

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2000/2001

Fire and police

Comparing the performance of Scottish councils



Introduction

Each year, fire brigades, police forces and councils publish a range of information to show people how well they are providing their services and how they compare with similar bodies.

This leaflet contains information on seven indicators relating to the activities of Scotland's fire and police services in 2000/2001. They are:

Fire

- the percentage of fire calls to which brigades responded within target times
- number of casualties/dwelling fires per 10,000 population
- sickness absence levels for full-time fire-fighters.

Police

- crime clear-up rates
- sickness absence levels for police personnel
- complaints against police officers
- racist incidents.

Other pamphlets published by the Commission cover:

Benefits, Finance and Corporate issues
Education services
Environmental and Regulatory services
Housing services
Leisure and Library services
Social work services

The Commission also publishes:

- a comprehensive compendium of the information for all the services for which there are performance indicators
- council 'profiles' analysing indicators on a council-by-council basis.

Using the information

For each activity we have set out why some of the differences in performance may have arisen. We also highlight particular features of the information – for example, the range in performance achieved by different brigades and forces.

Several factors affect the way a brigade or force performs its activities. You need to be aware of these in order to understand why results may vary. Some of these factors are outwith the control of a brigade or force – for example, population size and density, geographical area, and the mix between urban and rural settlements. Others may be specific to a particular service or the groups of people it serves. These local factors may mean that a brigade or force with a performance which, at first sight, appears to be worse than that of another has, in fact, done better given the circumstances it faces.

In this pamphlet we have shown information for brigades and forces for 2000/2001, and where appropriate made comparison with previous years. We have introduced two new indicators for police forces for 2000/2001, covering complaints against police officers and racist incidents. There is no trend data for these indicators this year.

Key

Auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission have reviewed authorities' arrangements for producing the performance information. In the tables shown in this pamphlet, an asterisk (*) against the data for a brigade or force indicates that the auditor expressed doubts about the reliability of its arrangements for producing the information.

Indicator 1

Scotland's fire brigades attended 91.7% of all calls to fire incidents within the target times set, a slight improvement compared with last year (90.8%).

In the high risk category brigades reported a reduction in the percentage of fire calls attended within the target time. This reflects reduced performance year-on-year since 1998/99.

Indicator 2

Across Scotland, there were slightly over 1,700 fire casualties in 2000/2001, which on average, is 3.4 casualties per 10,000 population. There were slightly over 7,000 accidental dwelling fires, which on average, is 14 accidental fires per 10,000 population.

Indicator 3

Across all brigades the proportion of firefighter shifts lost to sickness absence and light duties was 8.2%, which is a slight increase compared with the previous year.

The proportion of non-firefighting staff time lost due to sickness absence was 6.3%. This percentage compares with 5.4% for civilian staff in the police service.

Indicator 4

Overall, forces cleared up slightly over 44% of all recorded crimes (418,000), which is improved performance compared with previous years.

Across Scotland, the clear-up rate for domestic housebreaking has increased year-on-year since 1996/97.

Indicator 5

The proportion of police officer time lost due to sickness absence was 4.9%, which is a slight improvement compared with 1999/2000.

Overall, the proportion of civilian staff time lost to sickness absence was 5.4%, which compares with 6.3% for non-fire fighting staff within the fire service.

Indicator 6

There were 1,463 complaints made against police officers in 2000/2001.

Indicator 7

The total number of racist incidents reported to police forces in 2000/2001 was slightly over 2,700.

FIRE

Fire services are provided by eight fire brigades. Two of these cover the same areas as councils – Dumfries & Galloway and Fife. However, six are responsible to joint boards and cover more than one council area – Central Scotland, Lothian & Borders, Grampian, Highland & Islands, Strathclyde and Tayside.

Indicator 1: Response times to fires

The percentage of responses to fire calls within the target time, for areas in these five risk categories:

- high
- substantial
- moderate
- low
- rural.

The indicator provides information on responses to all fire calls by brigades, including those which turn out to be false alarms.

There is a UK wide system for categorising areas according to the extent to which they involve risk to life or property in the event of a fire. The national system contains five risk categories; high, substantial, moderate, low and rural. These categories reflect the risks associated with different localities. For example, high-risk areas include those with a concentration of shopping and business centres, hotels, theatres, cinemas, clubs and halls. Moderate-risk areas include suburban areas and the built-up areas of small towns. For the first four risk categories, there are nationally agreed targets for attendance and for rural areas brigades set their own local targets.

Points to bear in mind

Attendance times will be affected by a variety of factors, including:

- speed of dispatch of fire appliances
- traffic congestion and other road obstructions
- other incidents (eg road traffic accidents) resulting in appliances being away from the fire station
- duration of calls at incidents – increase in the amount of time spent at many incidents, for example, more post investigative work
- weather conditions.

The use of part-time fire crews, normally found in smaller towns and lower-risk areas, may influence attendance times. Remote rural areas present problems of distance and accessibility.

