

Date: 3 June 2015

Your Ref: PG 393-15

Our Ref:

Ms Christine Grahame MSP
Convener, Justice Committee
C/O Justice Clerks
Room T2.60
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP



Chief Constable
Sir Stephen House QPM

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Dear Ms Grahame

JUSTICE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PE1510 AND PE1511

I write in response to the above subject and your letter dated 27 April 2015 seeking comments on the effects of recent police control room closures on call handling.

By way of context, Contact Command and Control Division (C3) is currently undergoing a significant change programme to allow it to operate as a single entity in line with the formation of Police Scotland. Part of that programme involves the creation of a virtual service centre operated across three existing sites at Bilston Glen, Govan and Motherwell. In preparation for the full implementation of this new facility in the first quarter of 2016, a number of changes have taken place over the last twelve months to realign call handling to these sites. As a result Bilston Glen has operated as the East service centre since 17 March 2015, whilst Govan and Motherwell have jointly operated as the West facility since May 2014. East and West currently operate with a degree of independence, however there is scope to pass calls between the two areas and this occurs on a daily basis determined by call demand.

At present North calls are handled as they were prior to the formation of Police Scotland. This situation will remain until national ICT systems are rolled out in these areas. This work is currently ongoing and due for completion prior to the end of 2015.

The changes to date have been extensive and have affected ICT systems, processes and procedures as well as staff structures and deployment locations. As with any change of this scale it has naturally taken time for the new model to settle down. Staff have been provided with training in the new systems and processes, as well as live time, on the job support whilst they become more familiar with them. In addition a number of short term support mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that calls relating to matters which would not require a police response are taken away from the Service Centres, allowing staff to focus on calls from the public.

There have been times that this has been challenging however I am confident that this has been achieved with minimum impact on service delivery. The following table provides the last four weeks performance in relation to both emergency and non emergency call handling, for the areas that have undergone change. This performance is monitored daily by the Divisional Commander for C3 and reported weekly to the Scottish Police Authority.

East Service Centre (101)

Week commencing	Calls Received	Calls Discontinued	Calls Discontinued after 120 secs	Avg Speed Ans (sec)	Longest Wait Time	Grade of Service %
04/05/2015	13064	416	50	20	:06:31	87
11/05/2015	13466	313	40	15	:06:16	91
18/05/2015	13872	290	27	14	:04:44	91
25/05/2015	13765	285	56	14	:11:28	92

East Service Centre (999)

Week commencing	Calls Received	Calls Discontinued	Calls Discontinued after 120 secs	Avg Speed Ans (sec)	Longest Wait Time	Grade of Service %
04/05/2015	3632	35	2	6	:03:00	91
11/05/2015	2864	12	0	5	:01:56	94
18/05/2015	2963	17	2	6	:02:06	91
25/05/2015	2917	21	3	6	:02:10	91

West Service Centre (101)

Week commencing	Calls Received	Calls Discontinued	Calls Discontinued after 120 secs	Avg Speed Ans (sec)	Longest Wait Time	Grade of Service %
04/05/2015	17794	222	3	9	:03:33	93
11/05/2015	18447	196	11	8	:03:39	95
18/05/2015	18823	203	3	8	:03:17	95
25/05/2015	18470	366	55	10	:05:59	92

Glasgow Service Centre (999)

Week commencing	Calls Received	Calls Discontinued	Calls Discontinued after 120 secs	Avg Speed Ans (sec)	Longest Wait Time	Grade of Service %
04/05/2015	4263	17	0	4	:01:49	94
11/05/2015	4169	20	0	4	:01:55	96
18/05/2015	4307	28	0	4	:01:25	95
25/05/2015	4246	19	0	4	:01:46	94

For clarification, the following comments are provided.

- Calls received is the total number of calls presented to the service centre for answer, and will not include those that are discontinued during the options menu provided to the caller before the call is connected to a centre.
- Calls discontinued relate to those discontinued after the call is presented to a centre. This can be for a number of reasons including the fact the caller no longer wishes to speak to the police, or they have decided to contact us via another means.
- Calls discontinued after 120 seconds are assessed as being more likely to have been discontinued due to the length of time the caller is waiting to be answered.
- Average speed of answer is the average of all calls from the time of presentation to the centre to the caller being spoken to by a member of staff.
- The longest wait time relates to the longest time taken each week, after the call is presented to the centre, for a caller to be connected to a service advisor. Evidence shows that the longest call waiting always occurs at the time of peak demand in a day e.g. the 11 minutes 28 seconds showing on w/c 25/05/2015 occurred on Tuesday 26/05/2015 when we experienced an above average spike in demand, which had not been forecast, during the hours of 1800hrs and 2030hrs. This experience will now be considered for future demand forecasting.
- The grade of service for 101 (non emergency) calls is measured as the percentage of calls answered within 40 seconds of the call being presented. We aim to answer 90% of these calls within 40 seconds.
- The grade of service for 999 (emergency) calls is the percentage of emergency calls answered within 10 seconds of being presented to us. We aim to answer 90% of these within the 10 seconds.

This approach and performance framework, ensures that any performance issues are identified and resolved quickly through the most appropriate means. It represents the future model for the National (virtual) Service Centre.

In preparation for the realignment of calls from the north of the country, my staff are currently undertaking an extensive recruitment campaign which will allow us to have staff trained and skilled prior to that workload transferring.

I trust this information around the current and future call handling performance is useful to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rose Fitzpatrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'R' and 'F'.

Rose Fitzpatrick QPM
Deputy Chief Constable
Local Policing