

This report presents information on complaints about **Tayside Police** for the year 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

1 All complaints

- At 450 the total number of complaint cases received by Tayside Police in 2012-13 is down -2.4 per cent on last year. Scotland as a whole also experienced a decrease, of -1.7 per cent.
- At 884 the number of complaint allegations received by the force in 2012-13 is up 16.2 per cent on last year, compared with national decrease over the same period of just -0.5 per cent.
- The majority of allegations received concerned on-duty conduct (87.9 per cent), followed by 8.9 per cent about the quality of service and 3.2 per cent for off-duty conduct.
- Most on- and off-duty allegations received were directed at police officers (96.4 per cent), followed by 4.5 per cent at police staff and 1.2 per cent at special constables¹.
- At 880 the total number of allegations disposed of is up 8.8 per cent on last year, compared with a rise of just 0.9 per cent nationally.

Table 1: Summary statistics: Tayside Police, 2007-08 to 2012-13²

Fiscal year	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Complaint cases recorded	373	433	481	446	461	450
Complaint allegations received: on duty	326	445	566	505	656	777
Complaint allegations received: quality of service	64	73	54	63	76	79
Complaint allegations received: off duty	23	16	44	25	29	28
Complaint allegations received: total	413	534	664	593	761	884
Complaint allegations disposed of: on duty	239	413	541	588	686	756
Complaint allegations disposed of: quality of service	59	62	63	51	86	85
Complaint allegations disposed of: off duty	11	25	30	41	37	39
Complaint allegations disposed of: total	309	500	634	680	809	880
Complaint cases recorded per 10k population: Tayside Police	9.5	10.9	12	11.1	11.4	11.1
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: Tayside Police ³	10.5	13.5	16.6	14.7	18.9	21.8
Complaint allegations received per 10k population: Scotland ⁴	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:

- The rate per 10,000 population of complaint cases received by Tayside Police in 2012-13 saw a slight drop, taking it back down from being the highest in Scotland to just the second highest.
- Conversely its rate of complaint allegations received has risen to its highest point in at least six years. As a result it is nearly seven points clear of the national average and has the second highest rate in Scotland.

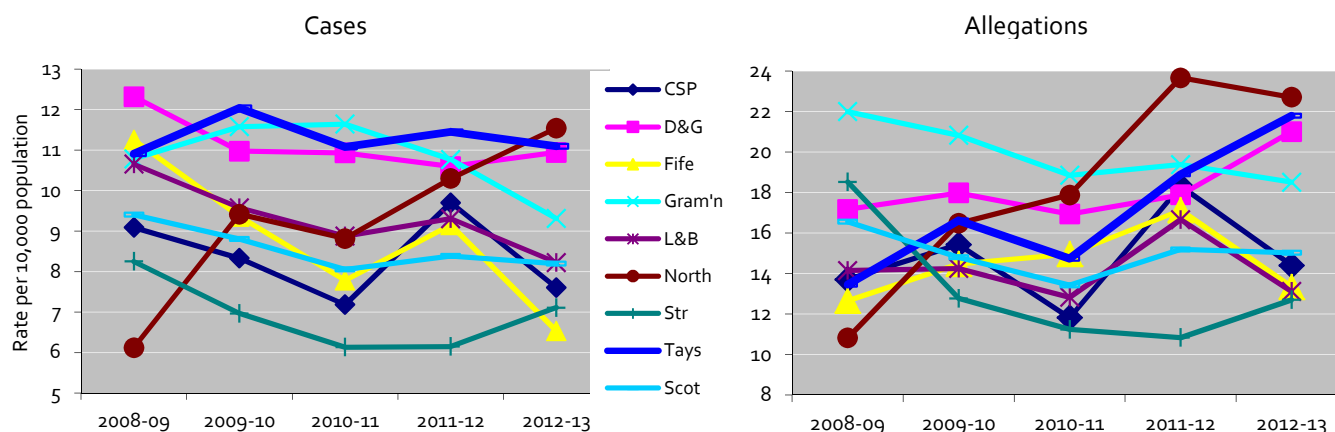
^[1] A single allegation may be directed at more than one member of a police force – hence percentages may not add up to 100%.