Grampian fire brigade's attendance times are not directly comparable with their previous years' figures as a result of a change to the way in which they were previously counted. However, they are now directly comparable with the figures for the other brigades.

COMMENTARY

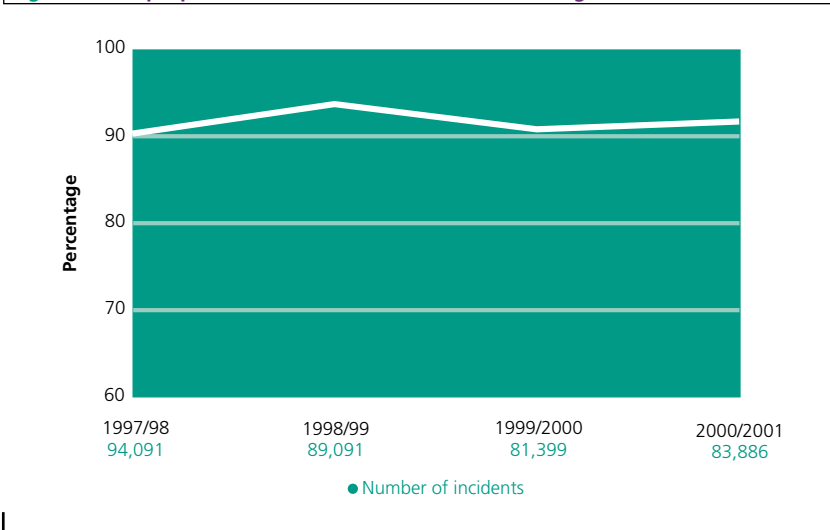
Across Scotland, the number of calls to fire incidents in the four risk categories for which there are national target response times showed a sharp reduction from 94,000 to 81,400 between 1997/98 and 1999/2000. However, it increased by about 2,500 in 2000/2001 to just under 84,000. Of these calls, **Scotland's fire brigades attended 91.7% within the target times set, which is a slight improvement on the previous year** (Figure 1). Over the last four years, the overall percentage of calls for which attendance targets have been met, has remained consistent at between 90% and 94%.

The percentage of attendances which were within the target in each of the first four categories varied among brigades as follows:

- 'High': 71% (Central Scotland) to 95.7% (Grampian)
- 'Substantial': 63.5% (Fife) to 90.3% (Grampian)
- 'Moderate': 94.1% (Strathclyde) to 100% (Dumfries & Galloway)
- 'Low': 87.8% (Highland & Islands) to 100% (Dumfries & Galloway).

Across Scotland, attendances to incidents on time in substantial, moderate and low risk areas all showed improved performance when compared with the previous year. Only those areas in the high risk category showed a slight reduction.

Figure 1: The proportion of fire calls attended within target times



High risk

The target in high-risk areas is for two appliances to attend within five minutes and a third appliance to attend within eight minutes. Only five brigades had areas classified as being in the high-risk category.

Overall, brigades reported a reduction in the percentage attended within the target time for this category. This reflects reduced performance year-on-year since 1998/99 (Table 1a).

Only one of the five brigades (Central Scotland improved by almost 18%) where comparison could be made increased their percentage attendance. Tayside has reported reductions in performance year-on-year since 1997/1998.

Brigades have also reported a significant reduction in the number of incidents in this category. Compared with 1997/98 there has been a reduction in the number of incidents of almost one-third.

Table 1a: The percentage of attendances at fires within target time (high risk)

BRIGADE	High risk			
	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	71.0	53.3	60.0	71.2
Grampian	95.7	95.4	90.9	85.0
Lothian & Borders	87.7	*91.8	94.1	91.2
Strathclyde	86.2	87.4	87.0	75.0
Tayside	82.0	82.6	90.6	95.8
All Scotland	86.9	88.5	89.1	80.3
Number of incidents	6,993	7,822	9,792	10,183

* Dumfries & Galloway, Fife and the Highlands & Islands did not classify any areas as being within the high risk category.

Substantial risk

The target attendance time for areas in the substantial risk category is for one appliance to attend within five minutes and a second appliance to attend within eight minutes.

Overall, brigades attended almost 81% of fire incidents within the target time which is a slight improvement compared with the previous year. Three of the eight brigades where comparison could be made reported improvements in this category, while four brigades attended more than eight out of every ten fires within the target time (Table 1b).

The number of incidents that brigades attended in 2000/2001 has reduced year-on-year since 1997/1998. Over that period there has been a drop of almost 7,000 fire incidents (25%).

Table 1b: The percentage of attendances at fires within target time (substantial risk)

BRIGADE	Substantial risk			
	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	73.8	70.5	76.8	81.4
Dumfries & Galloway	87.5	100.0	86.5	84.4
Fife	63.5	58.1	*60.0	66.9
Grampian	90.3	94.7	90.9	90.0
Highland & Islands	78.6	77.5	72.4	46.2
Lothian & Borders	87.5	*88.1	94.0	90.5
Strathclyde	78.6	77.0	88.0	76.0
Tayside	87.1	88.9	94.3	94.6
All Scotland	80.9	79.3	88.0	79.3
Number of incidents	19,717	21,125	24,898	26,607

Moderate risk

The target attendance time for incidents in the moderate risk category is for one appliance to attend within ten minutes.

