

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	25 October 2021
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Forensic Services Performance Report
Item number	3
Presented By	Fiona Douglas
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Consultation</b>
Appendix Attached	Business Performance Report Q2

**PURPOSE**

To present Forensic Services Performance Report, Q2 2021/22 for Committee consideration.

This paper is presented in line with;

- The Scottish Police Authority Scheme of Delegation

This paper is for consultation.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Forensic Services Business Performance Report is presented for Q2 2021/22.
- 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 2021/22.
- 1.4 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 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The financial implications are noted in the report.

## **3 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **4 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **5 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **6 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **7 COMMUNITY IMPACT**

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

**8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no direct equality implications associated with this paper.

**9 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct environmental implications associated with this paper.

**Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the content of the Q2, 2021/22 Performance Report.

OFFICIAL

FORENSIC SERVICES

SCOTTISH POLICE  
AUTHORITY

Scottish Police Authority

Forensic Services

Performance Report

Quarter 2 2021/22

*For presentation to the SPA  
Forensic Services Committee*

*25<sup>th</sup> October 2021*

OFFICIAL

## Executive Summary

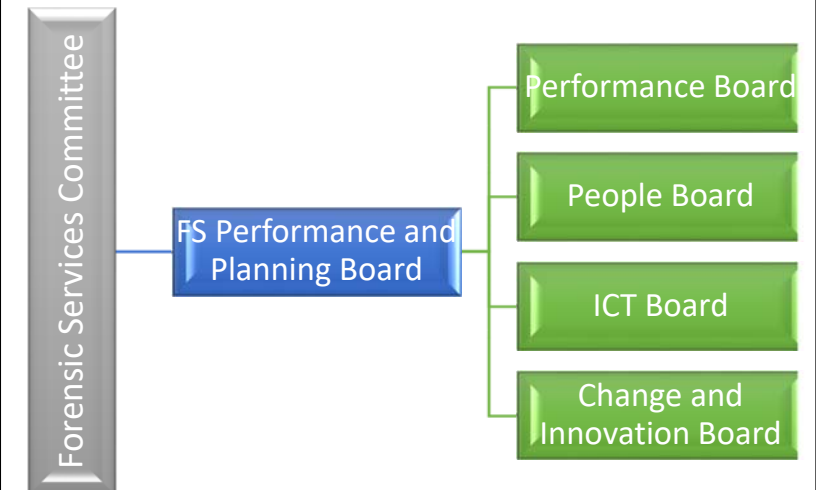
Forensic Services has performed consistently in Q2 in comparison to previous reporting periods. Capacity and demand across many disciplines is now in balance allowing for an improvement in timeliness and reduction in any significant caseloads over the coming months. This will be seen in the ageing of case data which has been included in the report which shows the average age of cases being worked on within each of the disciplines. The expectation of aging will be different in different disciplines in accordance with required completion dates and the complexity of the case and the types of forensic science that may be required.

Toxicology continues to be an area of concern where the available capacity is significantly below the demand for services - this is due to the higher than expected demand for Section 5A Drugs Driving submissions. This is subject to a number of detailed actions and the development of a more sustainable model for this service moving forward. In the meantime, actions are in place across all partners to manage any risk associated with the high caseload in this area.

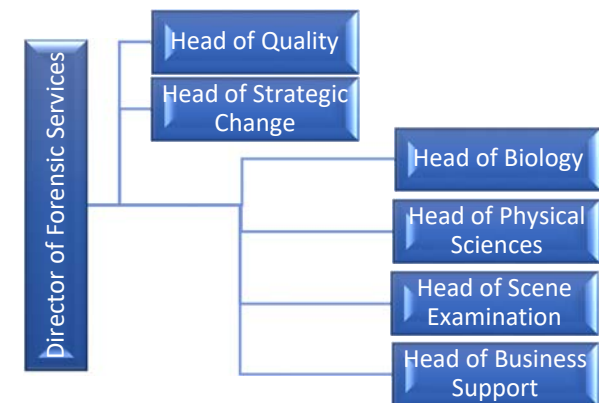
Demand for scene examination services has increased in Q2 as expected and is returning towards the levels of pre-pandemic demand across Scotland. Performance continues to track just below the 90% target of attendance in 24hrs and this is subject to scrutiny within the operational management of the function and at the Performance Board. Further review of recovery rates is continuing and caution must be taken with this metric, as it is important that focus is on the value as opposed to the volume of evidence recovered from scenes of crime.