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

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

^[4] 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, 2007-08 to 2012-13



2 On-duty complaints

- A total of 87.9 per cent of all allegations received by Tayside Police in 2012-13 were allegations concerning on-duty conduct – the highest in Scotland - with the average sitting at 84.5 per cent.
- At 777 the number of on-duty allegations received by the force in 2012-13 is up 18.4 per cent on last year, compared with an overall rise for Scotland of just 2.8 per cent.
- The majority of on-duty allegations received were directed at *police officers* (96.8 per cent compared with 95.7 per cent for Scotland as a whole), followed by 4.0 per cent at *police staff* (5.1 per cent for Scotland) and 1.3 per cent at *special constables* (0.7 per cent for Scotland)⁵.
- At 756 the number of on-duty allegations disposed of is up 10.2 per cent on last year, compared with a 3.5 per cent increase nationally.
- The most common types of allegation against on-duty members of the force disposed of were those of *neglect of duty* (29.0 per cent), *irregular procedure* (27.4 per cent) and *incivility* (14.3 per cent).
- The most common outcomes of these allegations were *concluded by explanation to complainer*⁶ (64.8 per cent), *unsubstantiated/not upheld due to insufficient evidence*⁷ (21.7 per cent) and *leading to "no proceedings" decision* by the procurator fiscal (7.8 per cent).

Table 2': Top three allegations types closed by Tayside Police, 2007-08 to 2012-13

Fiscal year	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Neglect of duty - number disposed of	49	79	94	107	189	219
Percentage change on previous year (%)	-57	61.2	19.0	13.8	76.6	15.9
Irregular procedure - number disposed of	28	50	93	150	200	207
Percentage change on previous year (%)	40	78.6	86.0	61.3	33.3	3.5
Incivility procedure - number disposed of	38	53	75	82	87	108
Percentage change on previous year (%)	-11.6	39.5	41.5	9.3	6.1	24.1

- The top three allegation types disposed of by Tayside Police remain the same as last year, although the two top have swapped places. All three also show sustained annual increases over the last five years.
- Though not shown here, both oppressive conduct and other non-criminal have seen some of the largest year-on-year increases, while assault and corrupt practice have experienced the greatest decreases.