There was a slight increase in the overall percentage of attendances at incidents within target time in this risk category and, consistent with previous years, attendances continue to be very high with all brigades reporting at least 94% of responses within target. Six of the eight brigades reported improved performance (Table 1c).

The number of incidents that brigades attended increased by 9% for this category compared with the previous years.

Table 1c: The percentage of attendances at fires within target time (moderate risk)

BRIGADE	Moderate risk			
	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	95.6	96.4	96.8	96.4
Dumfries & Galloway	100.0	98.6	95.0	98.3
Fife	95.2	94.4	*96.7	97.2
Grampian	99.2	98.7	98.6	98.4
Highland & Islands	96.3	96.2	96.1	94.5
Lothian & Borders	97.0	*97.8	97.7	97.2
Strathclyde	94.1	93.5	97.0	96.0
Tayside	98.6	98.5	99.4	97.3
All Scotland	96.0	95.7	97.4	96.6
Number of incidents	46,271	42,422	43,688	47,127

Low risk

The target attendance for incidents in low risk category areas is for one appliance to attend within twenty minutes.

Overall, brigades attended over 96% of fires within the target time for this category. Seven of the eight brigades attended at least 96% of fires within target, while Highland & Islands attended 88% of fires within target which shows continuous improvement over each of the three previous years (Table 1d).

The number of incidents that brigades attended in 2000/2001 in this category was slightly higher than in the previous year.

Table 1d: The percentage of attendances at fires within target time (low risk)

BRIGADE	Low risk			
	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	97.1	95.9	95.0	96.0
Dumfries & Galloway	100.0	100.0	99.3	99.2
Fife	97.9	97.5	*98.6	98.4
Grampian	99.6	99.6	99.8	99.0
Highland & Islands	87.8	85.6	79.2	67.2
Lothian & Borders	97.4	*97.7	98.0	98.3
Strathclyde	96.2	95.8	97.0	97.0
Tayside	96.6	97.2	97.9	96.0
All Scotland	96.2	96.0	96.1	94.0
Number of incidents	10,905	10,030	10,713	10,174

Rural

For rural areas, brigades set their own local targets for attendance. The number of incidents that brigades attended was almost 2,300. Three brigades, Dumfries & Galloway, Grampian, and Highland & Islands accounted for over 90% of these incidents.

The target times ranged from 20 minutes to 35 minutes and all brigades attended at least eight out of every ten fires within their local target time (Table 1e). The average attendance times varied from 11 minutes (Grampian) to 27 minutes (Lothian & Borders).

Table 1e: Attendances at fire calls within rural areas

BRIGADE	Local target (mins)	Percentage attendances within target time	Average time (mins/secs)			
	2000/2001	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Central Scotland	35	90.0	21m 43s	23m 30s	29m 22s	28m 40s
Dumfries & Galloway	20	89.3				
Fife						
Grampian	20	96.9	11m 24s	11m 26s		
Highland & Islands	30	87.9	16m 30s	15m 16s	17m 00s	19m 30s
Lothian & Borders			27m 33s*	25m 00s*	17m 50s	25m 00s
Strathclyde	30	87.2	18m 36s	21m 10s	20m 33s	29m 16s
Tayside	35	94.4	18m 30s		22m 12s	21m 10s

Dumfries & Galloway did not report their average time.

Fife did not classify any of its area in the 'rural' risk category.

Lothian & Borders did not report their local target time.

Indicator 2: Number of fire casualties and accidental dwelling fires

- Average number of fire casualties per 10,000 population over the previous five-year period.
- Average number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population over the previous five-year period.

Fire brigades provide advice on fire prevention and safety in buildings and they also undertake education and promotional activities amongst the community. This indicator reflects the effectiveness of brigades' fire prevention and safety programmes.

In order to smooth peaks and troughs that may occur in any one year, both parts of the indicator are based on figures calculated from the previous five years' data.

Fire casualties

The indicator reports all casualties arising as a direct result of fires attended by the brigade. However, those sent for a precautionary check-up for whom no further information is available to the brigade, are excluded. The number of casualties will not necessarily be the same as the number of incidents attended, as there will be both multiple injuries occurring at a single incident, and incidents without casualties.

Accidental dwelling fires

All accidental incidents are included in this part of the indicator but it excludes those incidents caused either maliciously or deliberately and those for which the cause was doubtful or not known.

Young children and elderly people are the significant 'at risk' groups for this indicator.

Points to bear in mind

The levels of both fire casualties and accidental fires tend to be higher:

- in areas with high levels of deprivation
- where a high proportion of properties are multi-occupied (eg tenements).

