

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	8 August 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Forensic Services Performance Report
Presented By	Fiona Douglas
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	N/A

PURPOSE

To present Forensic Services Performance Report, Q1 2022/23 for Committee consideration.

This paper is presented in line with:

- The Scottish Police Authority Scheme of Delegation

This paper is for discussion.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Forensic Services Business Performance Report is presented for Q1 2022/23.
- 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 2022/23.
- 1.3 The report demonstrates SPA Forensic Services delivery over the last quarter through the following components:
 - Progress updates on Forensic Service commitments laid out in the annual business plan;
 - Qualitative performance data.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 With the exception of Biology, volume crime unit and drugs, there has been a reduction in demand in the majority of business areas in Q1 compared to Q4. A number of initiatives in Police Scotland continue to compete for available capacity, particularly in the volume crime unit. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of days to turnaround this service.
- 2.2 The organisation continues to focus on reducing the number of open cases. The challenging areas of service delivery remain Drugs, Mark Enhancement and Toxicology. Mark Enhancement is subject to a specific improvement plan to reduce the amount of casework subject to examination for both DNA and Fingerprints, which are examined in this area of Forensic Services. Targeted improvements are planned and monitored to ensure that this improvement is delivered in line with agreed milestones.

Recruitment in drugs will stabilise the capacity of the unit over the coming months.

Toxicology is being supported by Biology, Chemistry, Drugs and administration to increase staff resilience in this area.
- 2.3 The impact of COVID-19 has continued to show a spike in sickness absence across Forensic Services. By and large, this has been managed to ensure that has been no significant impact on service

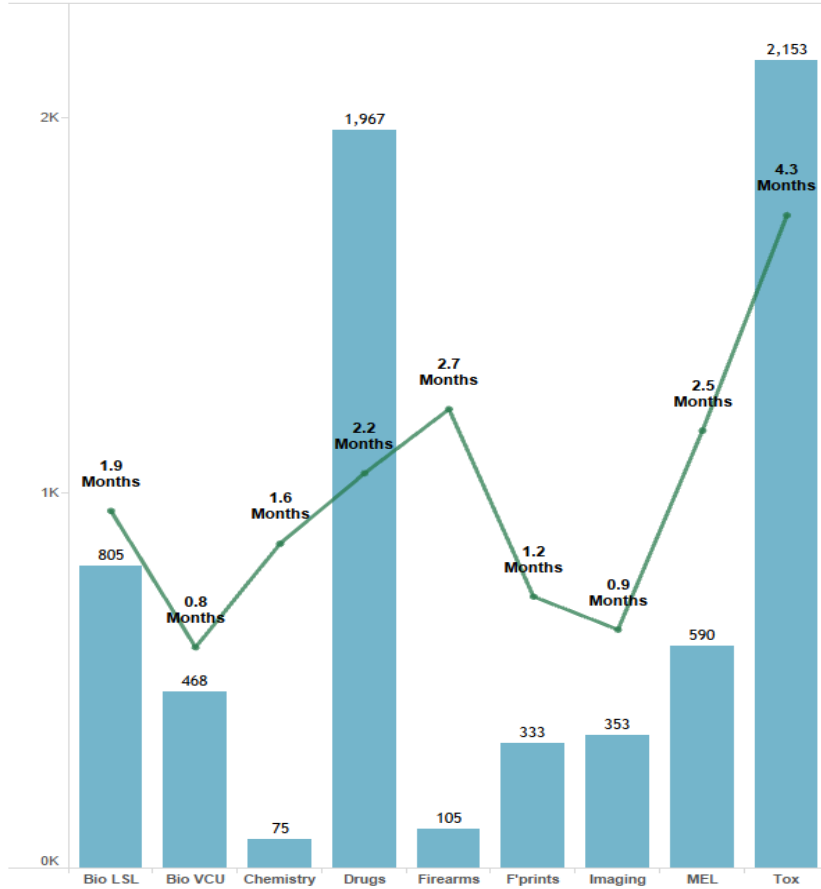
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experienced by our partners. However, there has been some specific localised areas of impact on our scene examination services in the West division.