Demand forecasting undertaken as part of the development of the strategic workforce plan will allow for more a proactive and cross-discipline response to changing demand trends, this is complemented further by the proposals for organisational change. The business cases for the new operating model, access to laboratory and scenes deployment projects will transform the performance of forensic services in coming years as the benefits are realised, particularly in relation to forensic services provided in support of local policing in Scotland.

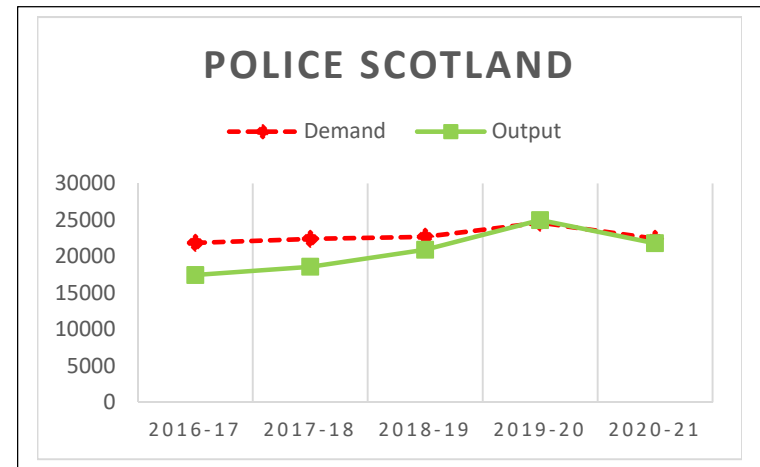
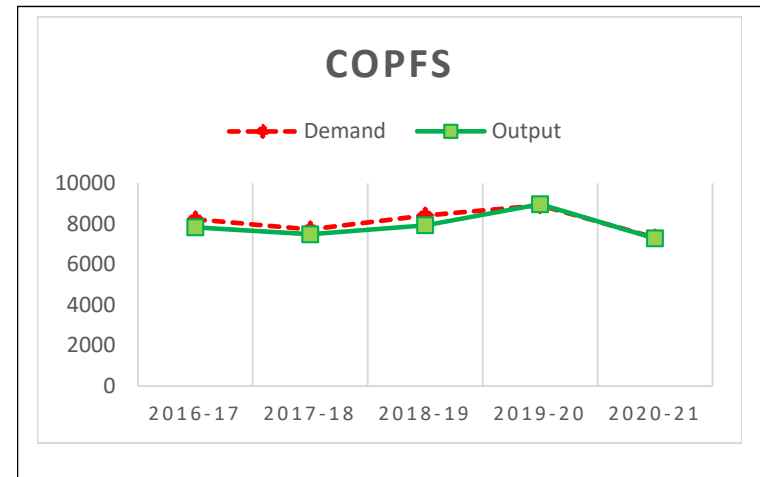
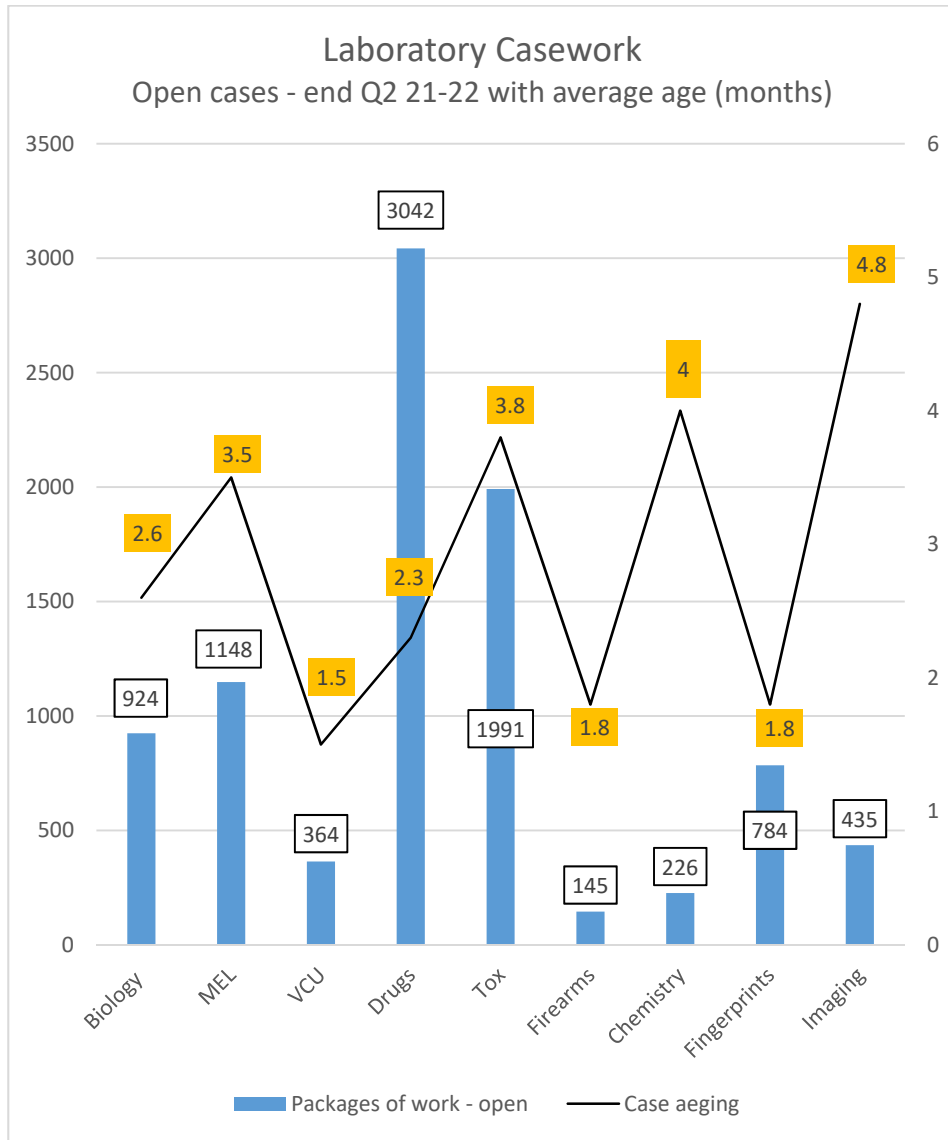
### Forensic Services Internal Governance



