

Professional Standards and Integrity Report May 2022

Committee(s): Professional Standards and Integrity	Dated: 25052022
Subject: Action Fraud Statistics – Quarter 4 – 1 st January 2022 – 31st March 2022	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1- People are safe and feel safe
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Commissioner of Police	For Information
Report author: Det Supt Dermont Robinson / PC Ann Roberts Analyst - Professional Standards Department	

Please refer to Glossary provided (Appendixes)

Executive Overview

This document contains the statistics prepared by the Professional Standards Directorate and Action Fraud for the fourth Quarter of 2021/22 (Jan to March).

Changes to the Police Misconduct Regulations	<p>This is the fourth quarter and completes a second year of data sets following the introduction of new police misconduct regulation, and where logged complaints include all dissatisfaction.</p> <p>This report has been drafted to reflect the new data and is in the same format as the main Professional Standards Directorate statistical reporting*. All comparisons to historic data are not relevant and are therefore not included.</p> <p>*Action Fraud data will be referred to in the overall figures to provide an overview of the Professional Standards Directorate workload, however the details have been removed and reported separately within this document.</p>
Action Fraud complaints	<p>Action Fraud – a National Service – continues to generate a greater volume of complaints than the City of London Police. This is a very small proportion against the volume of Action Fraud incident reports recorded.</p> <p>Complaint data has seen the number of complaint cases logged to a total of 194 in Q4. This is an increase against the previous quarter (131%). This increase reflects a change in logging of complaints.</p>

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	<p>The complaints are broken down as 34 logged under Schedule 3, and 160 not within Schedule 3.</p> <p>Changes to the Police Complaint & Conduct regulations in 2020 placed a greater emphasis on handling complaints in a <i>reasonable and proportionate</i> way and in a more customer focused manner.</p> <p>Reports of dissatisfaction are logged and assessed in line with Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002 and IOPC Statutory Guidance 2020 and this assessment can result in one of a number of outcomes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Schedule 3 or early service recovery. PSD will make early contact with the complainant to understand their concerns and their dissatisfaction and, where the nature of their dissatisfaction allows, will try to resolve it to their satisfaction. This avoids a more lengthy process of investigation and can provide a complainant with an early resolution, explanation or other satisfactory outcome. If at the end of this process, it cannot be resolved it may be dealt with as a formal complaint within Schedule 3. • Schedule 3 Recorded – IOPC Statutory Guidance stipulates where complaints must be recorded and those that must be investigated; these include the more serious matters. Complaints which do not require an investigation will be handled in a <i>reasonable and proportionate</i> manner to try to achieve an earlier resolution to the complainant's satisfaction, while others will be investigated formally. At the end of this process if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint they have a right of review by either the Local Policing Body or the IOPC, depending on the seriousness of the allegation. • Referral to Independent Office for Police Conduct – some complaints may be referred to the IOPC and they may decide to independently investigate or oversee a police investigation. The IOPC also monitor our complaints system. <p>The volume of logged complaints is extremely low compared to the number of fraud reports to Action Fraud. In Q4 of the 2021/22 financial year Action Fraud (AF) recorded 132,654 reports on the National Fraud Database consisting of 92,357 crime reports and 40,297 Information reports.</p>
Nature of Allegations	Of the 197 allegations recorded during Q4 2021/22 the highest number was in the category of A2 – Decisions (101), followed by A1 – Police contact (66) followed by A4 – General level of Service (17).

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	Reasons for complaint mostly relate to customer expectation of Action Fraud, with either the lack of contact or investigation cited.
Finalised Allegations	The total number of allegations finalised during Q4 is 178 compared to 84 in the previous quarter. Cases often contain more than one allegation; the number of cases finalised in Q4 is 155.
IOPC Reports	The IOPC has recently published the first annual complaint bulletin in the new format following the amendments to the Police Conduct Regulations. The IOPC has yet to publish a Quarterly bulletin in the same format. The IOPC place a caveat to the City of London Police statistics to reflect the Action Fraud complaints as they are combined. A CoLP commentary sheet has been published on the IOPC website with an explanation regarding the combined statistics.
Appeals	None received.
IOPC investigations	There are currently no live IOPC investigations.

