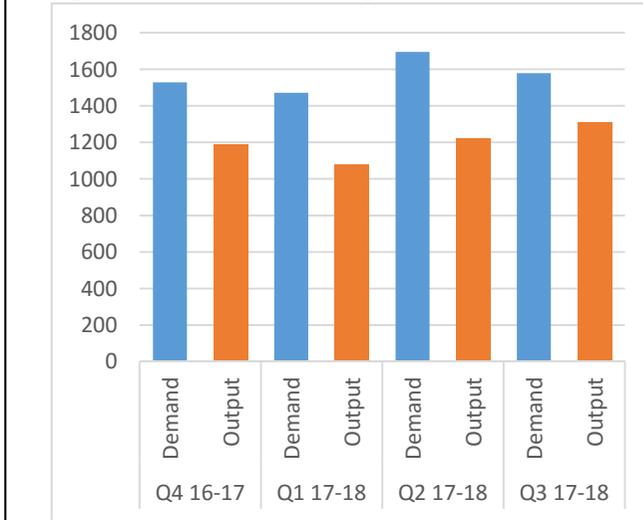
National Timeliness & Evidence Recovery



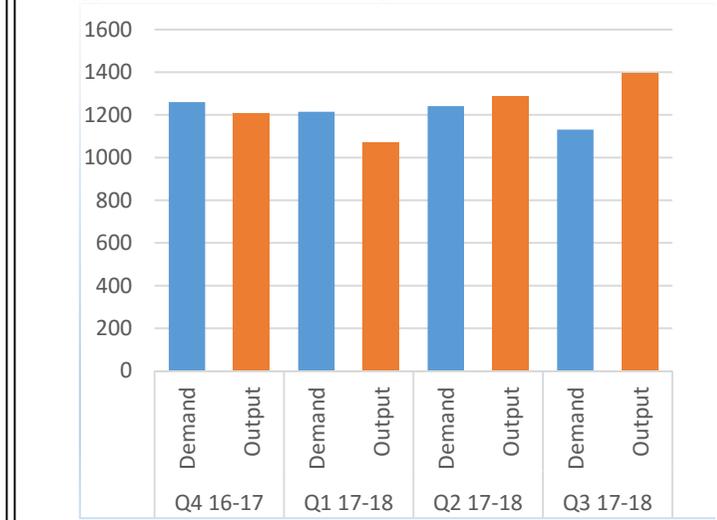
Scenes Commentary

Scene attendance and recovery rates are consistent. Performance continues to be strong for serious crime, some volume crime cases attendance times are greater than the anticipated 24 hours. The 2018-20 business plan will work to increase available scene examination capacity.

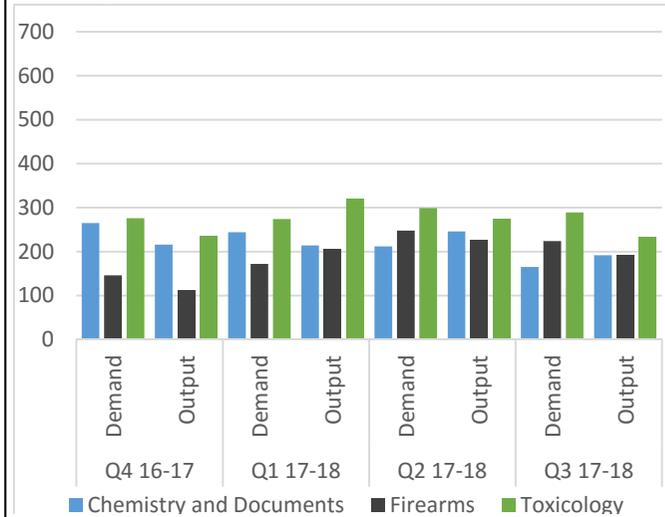
Biology – Serious Crime – Packages of Work



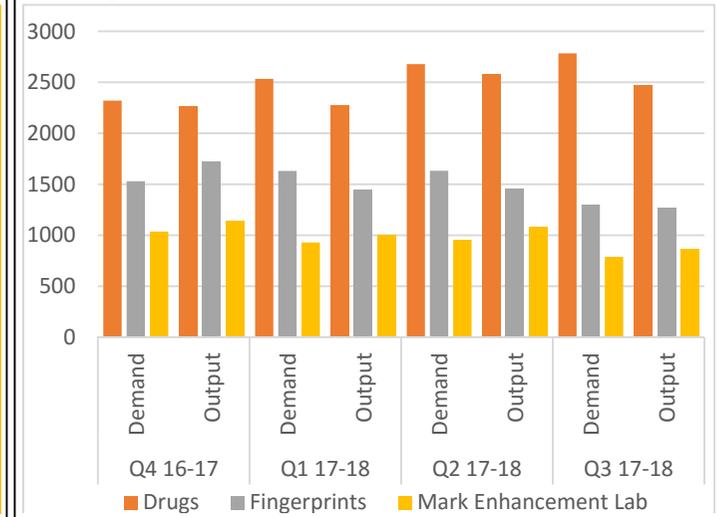
Biology – Volume Crime – Packages of Work



