



CROWN OFFICE
& PROCURATOR
FISCAL SERVICE

SCOTLAND'S PROSECUTION SERVICE

Performance against Key Targets April 2021 to March 2022

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Area of Activity	Performance Target	Performance Achieved 2020-21 (full year)	Performance Achieved 2021-22 (full year)	Description of Target
Take and Implement Decisions	75% within 4 weeks	76%	73%	Take a decision on the appropriate course of action and implement that decision in at least 75% of cases within 4 weeks of the date on which the report is received from the reporting agency. (NB: This target applies to all cases except cases which are likely to be dealt with under solemn procedure i.e. the more serious cases, where the case is likely to be dealt with in the High Court or in the Sheriff Court before a Jury.)
Service of Indictments ⁽¹⁾	All indictments are served within timebar	100%	100%	No High Court or Sheriff and Jury cases lost because no further action can be taken due to failure to serve indictment(s) within timebar (or amended timebar, if an extension is granted).
Investigation of Deaths ⁽²⁾	80% within 12 weeks	59%	50%	In deaths which require further investigation, conduct the investigation and advise the next of kin of the outcome within 12 weeks in at least 80% of cases.
Investigation of Criminal Allegations against the Police ⁽³⁾	75% within 6 months	Not applicable	87%	Complete investigation of complaints of criminal conduct by police officers and advise complainer of the outcome within 6 months of the report to the Procurator Fiscal in at least 75% of cases.

Information notes

⁽¹⁾ Our key target in respect of the service of indictments reflects the legislative requirement on COPFS to serve an indictment on all accused within very strict time limits. Failure to adhere to the time limits has very serious consequences and can, in certain circumstances, prevent the prosecution going ahead. The time limits vary according to the court in which the accused will be tried and whether the accused is on bail or remanded in custody. This key target is focused on demonstrating that we prepare solemn cases in accordance with these strict time limits. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prosecutions in Scotland has recommended that we ensure that all High Court bail indictments are served no later than 7 days before timebar. This supports the target of having no cases timebar before service of indictment is achieved in any case.

⁽²⁾ A key target in the investigation of deaths is that where a death requires further investigation, we will conduct the investigation and advise the next of kin of the result within 12 weeks of the death being reported to the Procurator Fiscal. Many of these deaths require a post mortem examination to be conducted. The examination process includes toxicological analysis. Pathologists are unable to conclude their examinations and submit their final reports to COPFS until they receive the toxicology results.

Since February 2019 COPFS has experienced delays in the provision of toxicology by service providers. As a result, there have been delays in the provision of pathologists' final reports to COPFS and the conclusion of investigations. Performance against target has therefore reduced.

COPFS continues to liaise with toxicology service providers to ensure that toxicology is provided within the required timescales

⁽³⁾ Following a review, a revised target for criminal allegations against the police was introduced from 1 July 2021. Performance achieved in 2021-22 relates to the period from 1 July onwards only.