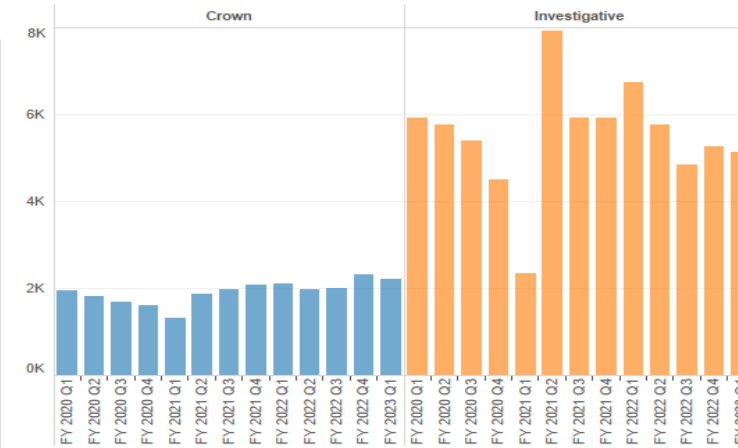
- 2.5 Consultation on the new operating model for Forensic Services has continued during Q1, with a significant amount of engagement and discussion about proposed changes for the organisation and our staff.
- 2.6 Work has continued on the revised Memorandum of Understanding and further discussion is ongoing to agree common KPIs with Forensic Services and our partners. Forensic Services are monitoring internal performance with future aspirations for improvement.
- 2.7 Demand for toxicology services continues to be an area of concern. A substantial amount of work has been completed to determine a possible sustainable future model for this service accounting for the current and future demand levels.
- 2.8 On the 23 June UKAS granted extension to scope for new semen and cellular extraction methods and Christmas tree staining. This will improve our ability to report complex sexual offence cases.

3.1 Forensic Services – Overall position

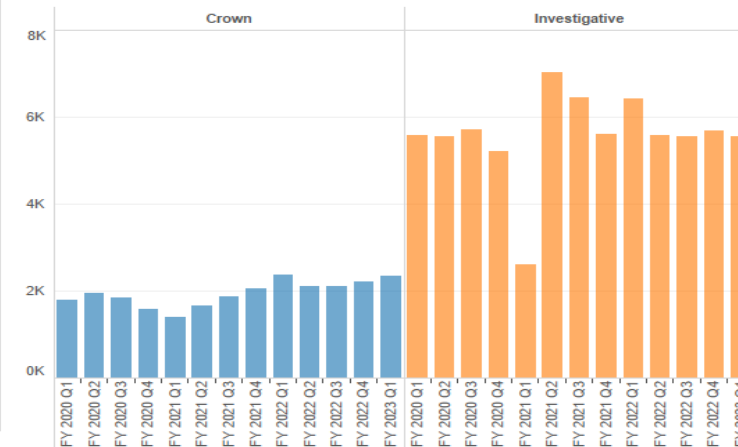
Forensic Services - Laboratory Casework
Open Cases - end Q1 22-23 with average age