Physical Sciences – Chemistry; Firearms; Toxicology – Packages of Work



Physical Sciences – Drugs, Fingerprints, MEL – Packages of Work



Forensic Services Caseload

Active Caseload - Quarter 3			
Biology LSL	1341	↓	-6%
Biology VCU	478	↓	-6%
Drugs	2112	↑	11%
Toxicology	339	↑	11%
Chemistry & Documents	131	↓	-24%
Firearms	208	↑	12%
Mark Enhancement	1269	→	0%
Fingerprints	568	↓	-24%

LEGEND - Months worth of Caseload based on Unit Capacities

2 or less
2 - 4
4 or more

Arrows and percentage denote change in active caseload from Q2

The caseload continues to increase in Biology as there are recognised issues with service demand being greater than capacity. Action has been taken to address this with the SPA Board approving a business case to provide additional resources to Forensic Services on the 28th of November 2017. A programme of work has since been developed to deal with the active caseload which will continue into 2018/19.

Drug analysis caseload continues to increase due to changes brought about by recent amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act. The impact is noticeable with demand exceeding available laboratory capacity. Additional resource is required to support this work and has been requested as part of the 2018-20 business planning work as the best means to manage this position.

Mark Enhancement have a large volume of outstanding casework to address. It has been assessed that additional short term resources are necessary to reduce this workload over the period 2018-20 in a sustainable manner which will then allow for stronger business unit performance in the future. The Forensic Services Committee will consider this work and it's suitability as part of the 2018-20 business planning work.

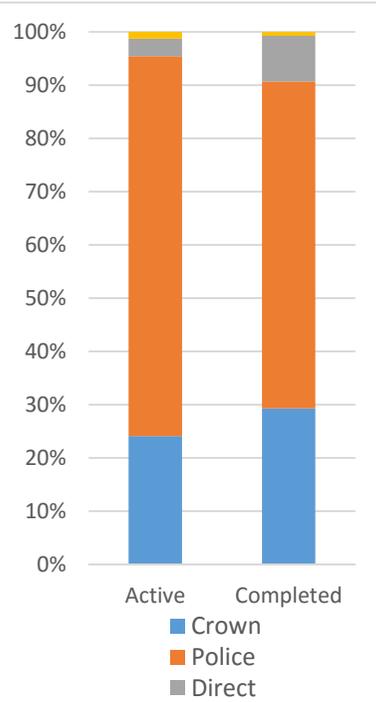
The caseload has also grown in Toxicology and Firearms. Action has been taken to address these areas also through business cases which will be assessed by the Forensic Services Committee as part of the 2018-20 business planning work.

The business continues to perform well however the active casework workload requires focus and attention – this will form part of the work planned during the next 2 years and will strengthen the timeliness of forensic examination. It is a key business priority and consistent with the Forensic 2026 Strategy.

Partner Delivery to Memorandum of Understanding							
FORENSIC SERVICE ANALYSIS - TIMELINESS INDICATORS							
Urgent Priority				Livescan Tenprints			
Target	100%	Actual	93%	Target	90%	Actual	99%
High Priority Custodies				Volume Crime DNA			
Target	90%	Actual	100%	Target	90%	Actual	88%
Police Drugs Cases				Criminal Justice samples			
Target	90%	Actual	62%	Target	90%	Actual	100%

+4% improvement to Urgent Priority custodies; +11% for Police Drugs Cases; and +5% for Volume Crime DNA.

Packages of Work by Customer – Quarter 3



7,296 POWs were completed during Quarter 3, a decrease of 356 (-5%) compared to Quarter 2. Active v Completed proportions continue to demonstrate Crown POW's being prioritised over Police Investigative work, contributing to aging of caseload.

Reporting Forensic Services Value

Work is ongoing within Forensic Services to better recognise the value contribution of the organisation to partners. It is anticipated that value measures will be able to form part of the Q1 2018/19 reporting and will relate to operational process.

