



This report presents information on complaints about **Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary** for the year 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

## 1 All complaints

- At 162 the total number of complaint cases received by Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary in 2012-13 is up by five cases (3.2 per cent) on the previous year, compared with a national fall of -1.7 per cent. It is one of only three forces to experience a year-on-year increase this year.
- Total allegations received rose by 17.4 per cent on last year, compared with an overall decrease for Scotland of just -0.5 per cent. The majority concerned on-duty conduct (67.8 per cent), followed by quality of service (31.5 per cent) and off-duty conduct (0.6 per cent).
- Most of the on- and off-duty allegations received by the force were directed at police officers (93.0 per cent), followed by 5.6 per cent at police staff and 0.9 per cent at special constables<sup>1</sup>. A further two were unspecified. Service outcomes were the most common subject of quality of service allegations received (39.8 per cent).
- At 370 the total number of allegations disposed of by the force is up by 60.2 per cent on last year - the biggest rise in Scotland - compared with a rise of just 0.9 per cent nationally.

**Table 1: Summary statistics: Dumfries & Galloway Constabulary, 2007-08 to 2012-13<sup>2</sup>**

Fiscal year	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Complaint cases recorded	139	183	163	162	157	162
Complaint allegations received: on duty	124	149	160	168	152	211
Complaint allegations received: quality of service	79	93	99	74	107	98
Complaint allegations received: off duty	5	13	8	9	6	2
Complaint allegations received: total	208	255	267	251	265	311
Complaint allegations disposed of: on duty	77	163	137	199	127	250
Complaint allegations disposed of: quality of service	63	87	90	82	98	119
Complaint allegations disposed of: off duty	2	15	9	7	6	1
Complaint allegations disposed of: total	142	265	236	288	231	370
Complaint cases recorded per 10k population: D&G	9.4	12.3	11.0	10.9	10.6	10.9
Complaint cases recorded per 10k population: Scotland	8.3	9.4	8.8	8.1	8.4	8.2
Complaint allegations received per 10k population: D&G <sup>3</sup>	5.2	17.1	18	16.9	17.9	21.0
Complaint allegations received per 10k population: Scotland <sup>4</sup>	13.3	16.6	14.8	13.4	15.2	15.0

Reasons for differences in these statistics vary and may include the nature and extent of training undertaken by staff, new procedures becoming established or fluctuating public confidence in reporting dissatisfaction:

- At 10.9 per 10,000 population, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary has seen relatively little movement in rate of cases received over the last four years and continues to sit above the Scottish average.
- With a larger increase in allegations received, particularly on-duty ones, its rate per 10,000 population is now six percentage points clear of the national average although still not the highest in Scotland.

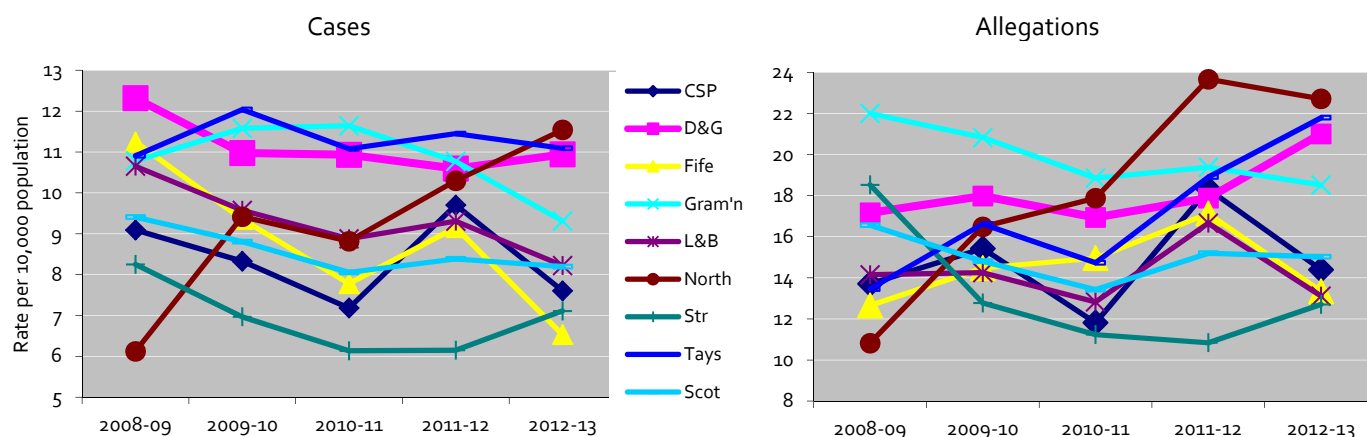
<sup>[1]</sup> A single allegation may be directed at more than one member of a police force – hence percentages may not add up to 100%.