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

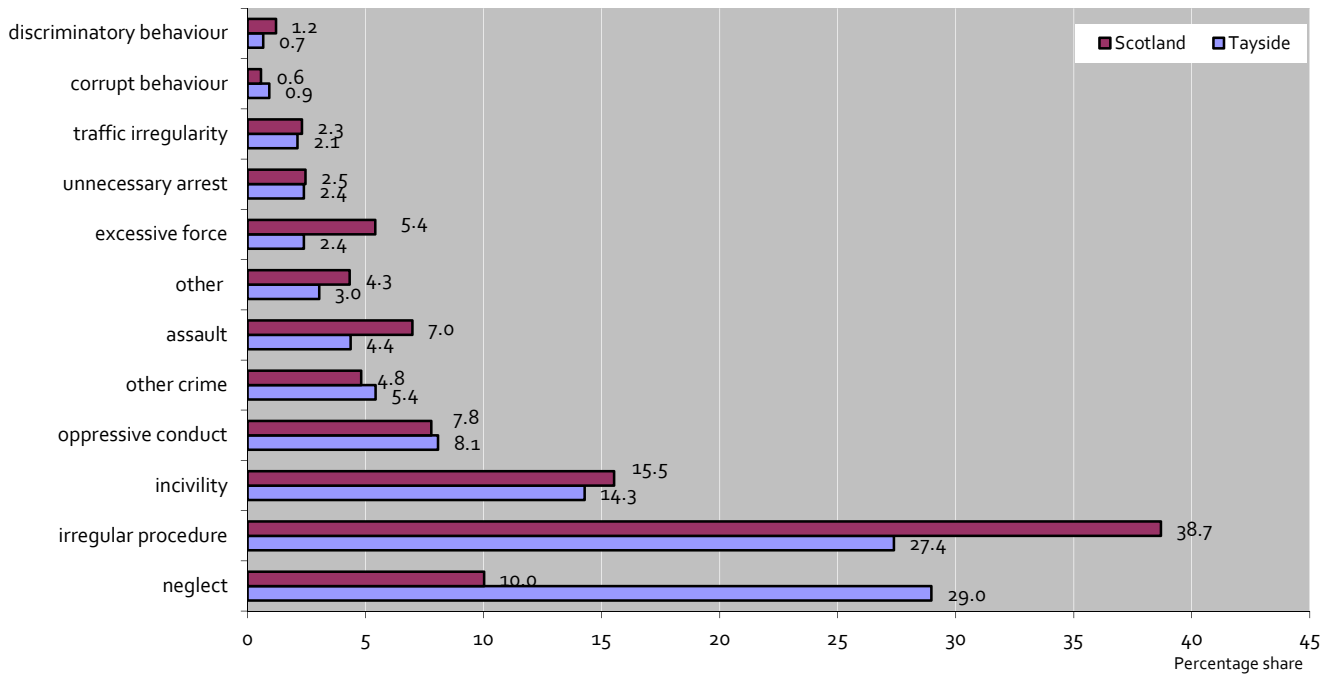
^[6] Resolved by explanation may now include allegations concluded by explanation, regardless of whether or not they were upheld.

^[6] NB: Large percentage changes can be a consequence of small raw numbers.

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

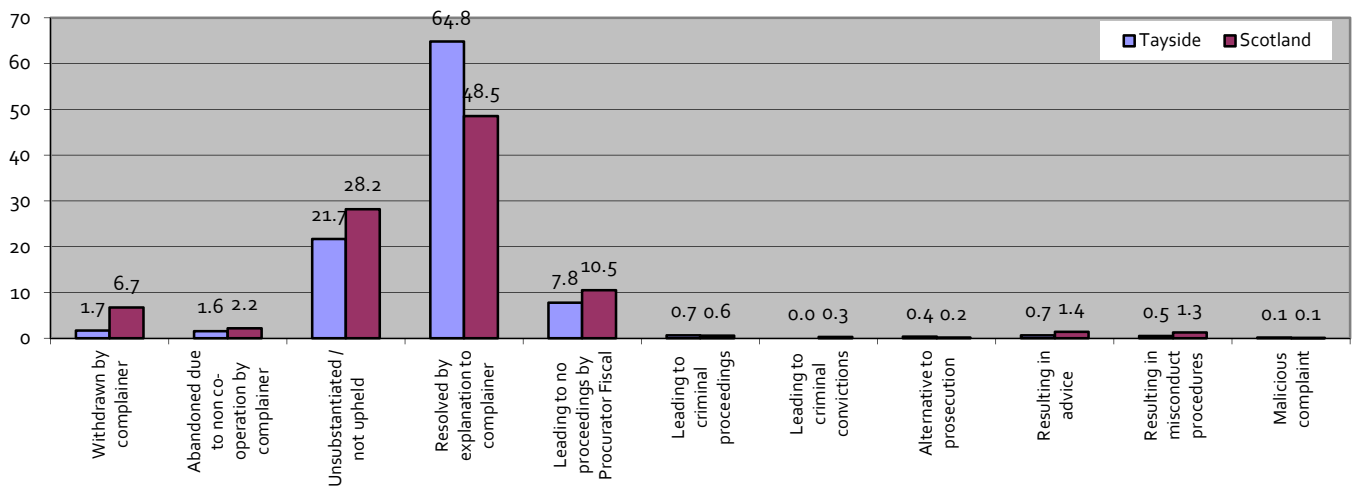
- The force has a markedly higher than (Scottish) average share of just one allegation type disposed of, neglect of duty (highest in Scotland). In a few other cases it has only a slightly higher share.
- Conversely it has a lower than (Scottish) average share in irregular procedure (the lowest in Scotland), excessive force (lowest in Scotland) and assault, in particular.