### Forensic Services Senior Management Structure

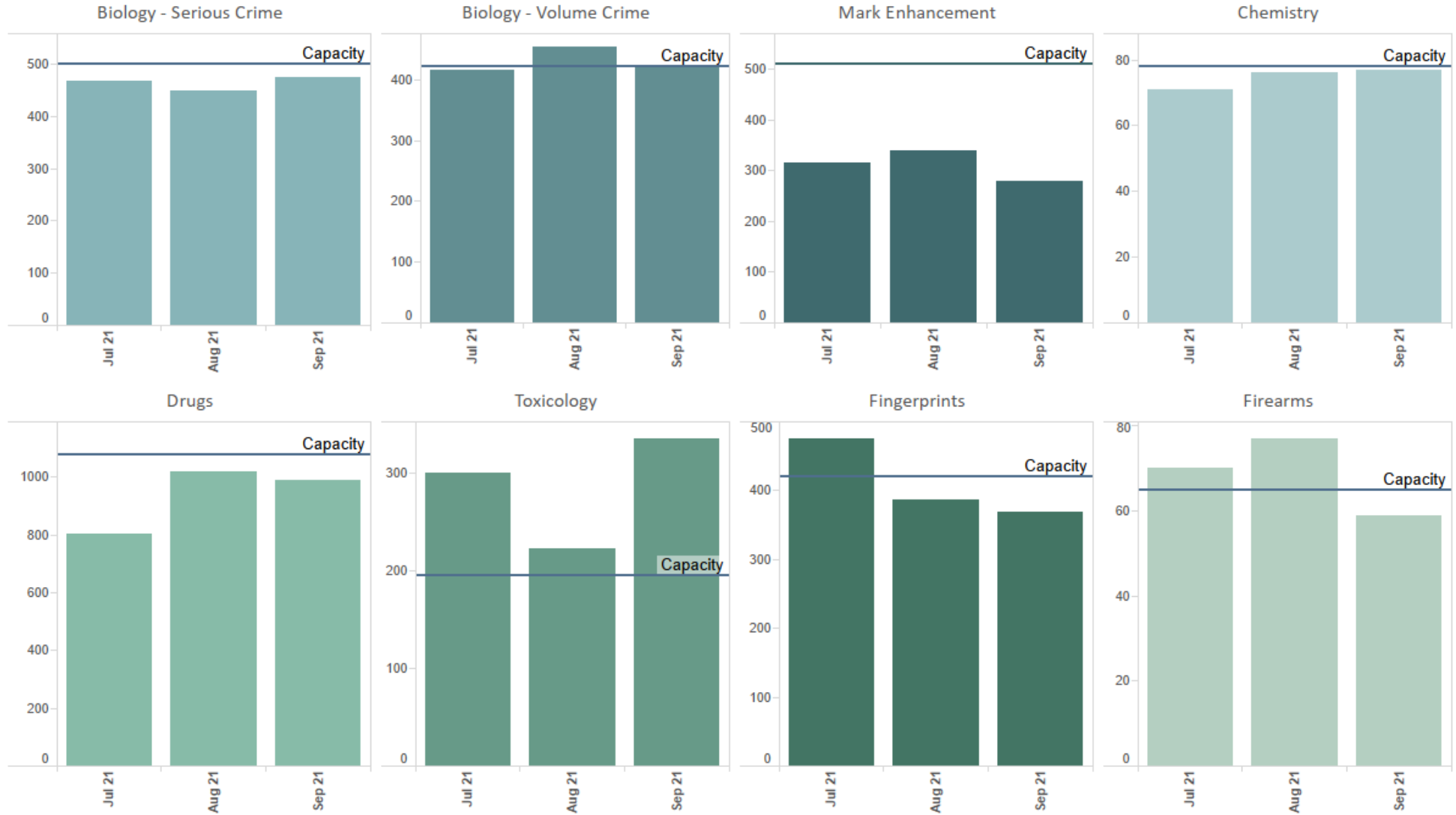


Forensic Services Overall Position



### Forensic Services - Laboratory Capacity

Charts illustrate new requests for casework opened per month



### Forensic Services - Toxicology



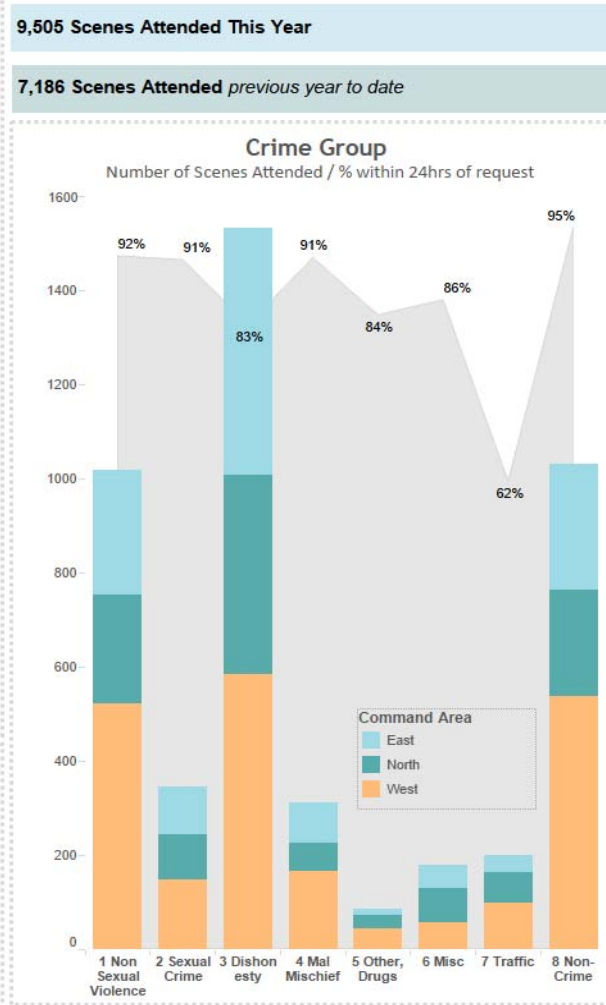
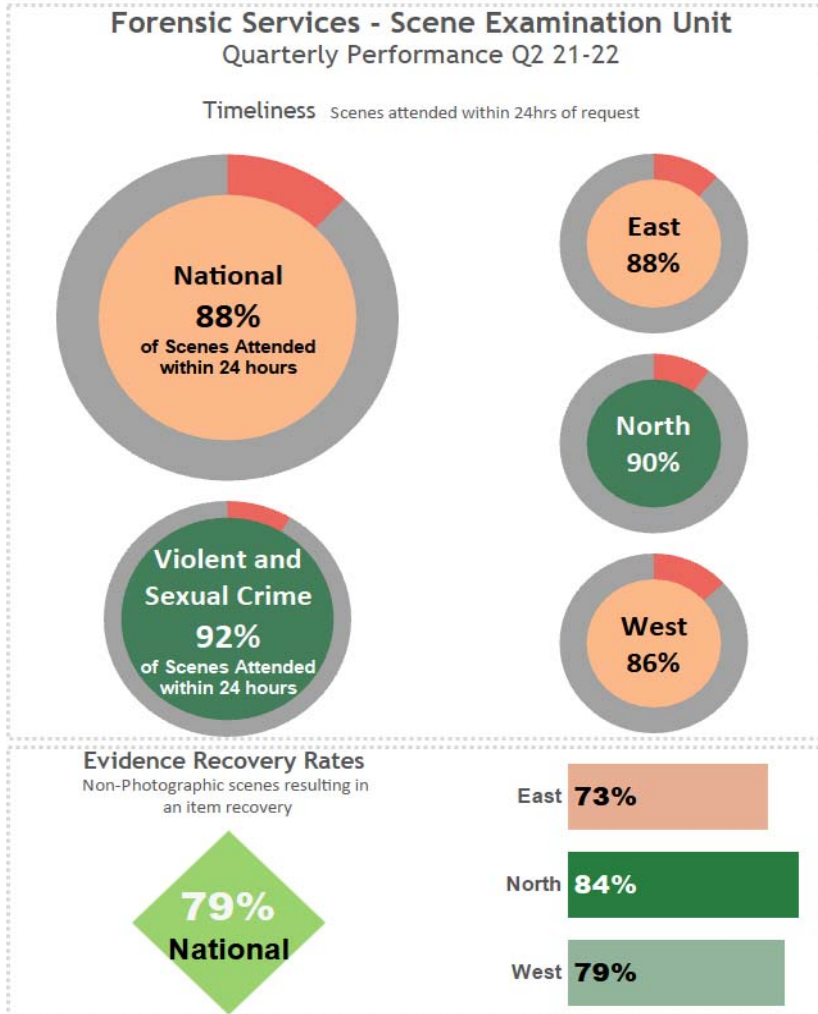
Demand for toxicology services remains high and continues to track above capacity resulting in an increasing backlog. Process improvement, the use of overtime, and outsourcing of work has temporarily released additional capacity, however, this is not substantial enough to meet the current demand. Two workshops have been held with justice partners to explore a range of short, medium and longer-term, solutions to meet current and future demand in this area.