COMMENTARY

Fire casualties

Across Scotland, there were slightly over 1,700 fire casualties in 2000/2001. There were 3.4 fire casualties per 10,000 population based on the rolling average for the previous five years. This represents a slight increase compared with the average for the previous year.

The average number of casualties per 10,000 population varied significantly between brigades from 1.4 (Fife) to 4.4 (Strathclyde) (Table 2a).

Table 2a: Average number of fire casualties per 10,000 population

BRIGADE	Number of fire casualties	Fire casualties (Rolling five year average)	
	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	46	1.8	1.8
Dumfries & Galloway	24	2.2	2.2
Fife	25	1.4	1.5
Grampian	132	2.8	2.7
Highland & Islands	37	1.7	1.8
Lothian & Borders	320	3.3	3.0
Strathclyde	1,023	4.4	4.3
Tayside	101	3.0	2.9
All Scotland	1,708	3.4	3.3

Accidental dwelling fires

Across Scotland, **there were slightly over 7,000 accidental dwelling fires** in 2000/2001. There were 14.3 accidental dwellings fires per 10,000 population based on the rolling average for the previous five years, which is a slight reduction compared with the average for the previous year (Table 2b).

The number of accidental fires per 10,000 population, based on the five year rolling average, varied between brigades from 9.7 (Fife) to 16.5 (Strathclyde). Six brigades reported a reduction in the number of accidental fires per 10,000 population compared with the previous year.

Table 2b: Average number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population

BRIGADE	Number of accidental dwelling fires	Accidental dwelling fires (Rolling five year average)	
	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	282	11.1	11.4
Dumfries & Galloway	154	10.1	10.3
Fife	340	10.3	10.5
Grampian	695	12.2	11.6
Highland & Islands	268	9.7	10.0
Lothian & Borders	1,191	13.8	14.1
Strathclyde	3,603	16.5	16.8
Tayside	600	15.9	16.0
All Scotland	7,133	14.3	14.5

Indicator 3: Sickness absence levels for firefighters

The percentage of shifts lost to:

- sickness absence
- light duties.

This indicator reports the percentage of shifts lost through absence due to sickness and injury in fire brigades. The proportion of lost time is for firefighters who are absent from work and also those who are assigned to light duties for medical reasons.

Sickness absence includes self-certificated, absence supported by a doctor's certificate, long-term sickness absence, and work-related injury. It does not include, for example, compassionate leave, career leave and special leave/unpaid leave nor maternity or paternity leave.

Points to bear in mind

Sickness absence levels in the fire service are generally high in comparison with the public sector average, partly as a result of the hazardous nature of the work, and the special needs in respect of fitness.

Brigade policies vary on the number of firefighters who can be accommodated on non-operational light duties.

Long-term sickness absence by a small number of staff can significantly affect performance at smaller brigades.

COMMENTARY

Full-time firefighters

Across all brigades **the proportion of shifts lost to sickness absence and light duties was 8.2%**, an increase of 0.5% compared with the previous year. The level of absence from fire-fighting duties varied from 4.6% (Dumfries & Galloway) to 9.1% (Strathclyde). Five brigades improved their level of absence while Central Scotland, Strathclyde and Tayside all reported higher levels (Table 3a). Within these absence levels, brigades allocated shifts to firefighters to undertake light duties. These levels ranged from 0.3% (Highlands & Islands, and Tayside) to 1.9% (Central Scotland).

Overall, almost 47,000 shifts were lost to sickness absence and light duties which equates to slightly over 16 shifts per firefighter per year. The number of shifts lost to sickness absence and light duties per firefighter varied between brigades from around nine shifts to 18 shifts per firefighter.

Table 3a: Working time lost to sickness absence

BRIGADE	Percentage of shifts lost due to sickness and light duties		Percentage of shifts lost due to sickness absence		Percentage of shifts lost due to light duties	
	2000/2001	1999/2000	2000/2001	1999/2000	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	8.0	7.3	6.1	7.2	1.9	0.1
Dumfries & Galloway	4.6	5.3	3.9	4.5	0.7	0.8
Fife	7.7	9.3	6.9	7.4	0.8	1.9
Grampian	6.1	7.6	4.6	6.7	1.5	0.9
Highland & Islands	5.1	6.0	4.8	5.3	0.3	0.7
Lothian & Borders	6.6	7.3	6.0	6.8	0.6	0.5
Strathclyde	9.1	8.1	8.6	7.9	0.5	0.2
Tayside	8.9	6.6	8.6	6.2	0.3	0.4
All Scotland	8.2	7.7	7.5	7.3	0.7	0.4

Other fire staff

Overall, **the proportion of non-firefighting staff time lost due to sickness absence was 6.3%**. This percentage compares with 5.4% for civilian staff in the police service. There was significant variation between brigades ranging from 3.9% at Highlands & Islands to 11.4% at Dumfries & Galloway (Table 3b).