Figure 2: Percentage share of on-duty allegations disposed of - Tayside and Scotland 2012-13



- The most common disposal for on-duty allegations in Tayside Police has been *resolved (now concluded) by explanation* to complainer, for roughly the last five years. Nevertheless this year has seen a dramatic rise in its proportion of such disposals, to nearly two in every three (64.8 per cent). Despite most forces also experiencing a sharp rise here too, Tayside's proportion is the second highest in Scotland where the average sits at 48.5 per cent.
- In contrast, the proportion of disposals *unsubstantiated/not upheld due to insufficient evidence*⁷ and *resulting in advice* have both fallen by clear margins: in the former case, by as much as 14 percentage points and in the latter by nearly ten points. Both declines are reflected in trends for Scotland as a whole.
- The only other disposal showing what appears to be a consistent decrease is allegations *leading to a "no proceedings" decision* by the area procurator fiscal. The force also has the lowest proportion nationally of *allegations withdrawn by complainer*.

Figure 3: Outcomes of on-duty allegations - Tayside and Scotland, 2012-13



3 Off-duty complaints

- The proportion of allegations received by Tayside in 2012-13 concerning off-duty conduct fell for a third consecutive year to reach 3.2 per cent. The proportion for Scotland as a whole fell to 3.1 per cent.
- At 28 the number of off-duty allegations received by the force in 2012-13 is down by a single allegation (-3.4 per cent) on last year, compared with a larger decline for Scotland of -31.9 per cent. At 39 the number disposed of is up by two (or 5.4 per cent) on last year, compared with a fall of -19.2 per cent nationally.
- The majority of allegations received were directed at *police officers* (85.7 per cent), followed by *police staff* at 17.9 per cent (NB: a single allegation can be directed at more than one person). The equivalent proportions for Scotland as a whole were 80.5 and 14.2 per cent respectively, and 5.7 per cent for *special constables*.
- Of those allegations disposed of by the force 79.5 per cent were of a criminal nature, compared with 73.4 per cent nationally. The most common outcome was *unsubstantiated/not upheld*, followed by *action taken*.

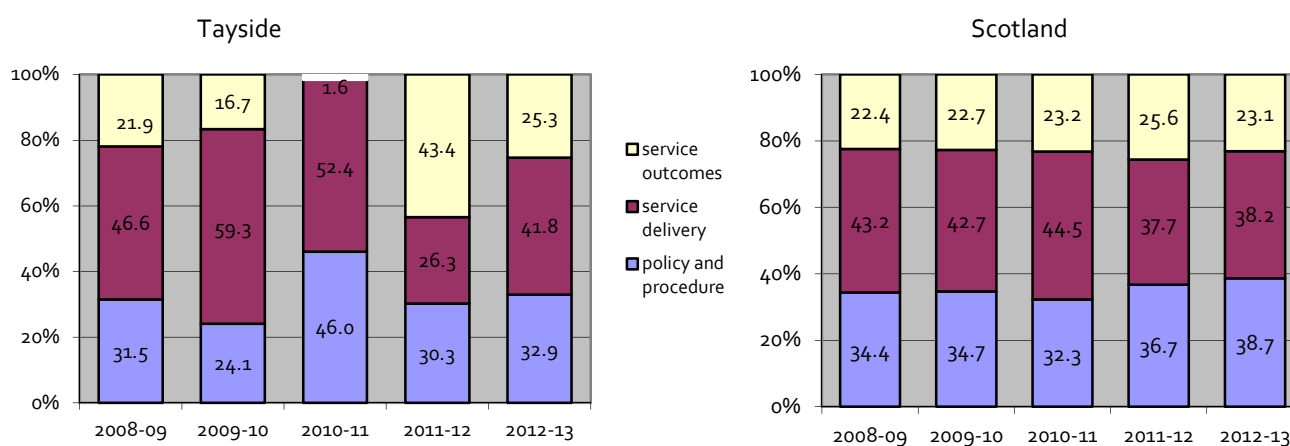
Table 3: Outcomes of off-duty allegations - Tayside Police and Scotland, 2009-10 to 2012-13