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Table 2 - Quarterly comparisons for Allegations

Table 3 – Quarterly comparisons for Allegations Finalised

Part B - Appeals

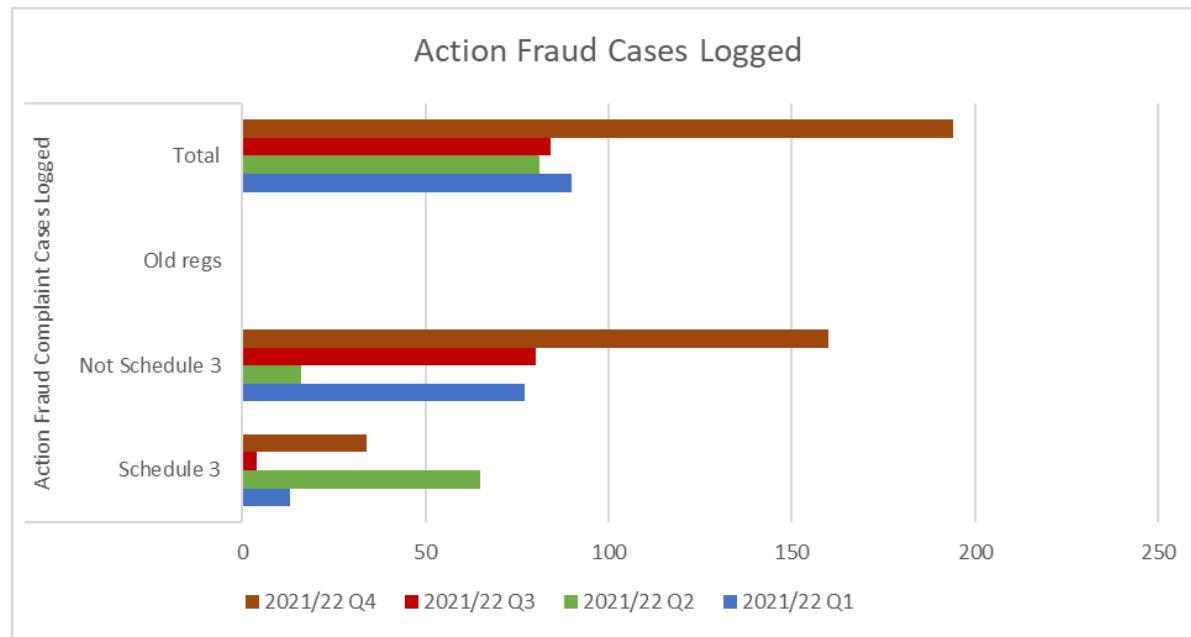
Part C – IOPC

Part D – Learning

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Part A – Complaints & Allegations