Table 3b: Working time lost to sickness absence – 2000/2001

BRIGADE	Percentage sickness absence – other staff
Central Scotland	5.5
Dumfries & Galloway	11.4
Fife	7.3
Grampian	5.8
Highland & Islands	3.9
Lothian & Borders	4.6
Strathclyde	8.0
Tayside	4.6
All Scotland	6.3

Police

Police services are provided by eight forces. Six of these, responsible to joint boards, cover more than one council area - Central Scotland, Lothian & Borders, Grampian, Northern, Strathclyde and Tayside. Two, Dumfries & Galloway and Fife, cover the same areas as the councils of the same name.

Indicator 4: Crimes cleared up

The percentage of all crimes cleared up and the percentage of crimes in the following categories cleared up:

- serious assault
- car crimes (crimes involving theft of a car or theft from a car and attempted theft)
- domestic housebreaking (theft by housebreaking, housebreaking with intent to steal, attempted housebreaking).

The effectiveness of police crime detection can be measured by the proportion of crimes and offences which are cleared up. A crime is regarded as 'cleared up' if there is sufficient evidence to justify a report being submitted to the procurator fiscal. 'Cleared up' does not, however, necessarily mean that in every case someone was arrested and charged.

Crimes are defined by the Scottish Executive and are generally more serious in nature than offences. They include, for example, murder, serious assault, rape, indecent assault, housebreaking, shoplifting, drug-related crimes and vandalism. Some crimes are far more common than others.

Clear-up rates for three categories of crime selected for their public interest are also reported. Clear-up rates for the different categories will vary. For example, the victim may be able to describe the offender when someone is attacked, whereas there may be no witness to property crimes.

Points to bear in mind

In rural areas the population is more static, local people are more likely to know each other and, therefore, they may notice offenders more readily and be able to give descriptions of them to the police.

The number of crimes recorded by the police is less than the actual number committed because people do not always report them.

COMMENTARY

Recorded crimes

The total number of recorded crimes in Scotland in 2000/2001 was just under 418,500, which is the lowest number reported since directly comparable figures were first reported in 1996/97. This is a significant reduction (over 17,000) compared with the previous year (Figure 4a).

Seven of the eight forces reported a reduction in the number of recorded crimes compared with the previous year, ranging from 2.2% (Strathclyde) to 8.7% (Tayside). Northern Constabulary reported a 5% increase in recorded crimes.

Overall forces cleared up slightly over 44% of recorded crimes, which is a year-on-year improvement since 1996/97. Five forces improved their clear-up rate compared with the previous year and Lothian & Borders and Strathclyde have continued to improve their clear-up rate year-on-year since 1996/97 (Table 4a).

Figure 4a: The overall percentage and number of recorded crimes cleared up

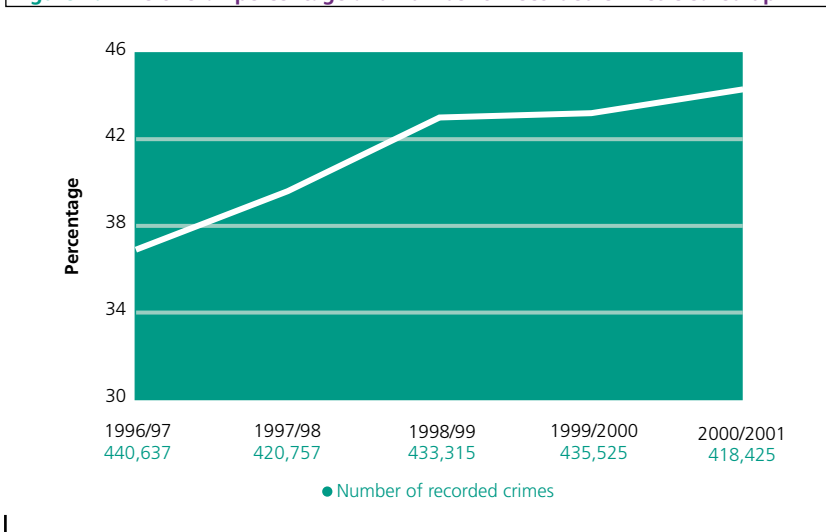


Table 4a: The percentage of all recorded crimes cleared up

	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
FORCE	Total recorded crimes	%	%	%	%	%
Central Scotland	16,198	57.9	54.8	57.1	56.1	58.8
Dumfries & Galloway	7,664	50.7	56.0	58.8	61.7	61.2
Fife	26,360	46.5	44.0	50.3	46.8	46.2
Grampian	46,271	33.0	36.3	37.9	40.8	31.3
Lothian & Borders	78,462	46.4	41.5	37.4	35.4	34.6
Northern	13,487	58.4	55.9	62.4	66.6	65.5
Strathclyde	201,092	44.1	43.4	43.2	36.7	34.0
Tayside	28,891	40.2	41.6	38.0	37.0	34.3
All Scotland	418,425	44.3	43.2	43.0	39.6	36.9

Serious assaults

In 2000/2001 the total number of serious assaults recorded in Scotland was 6,091, a slight reduction compared with the previous year. Six forces reported a reduction in the number of serious assault cases. These reductions varied from slightly under 2% in Fife to almost 16% in Tayside. However, Northern reported a 46% increase in the numbers for this category of crime (Figure 4b).

