

FRAUD SECTION MONITORING REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2005/06

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1.0 FRAUD WORK IN THE THIRD QUARTER 2005/06

1.1 Caseload investigated 1st April to 31 December 2005

Number of cases referred:	353
Number of cases accepted for investigation:	154
Number of cases closed non-proven:	20
Number of cases summonsed for prosecution:	9
Number of successful prosecutions:	7
Number of prosecutions found "Not guilty":	none
Number of prosecutions rejected:	none
Number of Administrative Penalties (fines) given:	4
Number of Cautions given:	6

2.0 PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS

2.1 The DWP set an annual target [based on the Benefits caseload] of 30 sanctions. The Fraud budget includes target income of £36,000 . This is incentive funding available from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). We are rewarded for any sanctions imposed as follows:

Each summons for prosecution issued:	£1,200
Each Guilty verdict:	£2,000
Each Administrative Penalty given:	£1,200
Each Caution given:	£1,200

2.2 In order to meet the annual targets, this averages out at £3,000 per month and 2.5 sanctions. For the 3 quarters to 31 December 2005, we have achieved:-

9 Summons issued	£10,800
7 successful prosecutions	£14,000

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6 Cautions	£ 7,200
4 Admin Penalties (fines)	£ 4,800

2.3 This means that we have claimed a total of £36,800 and have exceeded the annual target figure of £36,000.

3.0 STAFFING ISSUES

3.1 The Admin Support Officer has now undertaken specialist fraud investigation training (PINS) and is fully qualified as at the end of January 2006. However, the Fraud Prevention Team Leader resigned, with effect from 6 January 2006. One of the Fraud Investigators has now been appointed to this post, leaving a vacancy for a Fraud Investigator.

3.2 Prosecutions were handled by external solicitors until November 2005, due to pressure on Legal resources following the new Licensing Act, and this minimized the delay in cases being taken to court. The Legal section has now resumed responsibility.

3.3 Overpayments are still being dealt with on an ad hoc basis. There is still a backlog which delays sanctions being carried out. We are liaising with Revenues and Benefits on this issue.

4.0 CURRENT FRAUD WORK

4.1 The Fraud section is currently undertaking a caseload of 104 live investigations. 3 cases are being prepared to be summoned for prosecution. 1 Caution and 1 Admin. Penalty have been carried out in January to date (10/1/06). Work has been completed on the national fraud initiative.

4.2 Prosecutions are now being dealt with in-house. There are 2 prosecution files in the pipeline, with the informations (summons) to be issued by the end of January.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Fraud work is progressing in line with the business plan. Priority is now being given to completing the outstanding prosecution files.

5.2 It is recommended that Members note this report.

List of Appendices: None

Background papers: Fraud Case Files 2005/06

Officers Consulted: Corporate Team