<sup>[2]</sup> Complaints prior to April 2007 were recorded under an earlier definition that did not include off-duty and quality of service complaints.

<sup>[3]</sup> Following recalculation, revised figures are presented for allegations prior to 2009/10 from those in the 2008/09 version of this report.

<sup>[4]</sup> Following recalculation, revised figures are presented for allegations prior to 2009/10 from those in the 2008/09 version of this report.

Figure 1: Complaints received per 10k population for all forces and Scotland overall, 2007-08 to 2012-13



## 2 On-duty complaints

- A total of 67.8 per cent of all allegations received by Dumfries & Galloway Constabulary in 2012-13 concerned on-duty conduct. It remains the lowest proportion in Scotland, well below the national average of 84.5 per cent.
- At 211, the number of on-duty allegations received by the force in 2012-13 is up 38.8 per cent on last year - the largest individual rise in Scotland which, over the same period, saw a national increase of 2.8 per cent.
- The majority of on-duty allegations received were directed at *police officers* (92.9 per cent compared with 95.7 per cent for Scotland as a whole), followed by 5.7 per cent at *police staff* (5.1 per cent for Scotland) and 0.9 per cent *special constables*<sup>5</sup> (0.7 per cent for Scotland). There were no allegations against cadets but two (0.9 per cent) against unspecified members of the force.
- At 250 the number of on-duty allegations disposed of represents a considerable 96.9 per cent rise on last year - the highest by far in Scotland - compared with a 3.5 per cent increase nationally.
- The most common allegations made against on-duty members of the force disposed of were those of *irregular procedure* (28.8 per cent), *incivility* (20.4 per cent) and *neglect of duty* (18.4 per cent).
- The most common disposals were *concluded by explanation to the complainor*<sup>6</sup> (72.4 per cent), *not upheld due to insufficient evidence*<sup>7</sup> (16.0 per cent) and *leading to a decision of "no proceedings"* by the procurator fiscal (6.0 per cent).

Table 2': Top three allegations types closed by Dumfries & Galloway Constabulary, 2007-08 to 2012-13

Fiscal year	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Irregular procedure - number disposed of	8	26	40	50	36	72
Percentage change on previous year (%)	-27.3	225	53.8	25.0	-28.0	100.0
Incivility - number disposed of	35	46	30	43	34	51
Percentage change on previous year (%)	16.7	31.4	-34.8	43.3	-20.9	50.0
Neglect of duty - number disposed of	9	24	10	41	24	46
Percentage change on previous year (%)	200.0	166.7	-58.3	310.0	-41.5	91.7

- Given the considerable rise in on-duty disposals, it is not surprising that its three top allegation types have all experienced marked year-on-year rises.
- In fact, no category of allegation against the force experienced a decline this year.
- Other non-criminal allegations rose for a third consecutive year - up 122.2 per cent - to stand at 20 in 2012-13. Larger increases in other categories are mainly down to the small base numbers involved.

<sup>[5]</sup> A single allegation may be directed at more than one member of a police force – hence percentages may not add up to 100%.