Overall, forces cleared up over 59% of serious assaults, which is consistent with clear-up levels in recent years. Four forces (Central Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway, Northern, and Strathclyde) all increased their clear-up rates (Table 4b).

Four forces cleared up more than eight out of every ten of these crimes, while Strathclyde cleared up slightly over half.

Figure 4b: The overall percentage of serious assaults cleared up

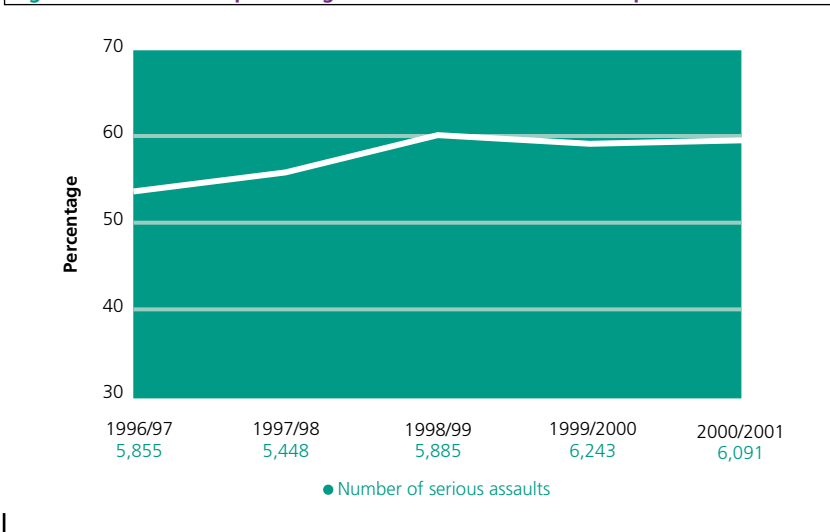


Table 4b: The overall percentage of serious assaults cleared up

	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
	Total serious assaults	%	%	%	%	%
FORCE						
Central Scotland	192	88.5	85.6	90.8	88.9	92.7
Dumfries & Galloway	71	88.7	84.6	89.7	91.5	97.3
Fife	267	73.8	76.8	85.9	92.0	94.8
Grampian	378	68.5	69.1	69.8	70.9	61.3
Lothian & Borders	786	69.3	70.3	66.4	63.0	61.6
Northern	242	93.4	91.6	88.1	86.2	87.5
Strathclyde	3,947	50.5	49.8	52.3	46.5	44.5
Tayside	208	81.3	86.6	86.3	81.7	77.8
All Scotland	6,091	59.5	59.1	60.1	55.8	53.6

Car crimes

The total number of car crimes recorded in Scotland in 2000/2001 was slightly over 66,000, a decrease of almost 30% compared with 1996/97 when directly comparable figures were first available (Figure 4c).

Overall the clear-up rate by forces was slightly less than the previous year. Four forces, Fife, Lothian & Borders, Northern and Tayside increased their clear-up rates, while all other forces reported reductions. Clear-up rates ranged from slightly over 17% at Grampian and Tayside to almost 41% at Northern (Table 4c).

Figure 4c: The overall percentage of car crimes cleared up

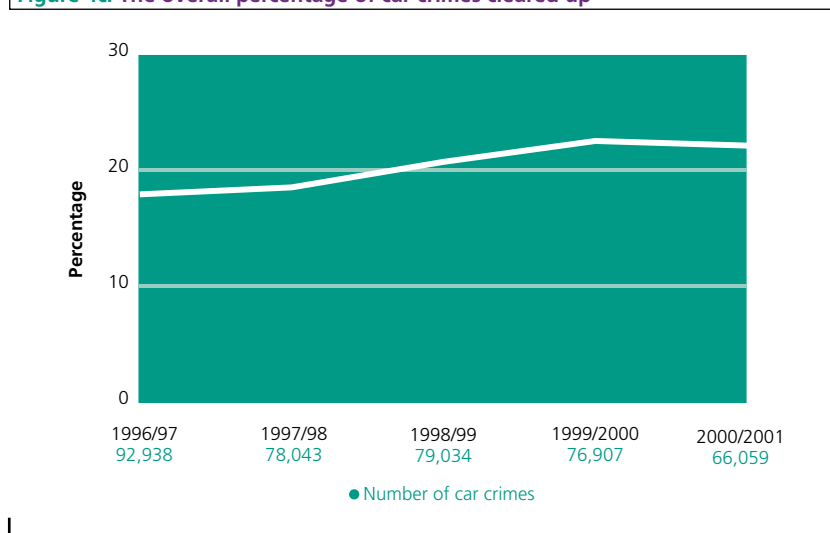


Table 4c: The percentage of car crimes cleared up

	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
FORCE	Total car crimes	%	%	%	%	%
Central Scotland	1,928	33.7	34.0	34.3	35.0	40.5
Dumfries & Galloway	733	31.0	35.8	39.7	42.4	37.6
Fife	4,762	36.1	35.4	39.6	35.9	33.4
Grampian	5,845	17.2	23.3	18.9	20.5	16.1
Lothian & Borders	11,805	22.0	20.7	16.3	16.5	17.0
Northern	1,019	40.8	38.6	44.6	50.4	51.4
Strathclyde	34,741	20.5	20.6	19.5	15.9	15.3
Tayside	5,226	17.2	17.0	14.5	14.3	14.3
All Scotland	66,059	22.1	22.5	20.7	18.5	17.9