Casework Demand 2019-20 onwards

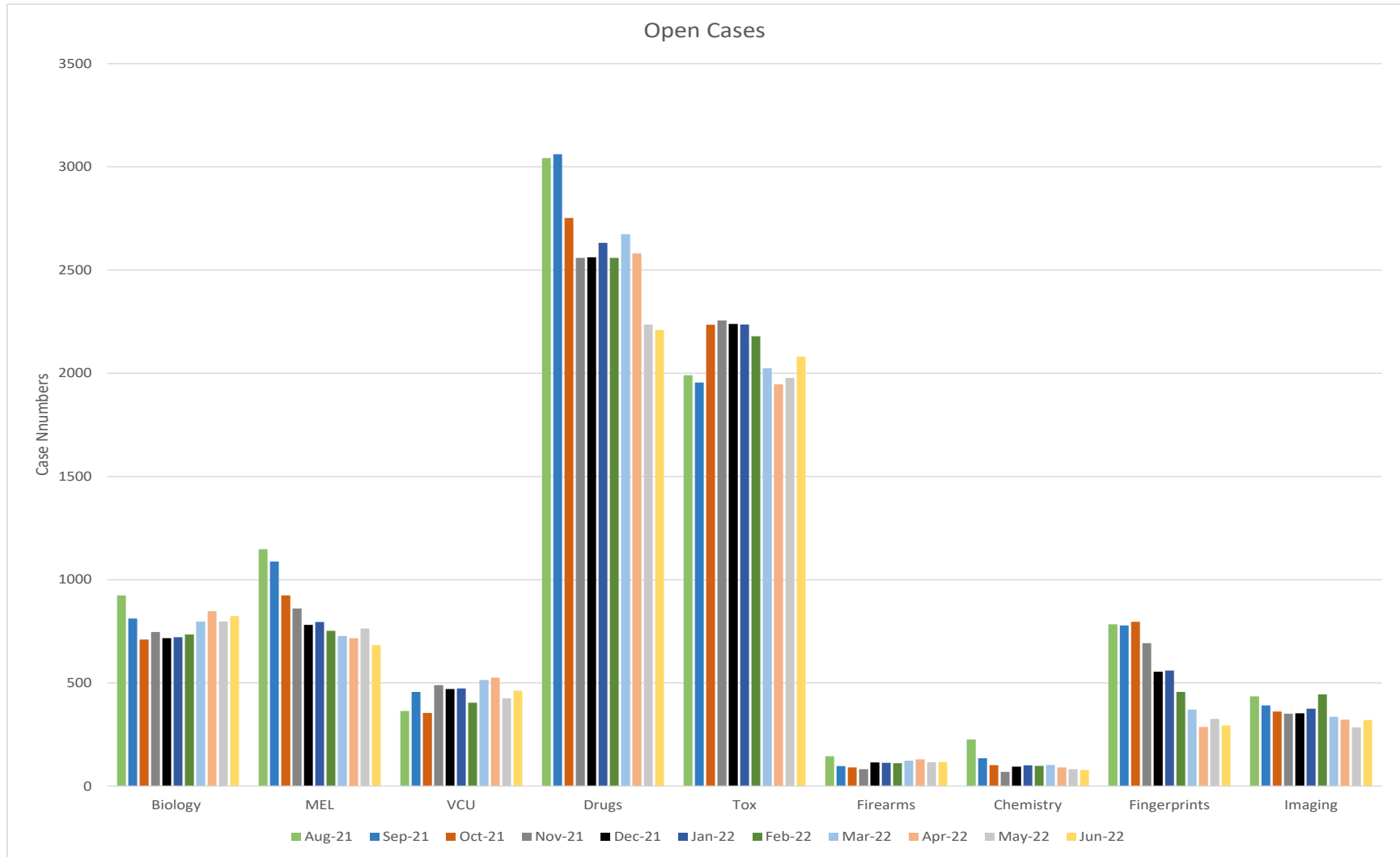


Casework Output 2019-20 onwards



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3.2 Forensic Services – Overall position, open casework