Table 1 - Quarterly Comparisons for Action Fraud Complaint Cases

Themes of complaints received

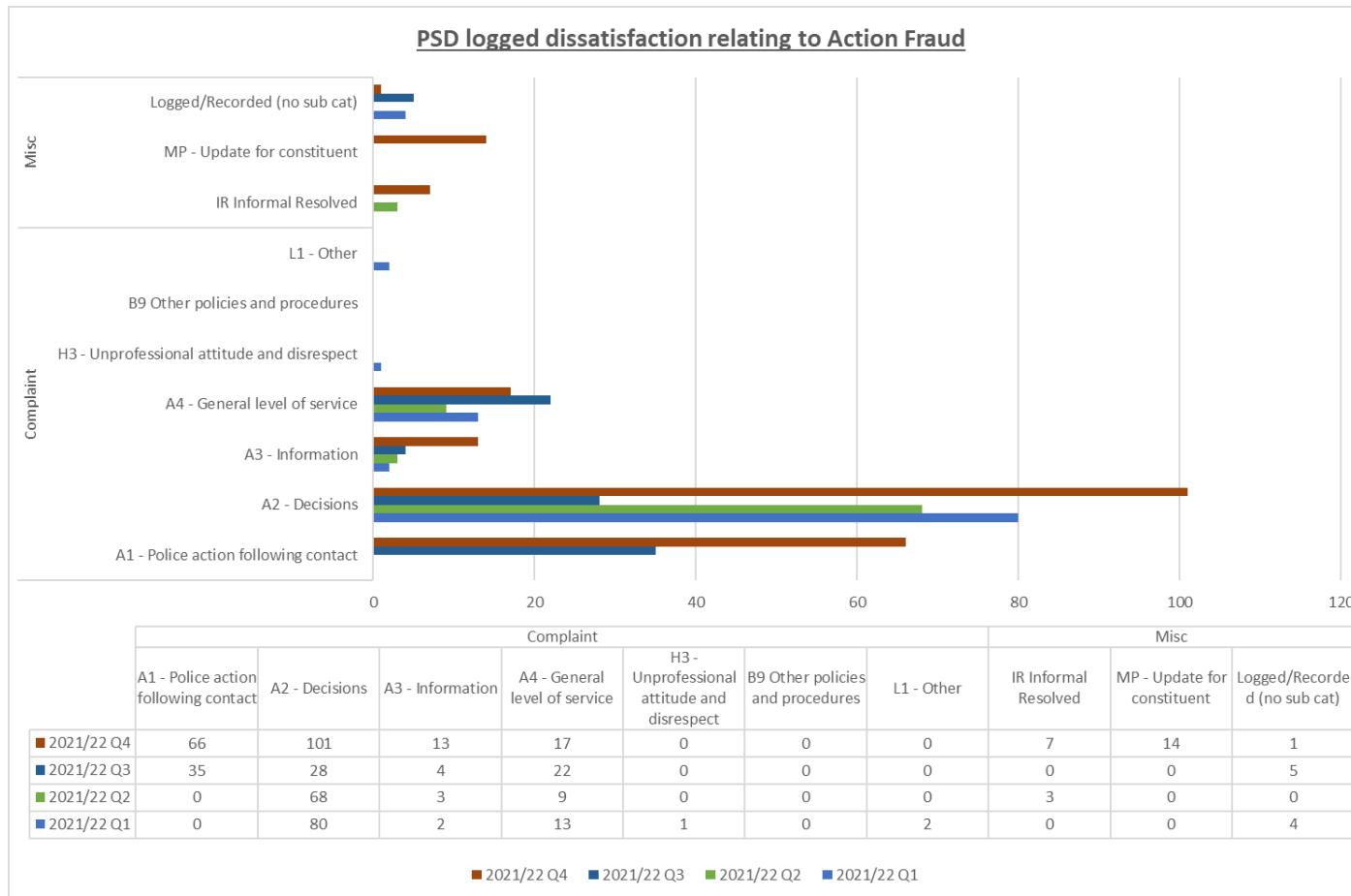
An analysis of complaints and dissatisfaction reports received over the previous 12 months, has been undertaken, detailed below. The highlighted ones are the top 3, most commonly received.

- AF has not investigated a report made**
- NFIB has not investigated a report made**
- Complainant advised that there are no viable lines of enquiry to investigate their report, when viable lines of enquiries have been provided**
- No update was provided, following report made to AF
- Report disseminated by NFIB has not been investigated by the relevant force
- A report made direct to a local force has not been investigated
- A reported crime is recorded as an Information Report

Within any given complaint, often several of the above are quoted. Circa 95% of complaints are made up of the 3 highlighted areas above, with the remaining 5% across all others.