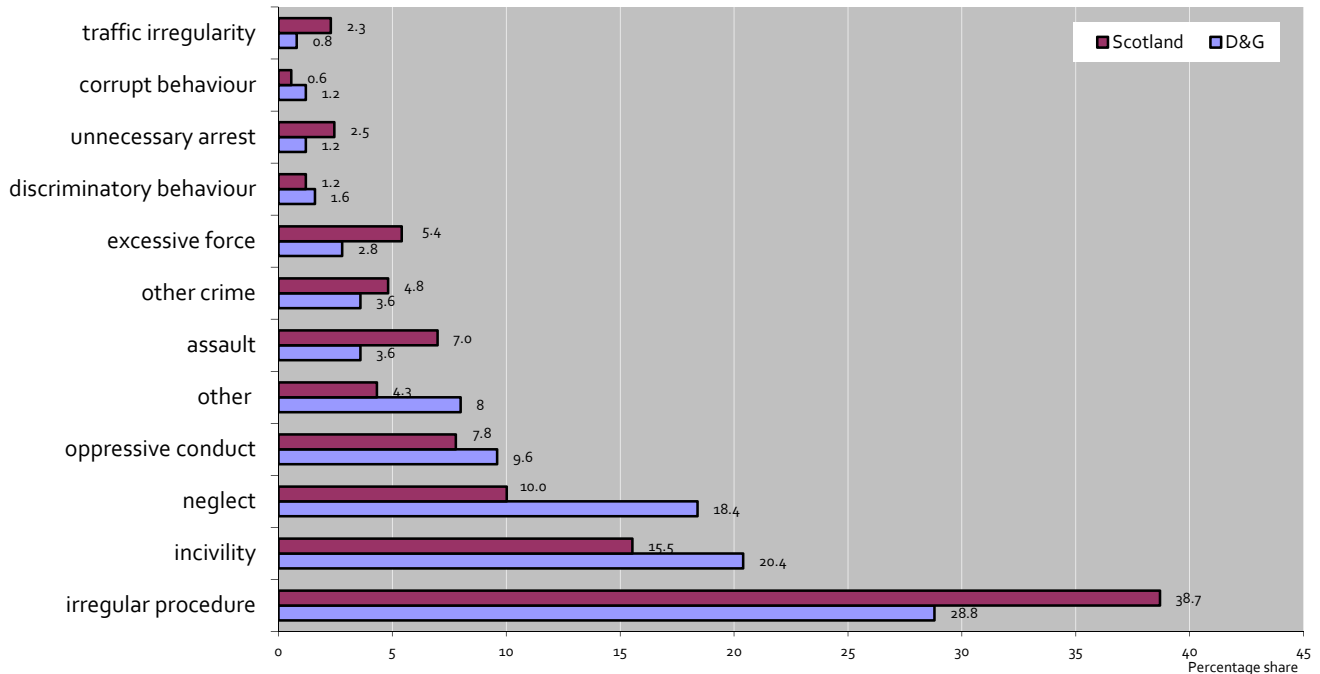
<sup>[6]</sup> Resolved by explanation may now include allegations concluded by explanation, regardless of whether or not they were upheld.

<sup>[6]</sup> NB: Large percentage changes can be a consequence of small raw numbers.

<sup>[7]</sup> "Unsubstantiated" is in the process of being replaced by new closure code 'not upheld due to insufficient evidence'.