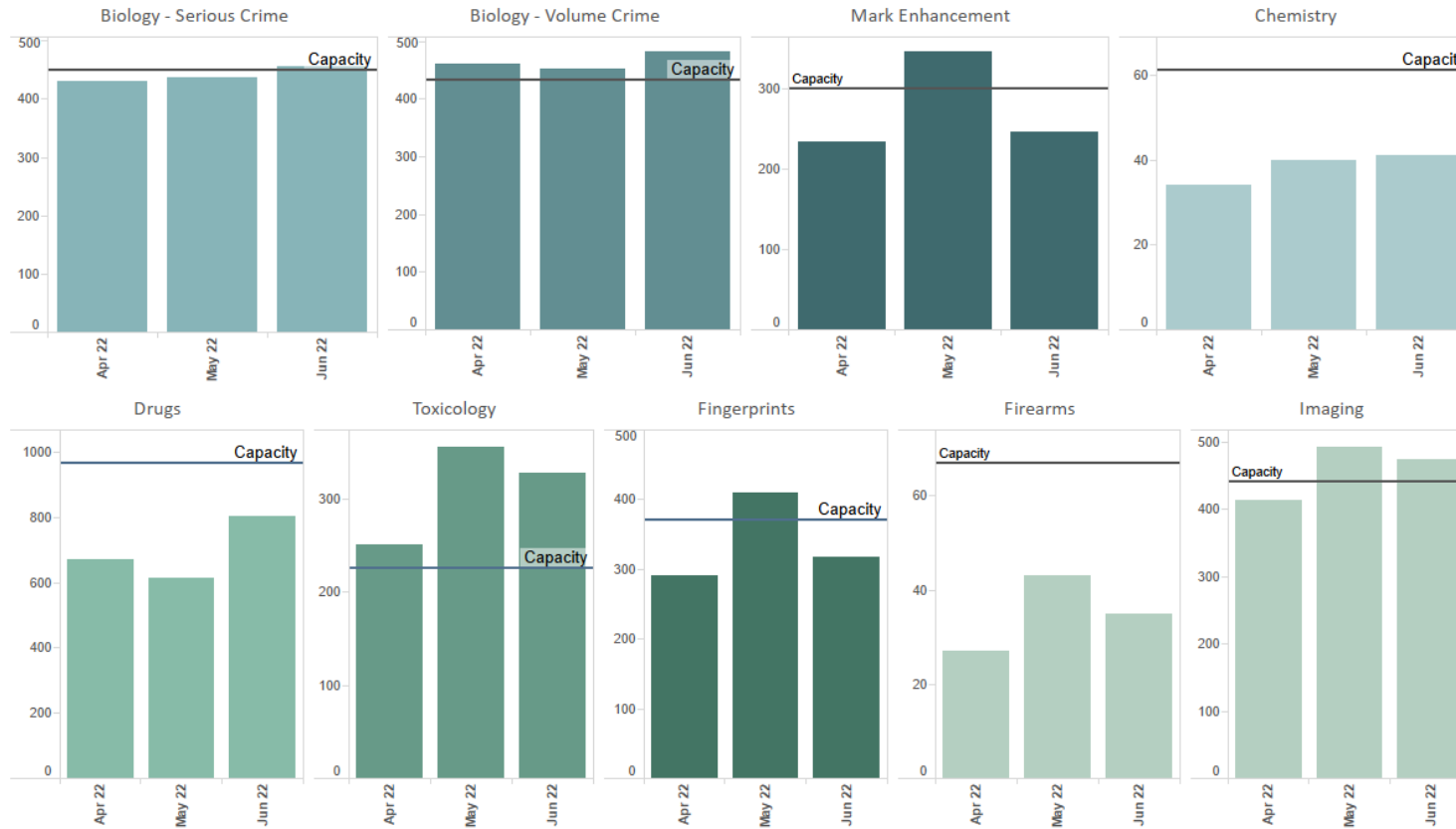


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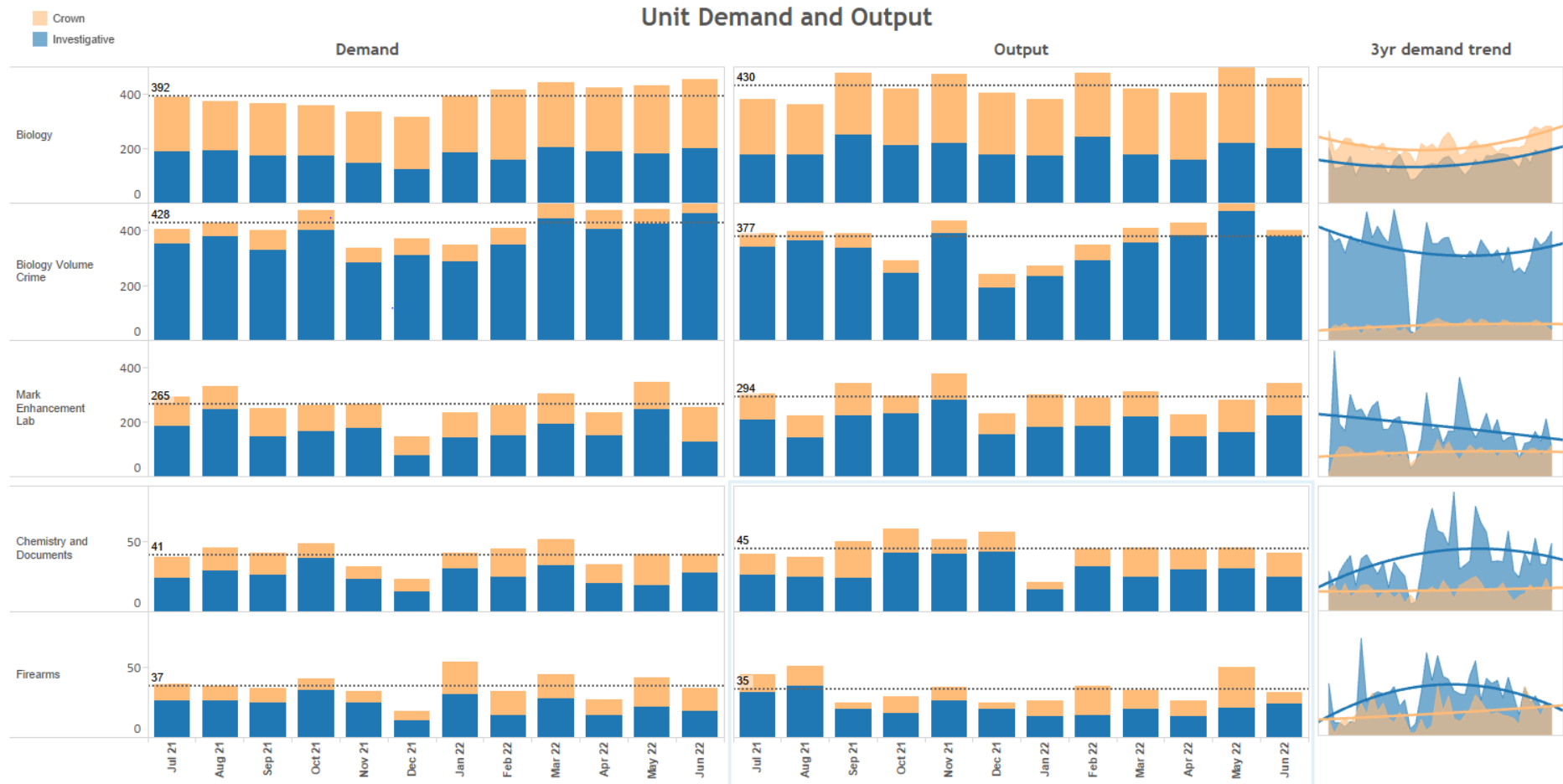
3.3 Forensic Services – Laboratory capacity