Further improvements continue to be explored including ongoing engagement with COPFS to remove non value-adding activities, exploring advancements in technology to reduce processing times and increasing reporting capacity through staff training.

It is important to note that whilst the demand for Sec 5A casework accounts for an average of 500-700 cases per quarter other types of toxicology work has remained steady.



Forensic Services – Scene Examination



Scene attendances have increased from Q1 and are higher than levels seen in 2020-21.

Housebreakings and Group 3 crime are still trending lower than previous years, whereas Violent crimes and Sex offences have consistently been above average during Q2.

Consistently red regions and crime categories are being reviewed to identify reasons and learning. Some numbers of crimes in smaller divisions, such as 'Traffic'-related scenes, are very low hence can show large swings in performance. There is also activity to develop the performance information further to represent timeliness of attendance which Forensic Services has control of and to reclassify attendances which are as requested but fall outside of the 24hr target.

Regional recovery rates have been explored and further work is ongoing.

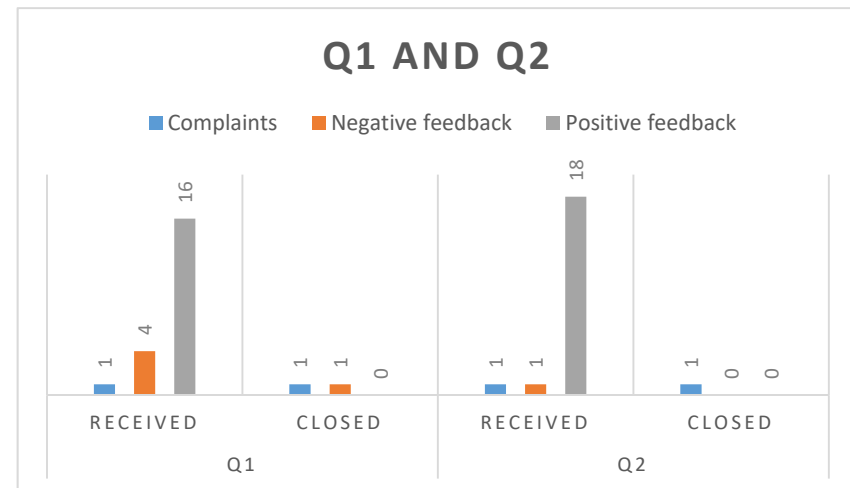
## Forensic Services - Quality

### Summary

- The Management System Review process meeting is to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021
- The annual UKAS accreditation assessment programme is under way for this year's full re-assessment of Forensic Services Management System
- Scene Examination activity to move towards ISO 17020 accreditation is progressing and being reviewed by the Change and Innovation Board and includes;
  - A refresher training package is being completed
  - End to end validation to be focused on
  - Update Annual Maintenance of Competence process to align with each accredited activity being observed annually
  - Introduce improved known outcome internal mock scene exams and external proficiency testing