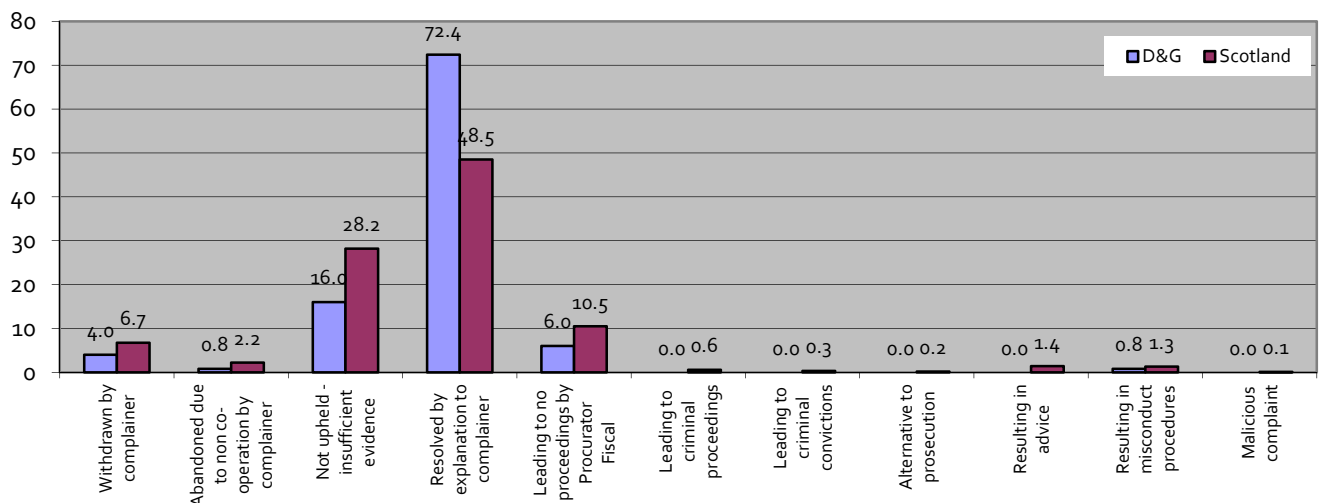
- The force has a higher than (Scottish) average share of disposed of allegations of neglect of duty, incivility (the highest share in Scotland), other non-criminal, corrupt behaviour, and oppressive conduct.
- Conversely, it has a lower than (Scottish) average share of disposed of allegations for irregular procedure, assault and excessive force amongst others.

**Figure 2: Percentage share of on-duty allegations disposed of - D&G and Scotland 2012-13**



- The most common disposal for on-duty allegations in Dumfries and Galloway has been *resolved by explanation* to complainer, for at least the last five years. Nevertheless this year has seen a dramatic rise in its proportion of such disposals, to more than seven in every ten (72.4 per cent). Despite most forces also experiencing a sharp rise here with the inclusion of all *concluded* allegations, D&G's proportion is by far the highest in Scotland, where the average sits at 48.5 per cent.
- In contrast, the proportion of disposals *not upheld due to insufficient evidence*<sup>7</sup> and *resulting in advice* have both fallen by clear margins: in the former case, the force now has the lowest share of these disposals; in the latter, shares of disposals have fallen from 15.0 per cent to zero this year. Both declines are reflected in trends for Scotland as a whole.
- The only other disposal showing what appears to be a fairly stable increase is *withdrawn by complainer*.

**Figure 3: Outcomes of on-duty allegations - D&G and Scotland, 2012-13**



### 3 Off-duty complaints

- The proportion of allegations received by Dumfries and Galloway in 2012-13 concerning off-duty conduct fell for a second consecutive year to just 0.6 per cent. The proportion for Scotland as a whole fell to 3.1 per cent.
- At just two, the number of these allegations received by the force is down by four or 66.7 per cent on last year, against a national fall of -31.9 per cent. Moreover, the number disposed of fell by five (-83.1 per cent) on last year, compared with a -19.2 per cent decline nationally.
- Both allegations received this year were directed at *police officers*.
- The force disposed of only one allegation which was not of a criminal nature (73.4 per cent of all off-duty disposals nationally were criminal), and that one was *resolved* by explanation to the complainer.