Forensic Services - Laboratory Capacity

Charts illustrate new requests for casework opened per month



3.4 Forensic Services – Unit demand and output

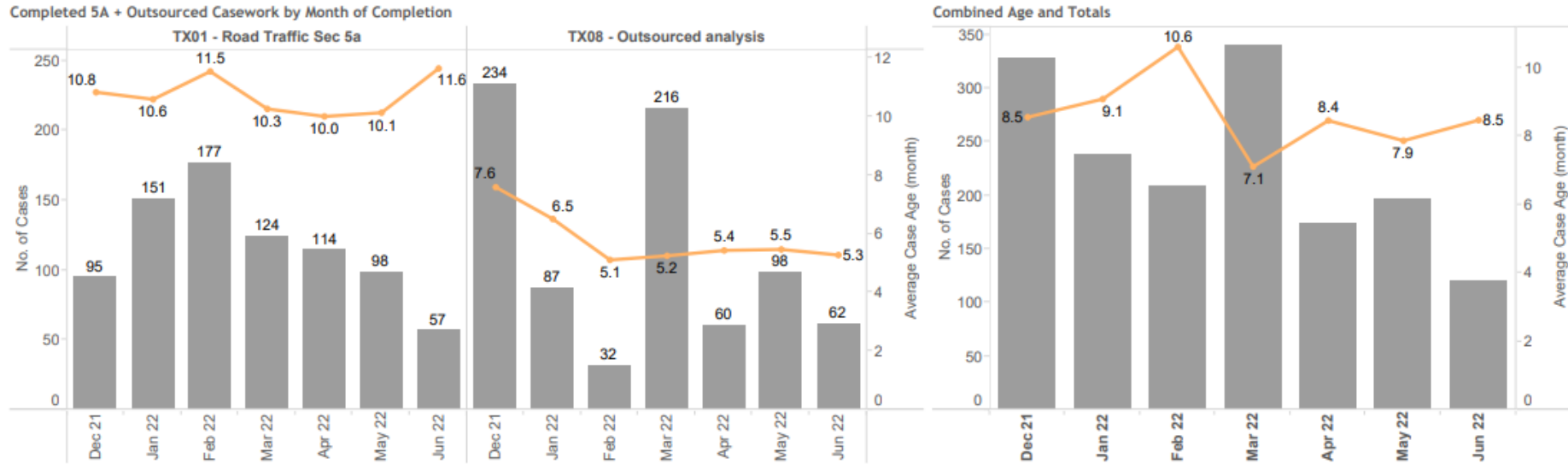


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3.5 Forensic Services – Toxicology update



The backlog in Toxicology has been on a downward trajectory since Dec 2021, but has seen an increase in June 2022, as a result of casework demands.