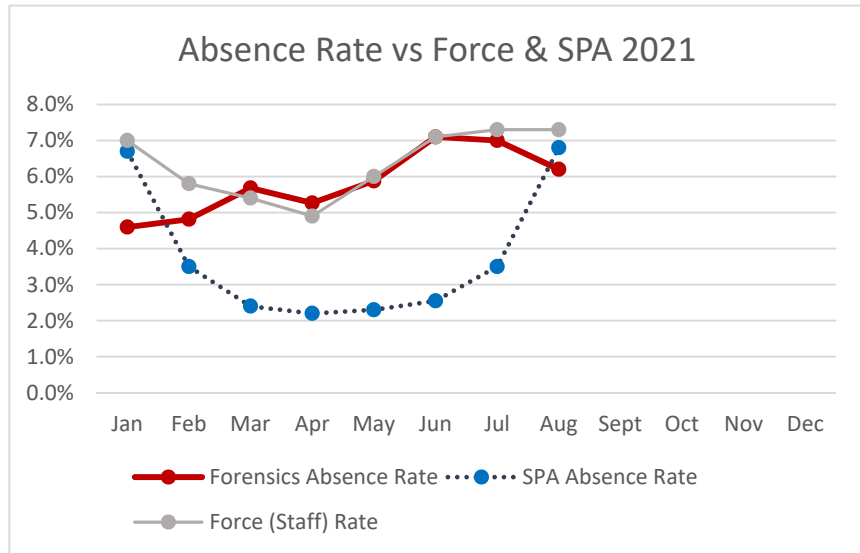
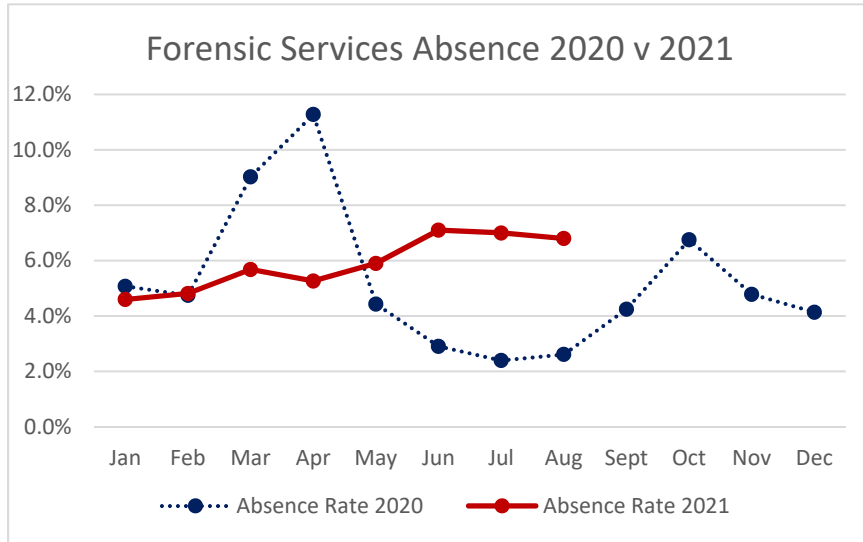
### Complaints and Feedback

- Complaints and both positive and negative feedback is recorded in compliance with the ISO 17025 Standard from our partners and customers. The graph below shows the feedback received during Q2 Jul - Sept; 2021-2022:



- All complaints or negative feedback recorded in the Management System will have corrective and preventive action documented following Standard Operating Procedure. Effectiveness of the action taken will be reviewed through the internal audit process and in turn through Management System.

### Forensic Services Absence



Covid accounts for five cases of sickness absence in Forensic Services currently. From the 18<sup>th</sup> October any absence due to Covid, or long-term covid, will be captured within general absence data.

The Attendance Management sub group of the People Board is currently undertaking a deep dive into the reasons for absence that are not Covid related and the outcome of this work will be aligned with the developing wellbeing plan for the organisation.

A number of vacancies are in the process of being recruited and this is reviewed monthly by the People Board. A number of unfilled vacancies are now in the process of being identified and recruitment started in October 21.