Domestic housebreaking cleared up

The total number of domestic housebreaking crimes recorded in Scotland was slightly under 24,000, which is a decrease of almost 3,000 compared with the previous year. This reflects a pattern of reduction since 1996/97 when directly comparable information was first available. Five forces reported fewer housebreakings compared with the previous year with Fife (38%) and Tayside (22%) reporting the greatest reductions. Grampian (17%) reported the highest increase.

Across Scotland, the clear-up rate for domestic housebreaking has increased year-on-year since 1996/97 (Figure 4d). In 2000/2001 six forces increased their clear-up rate for this category of crime. Most notably, Fife (over 12%) and Northern (over 11%) reported the highest increases in clear-up rates. Lothian & Borders has doubled its clear-up rates to 35% since 1996/97, while Strathclyde has increased its clear-up rate year-on-year since 1996/97 (Table 4d).

Figure 4d: The overall percentage of housebreaking crimes cleared up

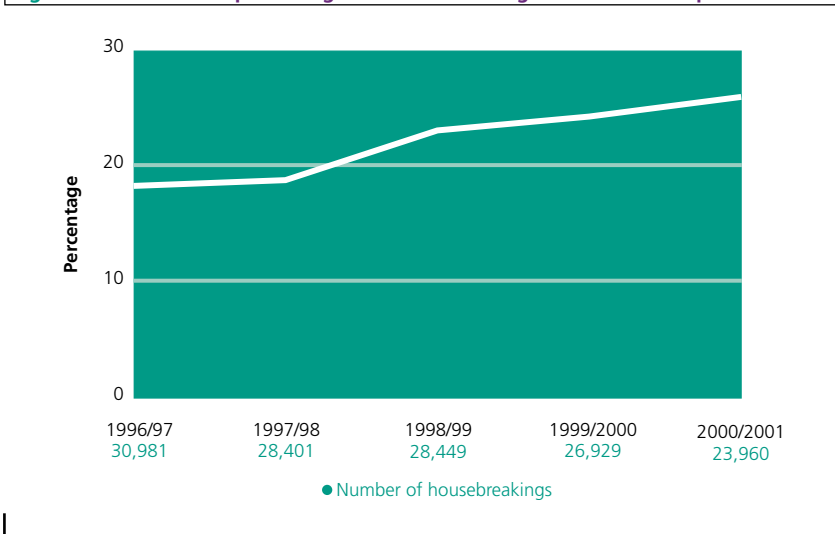


Table 4d: The percentage of domestic housebreakings cleared up

	2000/2001	2000/2001	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
	Total domestic housebreakings	%	%	%	%	%
FORCE		%	%	%	%	%
Central Scotland	1,094	30.7	28.3	34.1	30.0	35.1
Dumfries & Galloway	483	35.0	42.1	43.7	38.0	48.7
Fife	1,363	47.7	35.2	39.0	31.0	32.9
Grampian	4,160	21.2	20.6	21.0	24.4	19.3
Lothian & Borders	2,732	34.8	27.2	18.9	16.0	17.4
Northern	328	46.6	35.5	37.0	52.0	45.0
Strathclyde	12,264	22.9	22.0	21.7	14.9	13.3
Tayside	1,536	17.1	20.0	18.6	16.6	20.5
All Scotland	23,960	25.9	24.2	23.0	18.7	18.2

Indicator 5: Sickness absence levels for police personnel

Proportion of working time lost due to sickness absence for:

- police officers
- civilian staff.

This indicator reports the amount of time lost through sickness and injury absence in police forces.

Sickness absence includes self certification, absence supported by a doctor's certificate, long-term sickness absence, absence due to assaults on police, and work related injury. It does not include, for example, compassionate leave, career leave and special leave/unpaid leave nor maternity or paternity leave.

Points to bear in mind

Some variation in sickness absence between forces for civilian staff may be explained by the variation in the extent to which forces use traffic wardens, who generally have higher levels of sickness absence than other civilian staff.

Commentary

Police officers

Overall, slightly over 158,000 days were lost to sickness absence, which equates to almost 11 days per police officer per year. **Across Scotland, the proportion of time lost due to sickness absence was 4.9%, a slight improvement compared with 1999/2000** (Table 5a).

The level of sickness absence varied from 2.5% (just under six days per officer) in Grampian to 6.8% (almost 14 days per officer) in Tayside. In four of the seven forces (Fife, Grampian, Northern and Strathclyde), where comparison could be made, there was a reduction in their level of sickness absence compared with the previous year.