4. QUALITY

UKAS accreditation

The 2017 UKAS assessment visits to review Forensic Services accreditation to ISO 17025 concluded in Dec 2017, involving around 400 hours of assessment activity across all sites.

Further assessment work was carried out in Dundee in January & February 2018 due to UKAS schedule changes.

Positive feedback has been received from UKAS on the assessments conducted.

Successful renewal/maintenance of accreditation is expected to be confirmed by UKAS in March 2018.

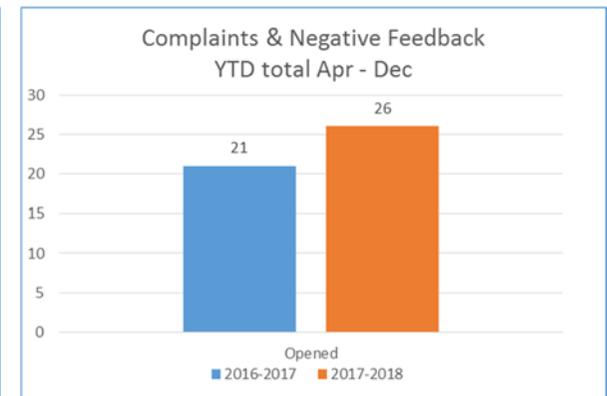
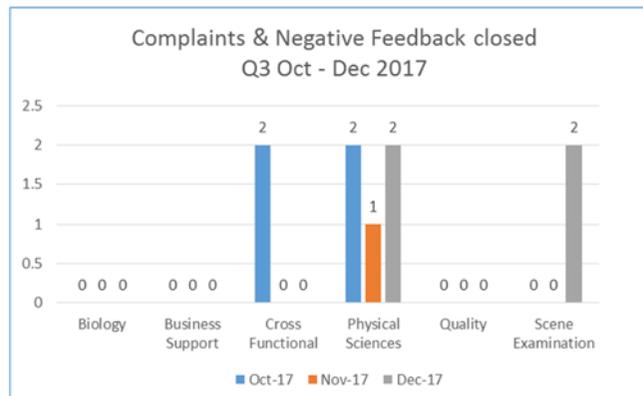
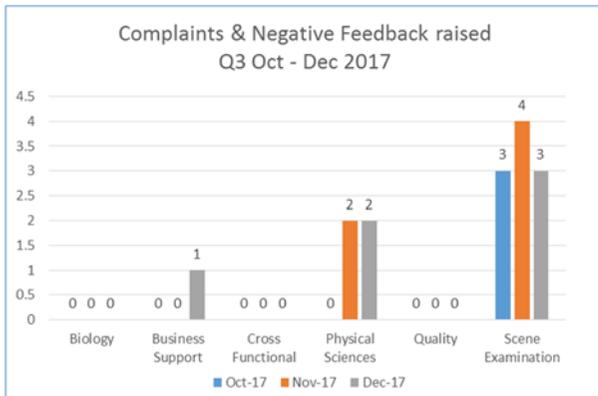
UKAS Extension to Accredited Scope

UKAS Extension to Scope (Ets)	Delivery Timeline				LEGEND
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
GlobalFiler - Relationship Testing (FS -Dundee)	[Green arrow]				On Track
Firearms - BulletTrax (FS-Glasgow)	[Blue arrow]				Risk of Delay
Physical Sciences - DNA Recovery	[Green arrow]				Delayed
Mark Enhancement	[Green arrow]				Complete

As planned the evidence was submitted to UKAS in January 18 to address the UKAS recommendations for the extension to scope for relationship testing in Dundee.

Accreditation to ISO17025 for DNA Recovery in Mark Enhancement and Physical Sciences remains on track for inspection by UKAS during Q1 2018/19.

Customer Feedback

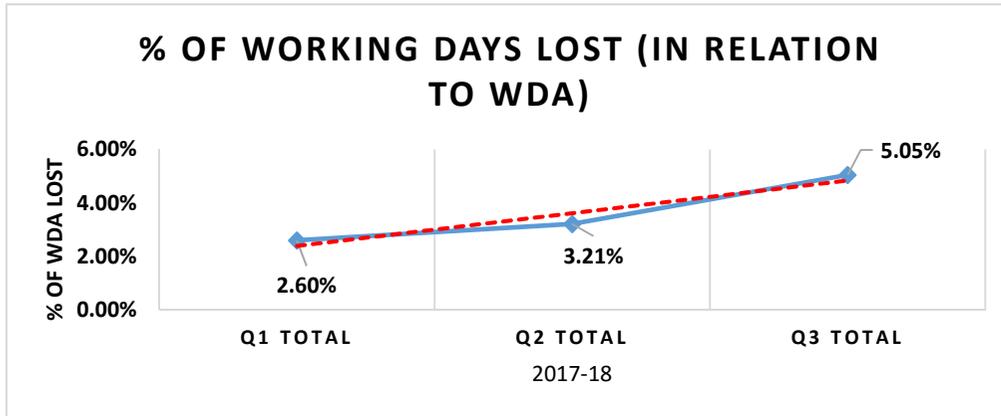


Q3 complaints and negative feedback is higher than the previous quarter (Q2) however year to date figures are consistent with previous years.

