

## Professional standards and ethical practice

Ethical decisions and action underpin the delivery of professional policing services. The QPS has a range of programs and initiatives that support professional and ethical practice including: an internal complaint system, a corruption prevention plan, policies on gifts and benefits, an internal audit function, and discipline and ethical awareness training. The *Statement of Values* and *Standard of Practice* supplement the Code of Conduct and outline appropriate behaviour for QPS staff.

The table below provides an overview of the QPS's performance against service standards from the *2012-2016 Strategic Plan* and *2012-13 Service Delivery Statement*.

Professional standards and ethical practice	Notes	2011-12 Actual	2012-13 Target/Est.	2012-13 Actual	2012-13 National average
Rate of complaints against police per 100 sworn (operational) staff	1	20.6	< 20.6	16.1	N/A
Public perception of police professionalism and image:	2				
- Police perform their job professionally		86.1%	≥ 85%	87.0%	≥ 85.5%
- Police treat people fairly and equally		76.8%	≥ 75%	77.1%	≥ 75.0%
- Police are honest		74.9%	≥ 75%	75.0%	≥ 73.8%
- I do have confidence in the police		86.3%	≥ 85%	86.9%	≥ 85.4%
Satisfaction of members of the public who had contact with police in the last twelve months	2	85.1%	≥ 85%	84.9%	84.0%

### Notes:

1. Complaints are reported as per the Report on Government Services definition.
2. Data is derived from the *National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing*.

## Achievement highlights

A new Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service came into effect in 2011. It is supplemented by a *Standard of Practice – Professional Conduct* and *Procedural Guidelines for Professional Conduct*, which outlines the specific responsibilities and accountabilities of QPS members.

In July 2012 the QPS rolled out the Administrative Consensual Discipline Process. This is an alternative to the Discipline Hearing Process. It provides a faster process when a member accepts responsibility for their conduct and the sanction applied.

During the year Ethical Standards Command developed and implemented the Professional Standards Training Continuum consisting of 6 modules and 26 topics of training. Training sessions were delivered to over 2 0000 people across the state.

The continuum ensures the professional delivery of meaningful ethics, values and discipline system training. It promotes professional conduct within the context of each member's workplace. It also equips managers to identify and respond to early warning signs and avert potential issues. The continuum has attracted interest from the United States and New Zealand.

In 2012-13, the QPS received 1 745 complaints by members of the public against officers on or off duty. The number of complaints reported needs to be seen in context. The QPS records over 5 million interactions with the public each year. This means only one in around 2 800 interactions with the public result in a complaint about police conduct.

The QPS constantly monitors and reviews reported complaints to identify the primary contributing factors. Every complaint is taken seriously, and is investigated.

Internal Audit is an independent function established within the QPS to assist the Commissioner discharge his responsibilities under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*. Internal Audit has due regard to Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines*.

The Internal Audit function was performed in accordance with the provisions of the Internal Audit and Inspectorate and Evaluation Branch Charter (October 2009), which was endorsed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Commissioner. In 2012-13, Internal Audit continued reviewing organisational activities and made recommendations for improvement in

- budget processes;
- asset management;
- policy development and documentation;
- training delivery;
- regional administration;
- IT systems management;
- workplace health and safety;
- Right to Information; and
- building security.

The Service's Ethical Standards Command conducts inspections and evaluations of a range of operational functions, duties and establishments. During 2012-13, it performed eight district audits including reinspections and inspections. In total, 114 stations/establishments were inspected.

Alcohol and drug testing continues to be one aspect of our commitment to enhance police wellbeing, safety, and integrity within the workplace. As at 30 June 2013, 1 095 members had undergone a random alcohol breath test, with 2 positive results. Following critical incidents, 36 breath alcohol tests were conducted and 32 urine drug tests. While four positive drug results were detected, all were found to be lawful.

### **Future initiatives**

The Service's Ethical Standards Command will continue to promote ethical behaviour, discipline and professional practice in the QPS through deterrence, education and system improvements. The Command will also remain the principal work unit for communication between the Service and oversight bodies such as the CMC. The Command will take ownership (under 'central function' business rules) of an expanded Professional Practice Manager (PPM) model across the QPS. The PPMs will report to the Internal Investigation Group. Integrity, compliance and performance will be aligned by restructuring elements of Ethical Practice Branch, the Inspectorate and Evaluation Branch, and Internal Audit into the Integrity and Performance Group led by a Superintendent.

The Internal Audit function will continue to reside within ESC. The QPS recognises the importance of the internal audit functions and QPS intends to change business practices so current resources from the inspection teams better support the internal audit function. The QPS will also use external providers where necessary to ensure an expert internal audit process. This should add a further level of external validity to the audit function. The Commissioner and the Senior Executive Officer will consult with the Queensland Audit Office and the independent chair of the QPS Audit and Risk Committee to ensure appropriate internal audit processes are maintained.

Also in 2013-14, the QPS will:

- progress police discipline reforms in line with the outcomes of the review of the CMC;
- monitor and report on strategic risks and enhance the management of risk in the QPS;
- review QPS Awards, ensuring there is internal and external recognition for business improvement and outstanding client service; and
- implement revised corporate governance arrangements in line with the recommendations of an independent review.

The QPS is reviewing civil protection for police on the beat, to ensure they can get on with their jobs to protect our communities. The review is examining the existing civil liability protections under the *Police Service Administration Act 1990*. It is also identifying any changes we need to make, to better support police in performing their duty.