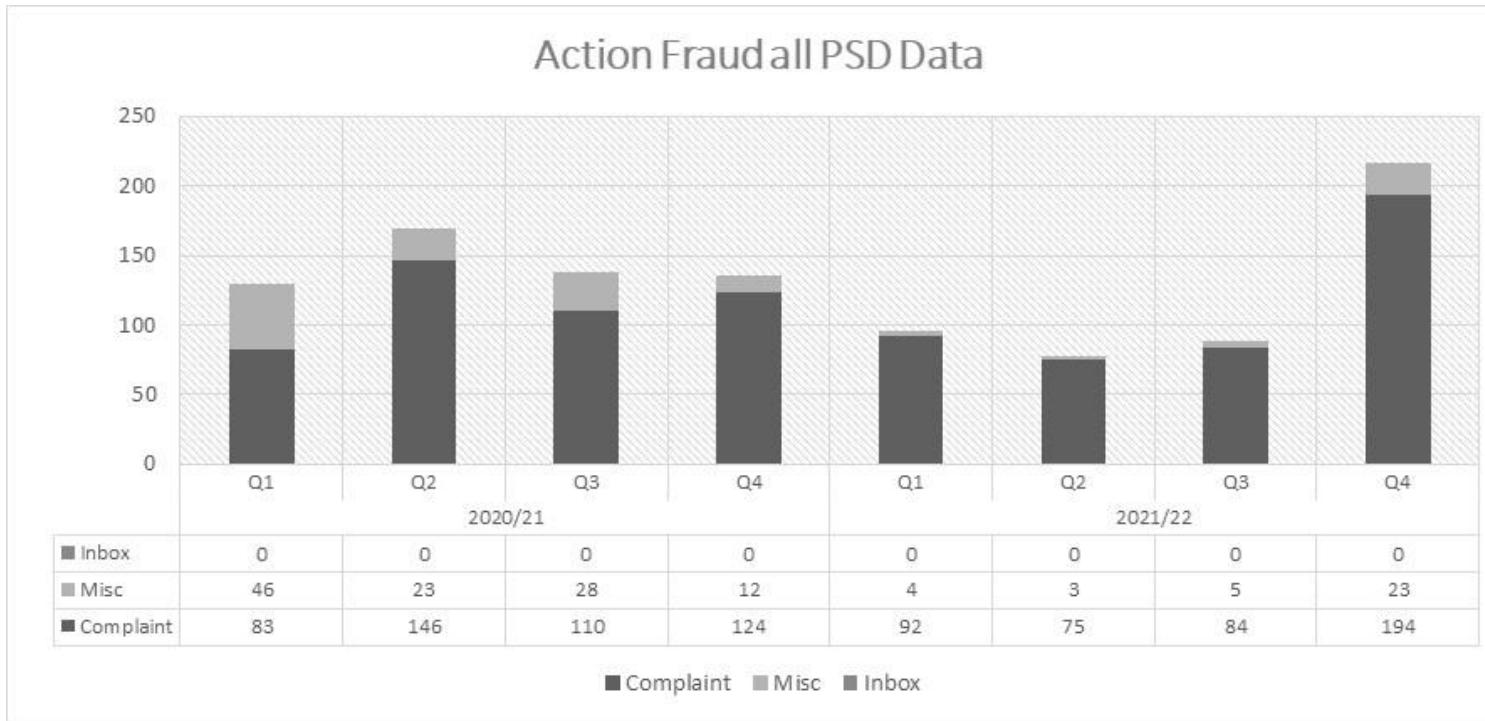
- The number of Action Fraud complaints logged in Q4 2021/22 is 194 which is an increase of 110 from the previous quarter.
- 160 of these complaints fell outside of Schedule 3, 34 were within Schedule 3.
- The previous quarter was an anomaly where more complaints fell inside of Schedule 3, this quarter has reverted to the trend (see graph).
- Recording standards require all customer dissatisfaction to be logged and the volume of reporting. At the beginning of 2022 (Q4) a decision was taken to record all Action Fraud complaints received by PSD and those received directly by the Action Fraud team. This is to ensure an accurate record is kept of the demand being dealt with and also enables relevant cases to be escalated to be dealt with under Schedule 3 timely.
- Additional information has been added to the AF website, which answers identified key complainants' frustrations. This informs potential complainants that the complaints process is not a mechanism to overturn the decision of NFIB, not to review and forward to a force for their consideration.
- In **Q4** of the 2021/22 financial year Action Fraud (AF) recorded **132,654** reports on the National Fraud Database consisting of **92,357** crime reports and **40,297** Information reports.