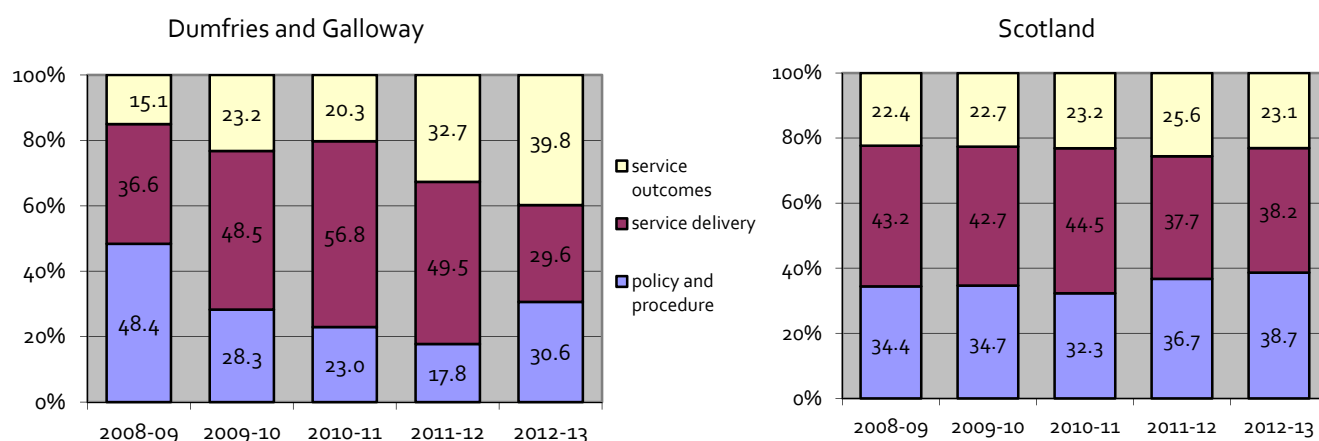
Table 3: Outcomes of all off-duty allegations - D&G and Scotland, 2009-10 to 2012-13

Fiscal year/	Dumfries and Galloway				Scotland			
	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
% Action taken	44.4	14.3	33.3	0.0	52.9	51.3	50.7	39.3
% Unsubstantiated / Not upheld	33.3	71.4	66.7	0.0	30.1	37.6	38.2	47.6
% Resolved	0	0	0	100.0	11.1	7.4	3.1	12.1
% Withdrawn	22.2	14.3	0	0.0	5.3	3.6	7.2	0.3
% Abandoned	0	0	0	0.0	0.6	0	0.8	0.7
TOTAL - number	9	7	6	1	342	417	359	290

### 4 Quality of service complaints

- With 31.5 per cent of all allegations received by Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary in 2012-13 concerning quality of service, the force continues to record the highest share here (12.4 per cent is the national average).
- At 98 the number of quality of service allegations received by the force in 2012-13 is down -8.4 per cent on last year, compared with a -9.9 per cent decline for Scotland as a whole.
- The most common type of allegation received by the force has changed from *service delivery* (29.6 per cent), to *service outcomes* (39.8 per cent), with 30.6 per cent concerning aspects of *policy and procedure*. This is quite a different profile to the national breakdown, as can be seen from Figure 4 below.
- At 119 the number of quality of service allegations disposed of by the force marks a rise of 21.4 per cent on last year, compared with a -8.2 per cent decrease nationally.

Figure 4: Percentage share of type of quality of service allegations received, 2012-13



## 5 Complainer characteristics

- In all cases (100.0 per cent) the complainer complained directly to the force as opposed to having someone else do so on their behalf - the only force to experience this. The equivalent percentage for Scotland as a whole was 97.7 per cent.
- The majority of its complainers were male (64.3 per cent) – slightly higher than the 62.4 per cent for Scotland as a whole. Dumfries and Galloway was one of only two forces to capture gender details on all its complainers.
- In 25.0 per cent of cases the age of the complainer was unknown; in a lower proportion (20.8 per cent) the occupational status of the complainer was also unknown; while in 41.4 per cent of cases the ethnicity of the complainer was unknown or not stated. In the first two instances the proportions unknown are the lowest in Scotland. Nevertheless they remain too high for us to comment further about these characteristics.

Figure 5a: Age of complainer - Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland, 2012-13