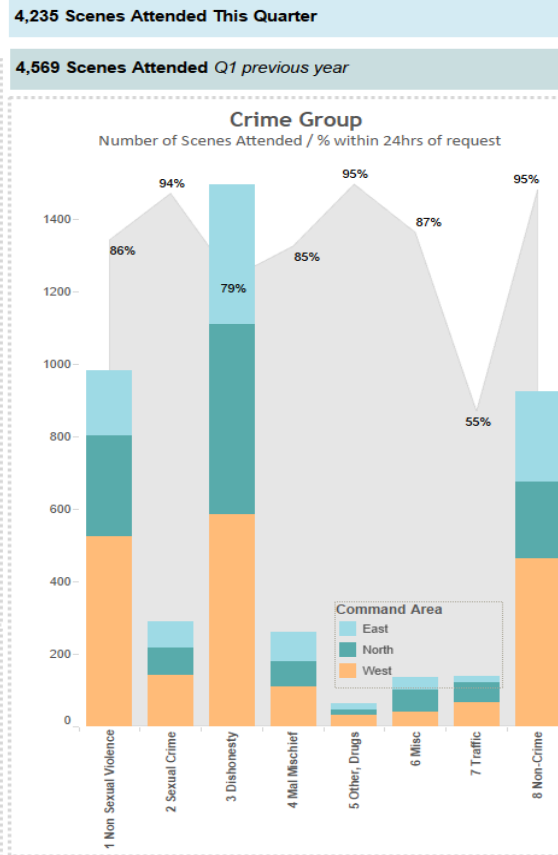
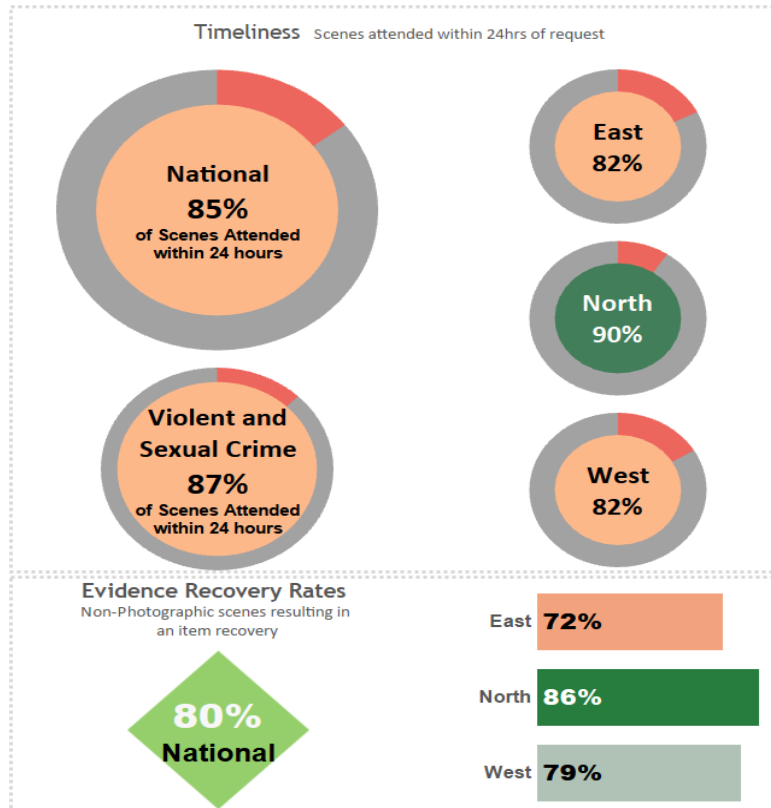
As a result of casework demands, there has been an increase in the average age of in-house reported Section 5A casework in April and May, as illustrated above. It is anticipated that the average age of these reported cases will decrease into July and beyond.

Section 5A cases continue to be outsourced to meet customer demand.

3.6 Forensic Services – Scene examination update

The average national scene attendance timeliness remains consistent at 85% with individual regional figures within 2% of the Q4 reported levels. The attendance timeliness specifically for violent and sexual crime has unusually reduced below the 90% target as achieved in Q4. This 3% reduction was primarily attributable to high staff absences however active engagement with Police Scotland minimised any service risks. The average evidence recovery rates and number of scenes attended similarly remains consistent with the previous quarter.