5. PEOPLE

Attendance Management

Absence figures have shown an increase throughout the year as shown below. The increase in quarter 3 is due to a rise in both short term and long term sickness which accounts for 51% and 49% of absence respectively.



The senior management team are aware of the impact of sickness on the organisation and will work with People and Development to better understand how we can continue to support our staff in this area.

Staff Communications

As part of the key stakeholder consultation on the Forensic 2026 Strategy, a staff engagement programme was undertaken to involve staff in the future vision, values and strategic direction of the organisation. These views have been captured and are helping to inform the final Forensic 2026 Strategy which will be presented to the SPA Board in March 2018.

The new Director of Forensic Services newsletter has now been established with 2 editions circulated giving staff information on key business highlights. This will continue into 2018.

Wellbeing Matters

Following the launch of Your Wellbeing Matters in September 2017, individual Your Wellbeing Matters cards have been issued to all staff providing details of the range of specialist support services available to them. This includes information on Employee Assistance Programme services available to staff and household family members; Trauma Risk Management (Trim) which is the model of support used to provide support to staff who are directly involved in potentially traumatic incidents; SPRA sports and recreation association; Credit Union; Benevolent Fund and Occupational Health.

Staff Pay and Reward Modernisation (SPRM) Programme

The SPRM met with Forensic Services to provide an update on the project and have published the first two 'Focus on' themed communications on Job Evaluation and Terms and Conditions. Further briefings will be issued in a staged manner over the next few months and the FAQs site on the Intranet is being updated to explain the principles of collective bargaining as part of the project. In addition, a line managers briefing will be issued to provide update on the project. A Negotiating Steering Group has been set up which includes representation from Forensic Services.

6. OUR WORK

Operation Escalade

This operation centred on bringing to justice a violent organised crime group, noted as the most sophisticated ever encountered by Police Scotland. In January nine members of this group plead guilty and were sentenced to a combined 87 years in jail for a range of violence, drugs and firearms offences... and forensic science undertaken within SPA played a critical role in the identification and prosecution of these individuals.

This operation has been the most complex and demanding case ever dealt with by Forensic Services, it has involved;

- Examination of multiple scenes and participation in Police Scotland search activities, involving 21 different Scene Examiners, recovering key materials and capturing multiple images at each location
- Examination of a range of seized firearms, involving months of work for Firearms experts, who were involved at the very start of the process in the recovery of the firearms; this early intervention proved vital in securing and maximising the forensic potential of the weapons, over 200 DNA samples were recovered through subsequent examination involving both firearms and DNA experts
- Examination of over 500 recovered items from various scenes which resulted in over 1,000 DNA samples and 1,000 fingerprints being recovered
- The result of these tests identified all of the initial suspects in the case and an additional 6 people that were not initially linked to the group until the forensic results were provided. A wider network of forensic intelligence was also able to be provided to Police
- Given the amount of money that was recovered, just the counting of this cash took a scientist four weeks to complete

The work involved in this case has at times involved nearly all of the scientific staff based within the Scottish Crime Campus. The collaboration of scientific staff has been impressive and has demonstrated clear results, using this shared expertise to maximise the value of the forensic evidence. This is clearly evident in the quality of DNA results obtained from the firearms.

This collaboration, in conjunction with the new DNA systems in place to obtain a profile from minute amounts of material and interpret complex results, has provided a wealth of intelligence and evidence, 80% of these results would not have been obtained just 2 years ago.

Without this critical work a number of suspects in this case would not have been identified, and indeed it is irrefutable that the quality of the forensic science has contributed to the decision of this group to plead guilty to their crimes, saving a considerable amount of public money on an extensive and complex court case.

Forensic Science in Scotland is at the top of its game... criminals should be aware that they cannot escape without leaving traces of material at the scene of their crime. Forensic Services is committed to working with partner agencies in the Criminal Justice Community to ensure the safety of people in Scotland.