Table 5a: Percentage of time lost due to sickness absence for police officers

FORCE	Percentage sickness absence – police officers	
	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	5.9	5.8
Dumfries & Galloway	3.5	3.3
Fife	4.2	4.7
Grampian	2.5	2.8
Lothian & Borders	6.1	
Northern	3.6	4.2
Strathclyde	4.7	5.5
Tayside	6.8	6.3
All Scotland	4.9	5.1

Lothian & Borders did not report this information in 1999/2000.

Civilian staff

Slightly over 62,000 days were lost to sickness absence. This equates to approximately 13 days lost to sickness absence per employee per year.

The proportion of **civilian staff time lost to sickness absence was 5.4%**, a slight improvement on the previous year (Table 5b). This percentage compares with 6.3% for non-fire fighting staff within the fire service.

The level of sickness absence varied across forces from 2.5% at Grampian to 6.8% at Tayside. Four forces, Central Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway, Grampian and Strathclyde improved on the percentage of time lost to sickness absence compared with the previous year.

Table 5b: Percentage of time lost due to sickness absence for civilian staff

FORCE	Police sickness absence – civilian staff	
	2000/2001	1999/2000
Central Scotland	4.5	6.8
Dumfries & Galloway	2.8	3.5
Fife	4.6	4.2
Grampian	2.5	3.4
Lothian & Borders	6.2	
Northern	3.9	3.2
Strathclyde	6.4	7.1
Tayside	6.8	6.1
All Scotland	5.4	5.7

Lothian & Borders did not report this information in 1999/2000.

Indicator 6: The number of complaints per 100 police officers

This indicator provides information on the number of complaints received from any person against on-duty police officers where there is an inference that professional or criminal misconduct has occurred.

This indicator does not include complaints against police support staff.

Points to bear in mind

2000/2001 is the first year for which this information has been collected.

Commentary

Overall, there were 1,418 complaints made against police officers in 2000/2001. Across Scotland, police forces reported that there was less than ten complaints for every 100 police officers which varied amongst forces from five at Dumfries & Galloway to 13 at Tayside and Lothian & Borders (Table 6).

Table 6: The number of complaints per 100 police officers

FORCE	Complaints per 100 police officers	Number of complaints
	2000/2001	2000/2001
Central Scotland	11.5	84
Dumfries & Galloway	5.1	24
Fife	10.9	90
Grampian	12.8	155
Lothian & Borders	13.1	340
Northern	10.6	71
Strathclyde	6.9	502
Tayside	13.1	152
All Scotland	9.5	1,418

Indicator 7: The number of racist incidents

Recommendations within the report by Sir William Macpherson into the death of Steven Lawrence are aimed at increasing reporting levels of racist incidents in order that the full scale of racist activity can be reliably assessed.

As a result of these recommendations Scottish police forces are actively encouraging the reporting of racist incidents and it is expected that over the coming years the number of reported incidents would increase.

Points to bear in mind

A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

2000/2001 is the first year for which this information has been collected.

COMMENTARY

The total number of racist incidents reported to police forces in 2000/2001 was slightly over 2,700. The number of racist incidents reported ranged from two cases per 10,000 population in Dumfries & Galloway to eight cases per 10,000 population in Tayside.

Table 7: The number of racist incidents per 10,000 population

FORCE	Incidents per 10,000 population	Number of racist incidents
	2000/2001	2000/2001
Central Scotland	5.5	153
Dumfries & Galloway	2.0	30
Fife	4.7	166
Grampian	3.4	180
Lothian & Borders	6.2	551
Northern	2.7	76
Strathclyde	5.5	1241
Tayside	8.0	308
All Scotland	5.3	2,705

Contacts

If you have any specific queries about the performance information, you may wish to contact your force or brigade. The addresses and telephone numbers are given below. If you have general queries about this pamphlet, you may wish to contact Alec Taylor or Jim Lakie at Audit Scotland (see back cover).

Central Scotland Fire Board, Divisional Officer M Wilson, Head of Corporate Affairs, Fire Brigade Headquarters, Main Street, Maddiston, Falkirk, FK2 0LG, T. 01324 716996

Dumfries & Galloway Fire Brigade, Divisional Officer Oliver Galligan, Fire Brigade HQ, Brooms Road, Dumfries, DG1 2DZ, T. 01387 252222

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Strathclyde Fire Brigade, Senior Divisional Officer David Hutchison, Fire Brigade HQ, Bothwell Road, Hamilton, ML3 0EA, T. 01698 300999

Tayside Fire Board, Acting Firemaster S Hunter, Fire Brigade HQ, Blackness Road, Dundee, DD1 5PA, T. 01382 322222

Central Scotland Police Force, Chief Inspector Jim Cattanach, Policy Strategy & Quality Unit, Police Headquarters, Randolphfield, Stirling, FK8 2HD, T. 01786 456000

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