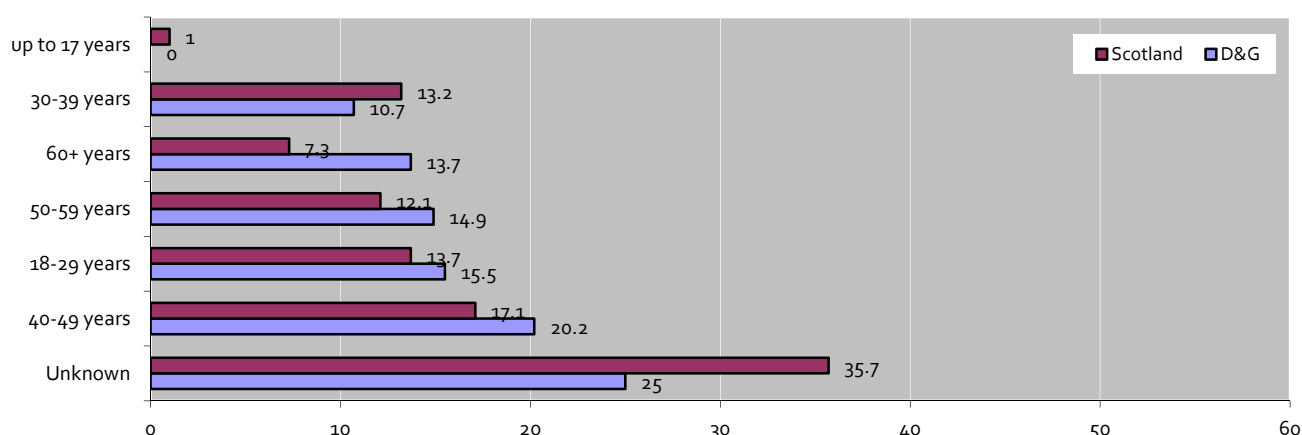
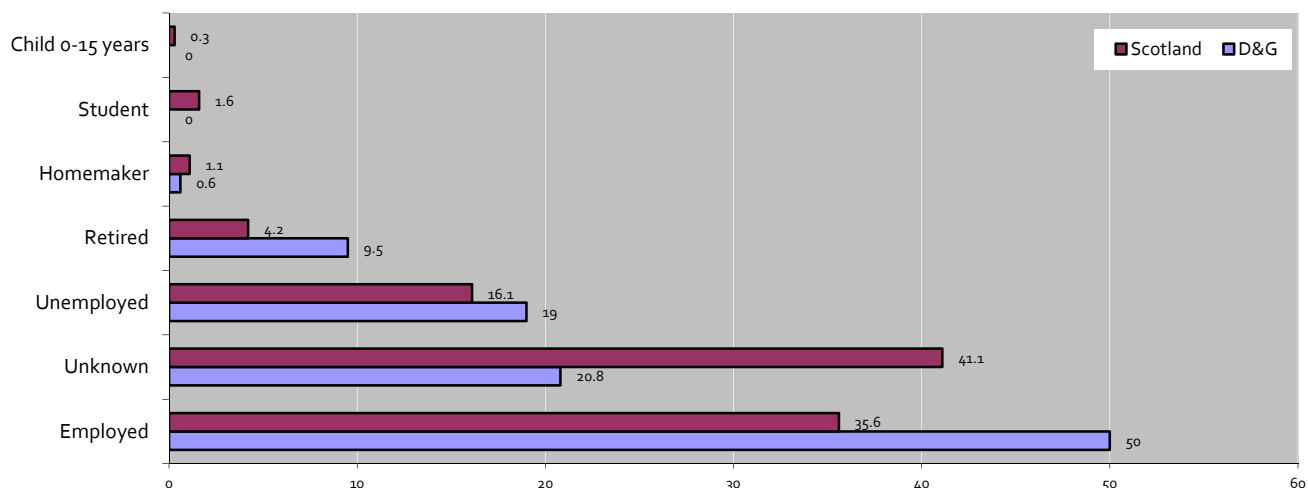


Figure 5b: Occupation of complainer - Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland, 2012-13



## 6 Subject of complaint characteristics

- We have said elsewhere that the majority of subjects of allegations were police officers. Around two-thirds of all those complained about in the force were male (66.3 per cent), 25.1 per cent were female and 8.6 per cent were unknown. The equivalent figures for Scotland are 72.5 per cent, 20.7 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively.
- The peak ages for being complained about in the force are 30-39 (33.7 per cent, compared with 27.2 per cent nationally) and 40-49 (33.2 per cent, compared with 28.2 per cent nationally). This is only indicative, however, given that in 12.8 per cent of cases the age of the subject was unknown.
- Similarly, in 9.6 per cent of cases the ethnicity of the subject of the complaint was unknown.