Fiscal year ¹	Tayside Police				Scotland			
	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
% Action taken	33.3	46.3	59.5	35.9	52.9	51.3	50.7	39.3
% Unsubstantiated / Not upheld	36.7	34.1	29.7	38.5	30.1	37.6	38.2	47.6
% Resolved	23.3	17.1	10.8	23.1	11.1	7.4	3.1	12.1
% Withdrawn	6.7	2.4	0.0	0.0	5.3	3.6	7.2	0.3
% Abandoned	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.6	0	0.8	0.7
TOTAL - number	30	41	37	39	342	417	359	290

4 Quality of service complaints

- Just over one in twelve (8.9 per cent) of all allegations received by Tayside Police in 2012-13 concerned quality of service. This is the lowest proportion in Scotland, where the national average sits at 12.4 per cent.
- At 79 the number of quality of service allegations received by the force in 2012-13 is up by just three (or 3.9 per cent) on last year, compared with an overall decline for Scotland of -9.9 per cent.
- This year the majority of allegations received were directed at aspects of *service delivery* (at 41.8 per cent) followed by *policy and procedure* (32.9 per cent) and *service outcomes* at 25.3 per cent. This is quite a different profile for the force compared with recent years and is more in keeping with the national picture.
- At 85 the number of quality of service allegations disposed of by the force fell by a single allegation (-1.2 per cent) on last year, compared with a decrease of -8.2 per cent nationally.

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



5 Complainer characteristics

- Nearly all complainers (94.7 per cent) made their complaint to the force as opposed to having someone else do so on their behalf. This is three points lower than the 97.7 per cent recorded nationally. Where someone else did so on their behalf, it was most likely to be someone acting as an agent for the complainer (4.1 per cent).
- The majority of complainers were male (60.7 per cent), slightly lower than the Scottish average of 62.4 per cent. The gender of the complainer was unknown in only 1.8 per cent of cases.
- In 29.1 per cent of cases the age of the complainer was unknown; in a slightly lower proportion (26.9 per cent), the occupational status of the complainer was unknown; while in a higher proportion (34.2 per cent), the ethnicity of the complainer was unknown or not stated. Although these are some of the lowest unknown proportions recorded by forces we remain unable to make further comment about complainer characteristics.