Forensic Services - Scene Examination Unit
Quarterly Performance Q1 22-23



3.7 Forensic Services – Quality Management System & Accreditation

Accreditation Summary

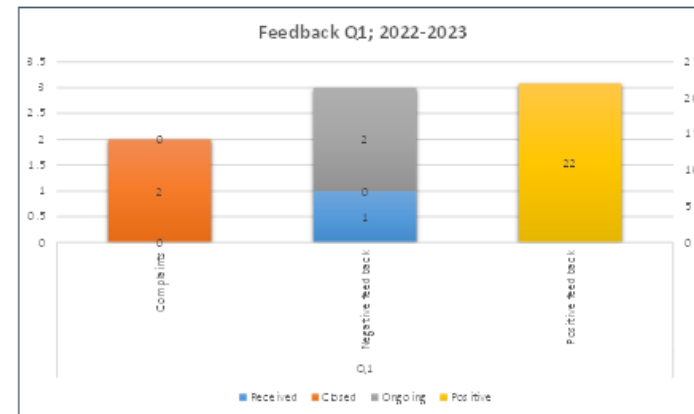
- The 2021 UKAS accreditation assessment programme is overdue for confirmation of re-accreditation.
- The delay in renewal of accreditation is due to the ongoing scrutiny of section 4 and 5a drugs toxicology testing activity at FS, and UKAS request for further evidence of compliance to the ISO 17025 Standard.
- FS Head of Quality has had dialogue with UKAS regarding the forthcoming UKAS Surveillance effort for the 2022 round of assessments.
- UKAS have produced a breakdown of the effort for FS and through their Technical Focal groups, have targeted areas of focus across all forensic service providers across the UK.
- In addition, UKAS seek assurance of FS compliance to our Management System in areas where there are high caseloads, and as activity increases in transition to the new Operating Model.
- A number of UKAS documents have also been published in the last 12 months that Forensic Services are required to demonstrate compliance.

Quality Recovery Plan

- Open and outstanding Critical NCs, Complaints and Negative & Positive feedback received is reported weekly to the FS SMT.
- Outstanding Information security and Business Continuity actions are now being reported alongside these to the FS SMT.
- A separate report on current progress against the QIP targets was made available to the Jul 2022 FS Performance & Planning Board.