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Table 2 - Quarterly Comparisons for Action Fraud Allegations

- Of the 197 allegations recorded during Q4 2021/22, Decisions was the highest category with 101, followed by Police Contact with 66 followed by General level of Service 17. The graph visualises the trend of Decisions over the yearly data being the highest category by far.
- Miscellaneous cases are being logged where members of parliament are making contact on behalf of constituents or if not clear if a complaint is being made. This number had dropped since letters explaining the AF system have been written to all Members of Parliament, and the changes to the recording standards in the regulations. However the increase this quarter in MP enquiries appears to be no more than more people have sought assistance from their MP's about the outcome of their Action Fraud report assessments.
- The IOPC published the yearly bulletin covering 2020/21. This includes AF data and is not separated out from CoLP complaint data. A commentary sheet has been included with this bulletin on the IOPC website to explain the data.
- Until the IOPC publish the quarterly bulletins we do have any National data to make allegation type comparison with, or which allegation types will be the highest categories. It is unlikely that AF will be able to be compared against any other National data, being unique.

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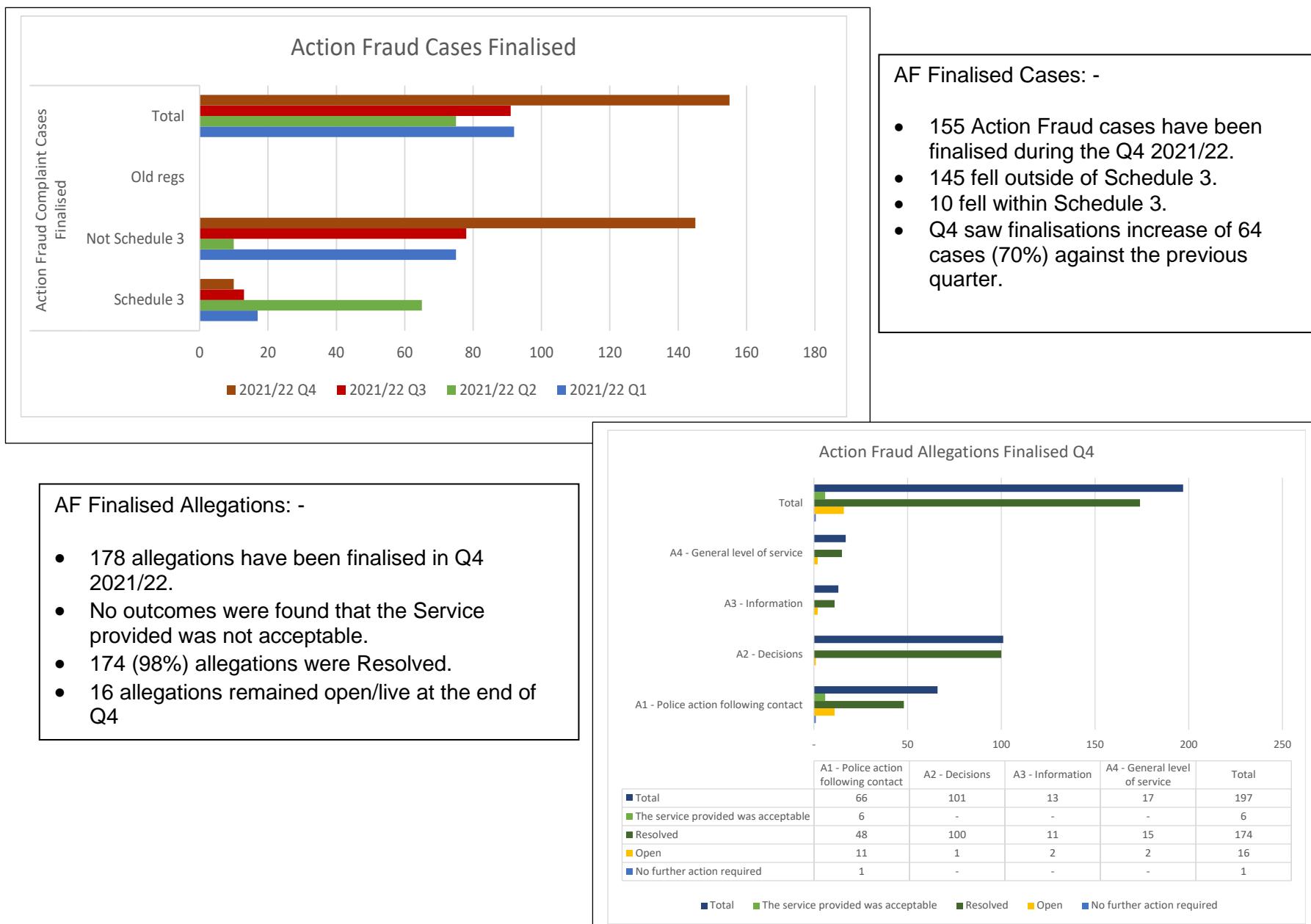