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

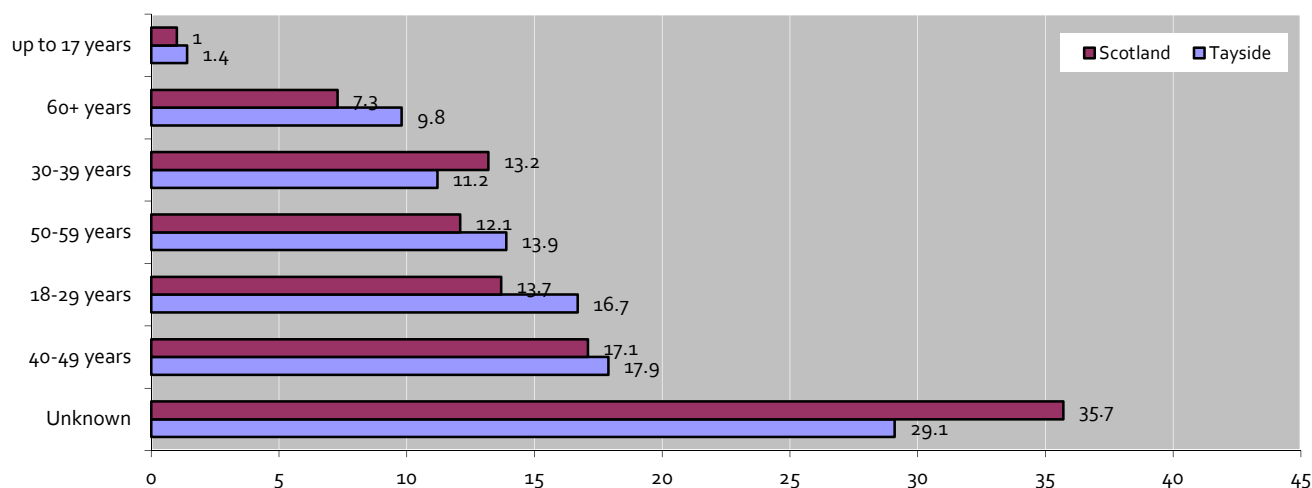
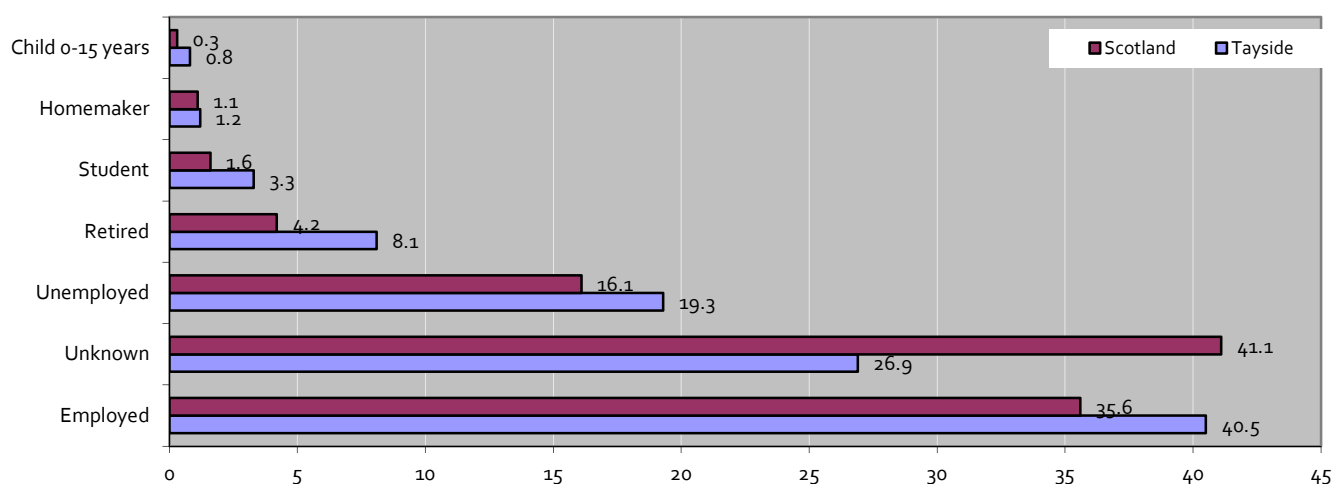


Figure 5b: Occupation of complainer - Tayside and Scotland, 2012-13



6 Subject of complaint characteristics

- We have said elsewhere that the majority of subjects of allegations were police officers. Over seven in every ten of all those complained about in the force were male (73.7 per cent), 21.5 per cent were female and 4.7 per cent were unknown. The equivalent figures for Scotland are 72.5 per cent, 20.7 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively.
- With 62.9 per cent of all cases missing data on the age of the person complained about, it is not possible even to provide an indicative breakdown of the age profile of those complained about in the force.
- Similarly, in the vast majority of cases (80.0 per cent) there is no information on the ethnicity of the subject of the force's complaints.