Complaints and Feedback

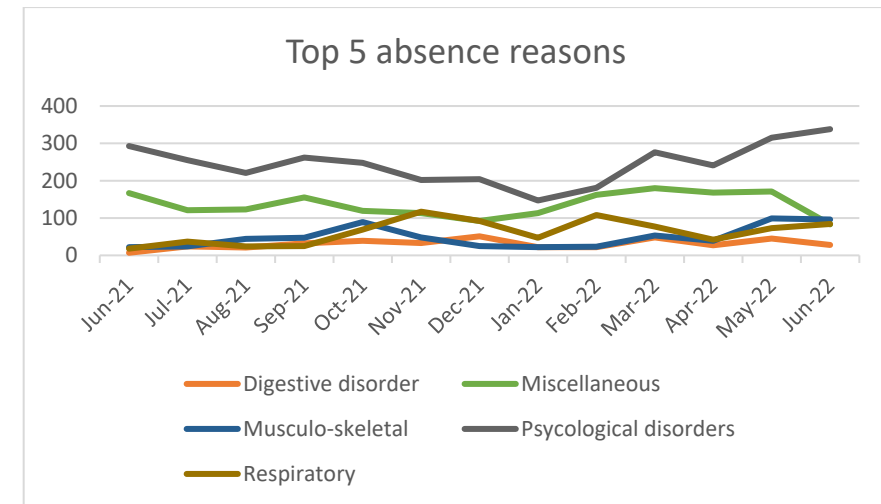
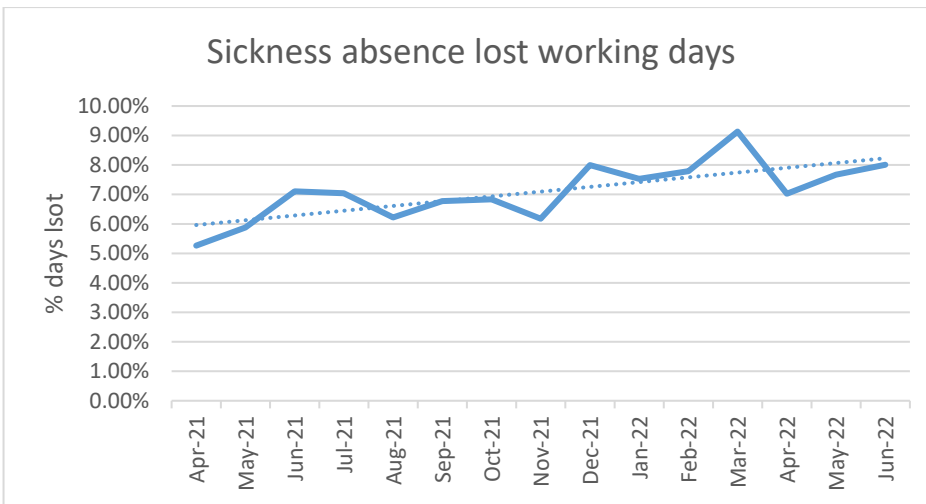
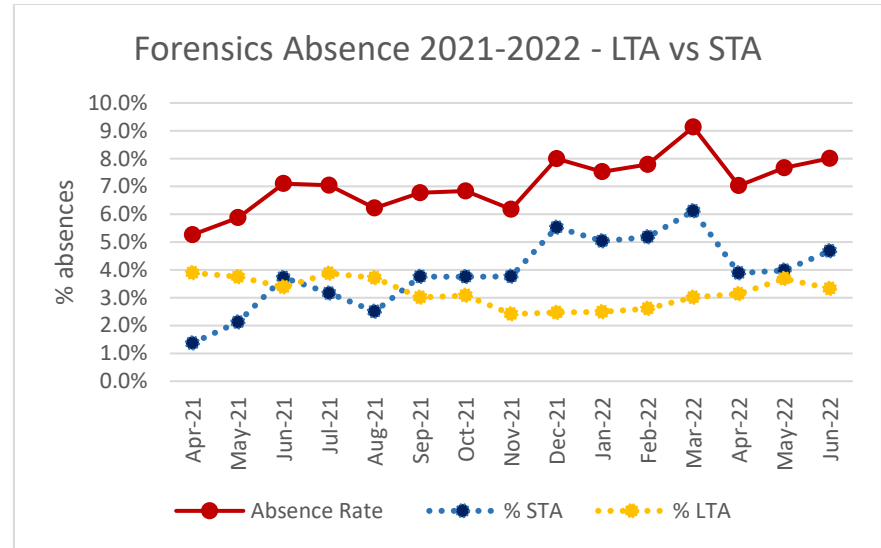
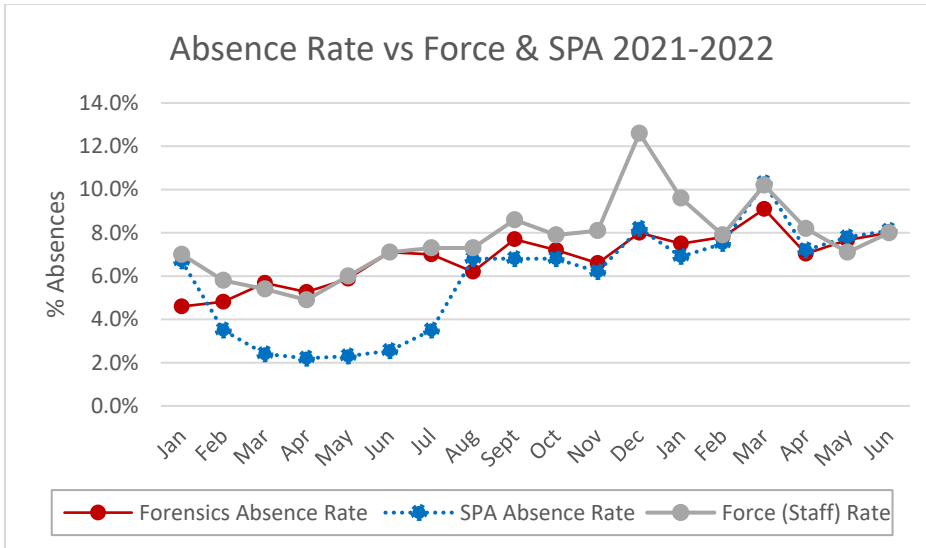
- Complaints and both positive and negative feedback is recorded in compliance with the ISO 17025 Standard.
- During this reporting period, none were reportable to the SPA Complaints & Conduct Committee, with all relating to service delivery to COPFS or PSoS.



- All complaints or negative feedback recorded in the Management System have corrective and preventive action documented following Standard Operating Procedure.
- Effectiveness of actions taken are reviewed through the internal audit process and in turn through Management System Review meetings.
- The 2022 Customer Survey has been agreed by the FS SMT and will now be distributed to customers through the 'Citizenspace' platform.
- Once complete the data and feedback will be presented to a future FS committee meeting.

4.0 Forensic Services – Absence data

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3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications in this report.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no social implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

There are no community impact implications associated with this paper.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the information in this report.