The vast majority of Action Fraud complaints cite a lack of response or investigation. Prior to changes to the Police Regulations these were usually resolved informally through service recovery by providing an update/explanation to the complainant and a swift resolution. ALL expressions of dissatisfaction are now formally logged, therefore as anticipated there is an overall rise in complaint numbers (majority of which fall within the AF service). All forces are likely to see an increase in complaint numbers, which will be reflected in the IOPC bulletins when published. The City of London bulletin contains all data including AF data.

Due to these changes to recording standards, at the beginning of 2022 (Q4) a decision was taken to record all Action Fraud complaints received by both PSD and those received directly by the Action Fraud team. This is to ensure an accurate record is kept of the demand being dealt with and also enables relevant cases to be escalated to be dealt with under Schedule 3 in a timely manner. This increase in complaints is reflected in the most current data (Q4). The upward trend in AF complaints is likely to continue or to show a plateauing over the forthcoming quarters. Positive changes to the AF website and overall communication strategy surrounding the AF service will assist in maintaining low complaints (compared to the volume of crime reports) of this national service.

Action Fraud call centres are working with CoLP to manage customer expectations. PSD is working with the NFIB to resolve simple dissatisfaction with early intervention especially around perceived lack of response. Action Fraud is recruiting staff to assist in raising the expectations of the service.

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Table 3 – Finalised – Cases and Allegations – Q4

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Part B –Appeals

None

Part C - IOPC

No cases been brought to the attention of IOPC

Part D –Learning

Action Fraud Complaints

- Additional information has been added to the AF website, which answers identified key complainants' frustrations. This informs potential complainants that the complaints process is not a mechanism to overturn the decision of NFIB not to review or forward to a force for their consideration.
- To increase service delivery/service recovery, more complainants are being telephoned to discuss their complaint. This is well received and alleviates the need for written communication.
- Within conversations, and included in written communication, crime prevention advice is now provided with details of other agencies that maybe best placed to deal with their dissatisfaction. This has increased the number of complaints dealt with outside of schedule 3, therefore reducing demand and resource required and ensuring that complainants receive the most appropriate advice and response.
- MP's and Home office have been provided with Q&A's, that fully explain the role of AF and NFIB, and the remit of the complaints process. This has reduced the amount of MP letters being received as MP's and Home Office are able to engage with their constituents, without the need to forward their issues to PSD.
- 28 day update template letter from AF has been changed to better inform victims why their report is not referred for investigation. This is designed to overcome the problem with the current template saying that there are 'no viable lines of enquiry' when the victim feels there are, which has been generating complaints (even though this is addressed in the FAQs on the AF website).