

Mrs Nuala O'Loan
Police Ombudsman
for Northern Ireland

When the going gets tough
CACOLE Vancouver
2 October 2006

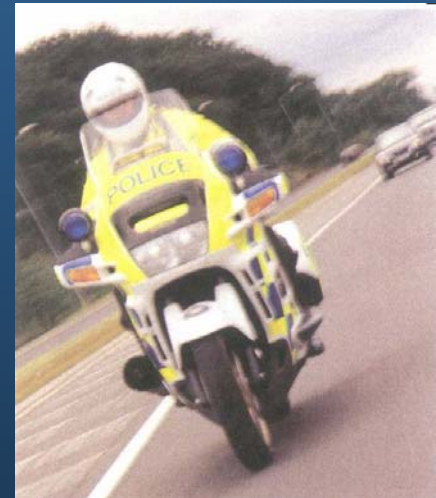
THE INDEPENDENT IMPARTIAL POLICE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

- Opportunity and challenge
- A contribution to the future of Northern Ireland

We Investigate

Complaints about Police Officers

- The Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Larne Harbour Police
- Belfast Harbour Police
- Belfast International Airport Police
- Ministry of Defence Police
- Serious Organised Crime Agency



Incident must normally be within 1 year

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

**The Police (Northern Ireland) Acts
1998, 2000 and 2003**

Other legislation

OUR MISSION

To ensure maximum awareness of the Police Ombudsman complaints service and that it is fully accessible and responsive to the community

To provide a robust and effective investigation process leading to evidence based recommendations

To analyse and research the outcomes of complaints so as to inform and improve the policy and practice of policing

THE PROCESS

- To receive complaints
- To decide how they should be dealt with
- To deal with the complainant and the police
- To deal with any other relevant agency
- To reach a conclusion
- To keep the parties informed throughout
- To take necessary action

Incoming Work

Since 6 Nov 2000

Complaints	-	18996
------------	---	-------

Allegations	-	27651
-------------	---	-------

2005-2006:

Complaints	-	3108
------------	---	------

Allegations	-	5381
-------------	---	------

Special Investigations

(incoming work)

Nov 6 2000 to September 2006

Call in by Police
Ombudsman



53 Call ins by the Police Ombudsman

Referrals By
Policing Board



1 Referral by Policing Board

Referrals by Chief
Constable



211 Referrals by Chief Constable



Referrals by Public
Prosecution Service



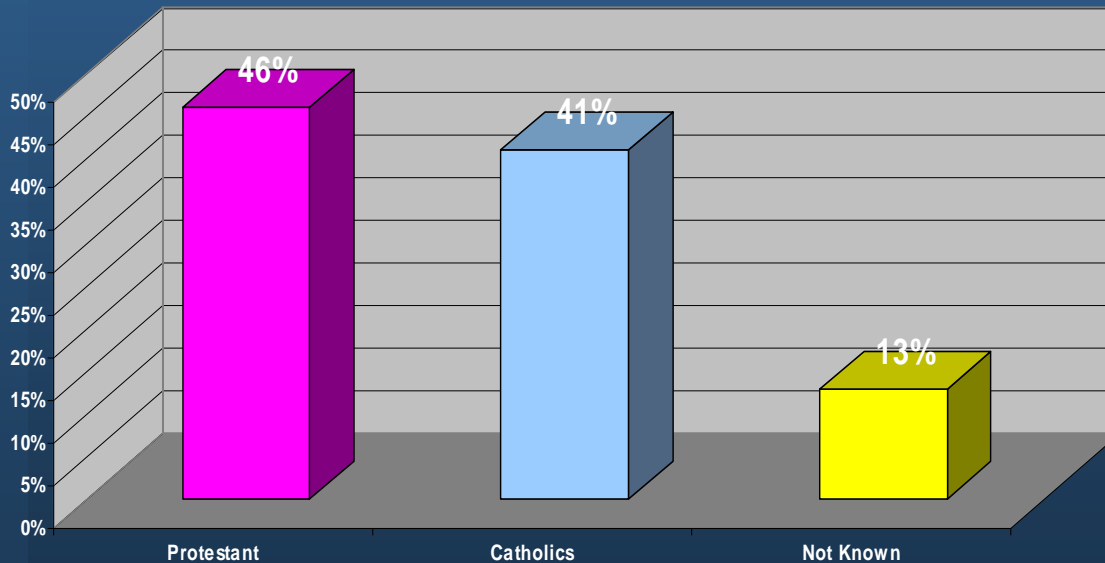
3 Referrals by Public Prosecution Service

OFFICE STRUCTURE

- 128 staff
- Corporate Services
- Legal Services
- Information
- Investigations
- Policy and Practice
- 24/7/365 cover
- £7.5 million budget



Community Background of Employees in post (01/01/06)



Protestant 46%
Catholic 41%
Not Known 13%

What Kind of Allegations Do We Investigate?

- Incivility
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Assault
- Death – murder/manslaughter
- Perverting course of justice
- Theft
- Failure of duty

Formal Investigations

Investigators have full police powers and privileges:

- powers of arrest, search and seizure.
- powers to access and seize documentation or property
- powers to secure incident scene
- use all necessary ancillary support e.g. Forensic Science, photography, medical evidence



Automatic investigation



- Firearms discharges
- AEP discharges
- Deaths
- Other serious issues

Vital that evidence is preserved. Protocols between Police Ombudsman and PSNI – steps must be taken to protect evidence and scene prior to arrival of Police Ombudsman staff.

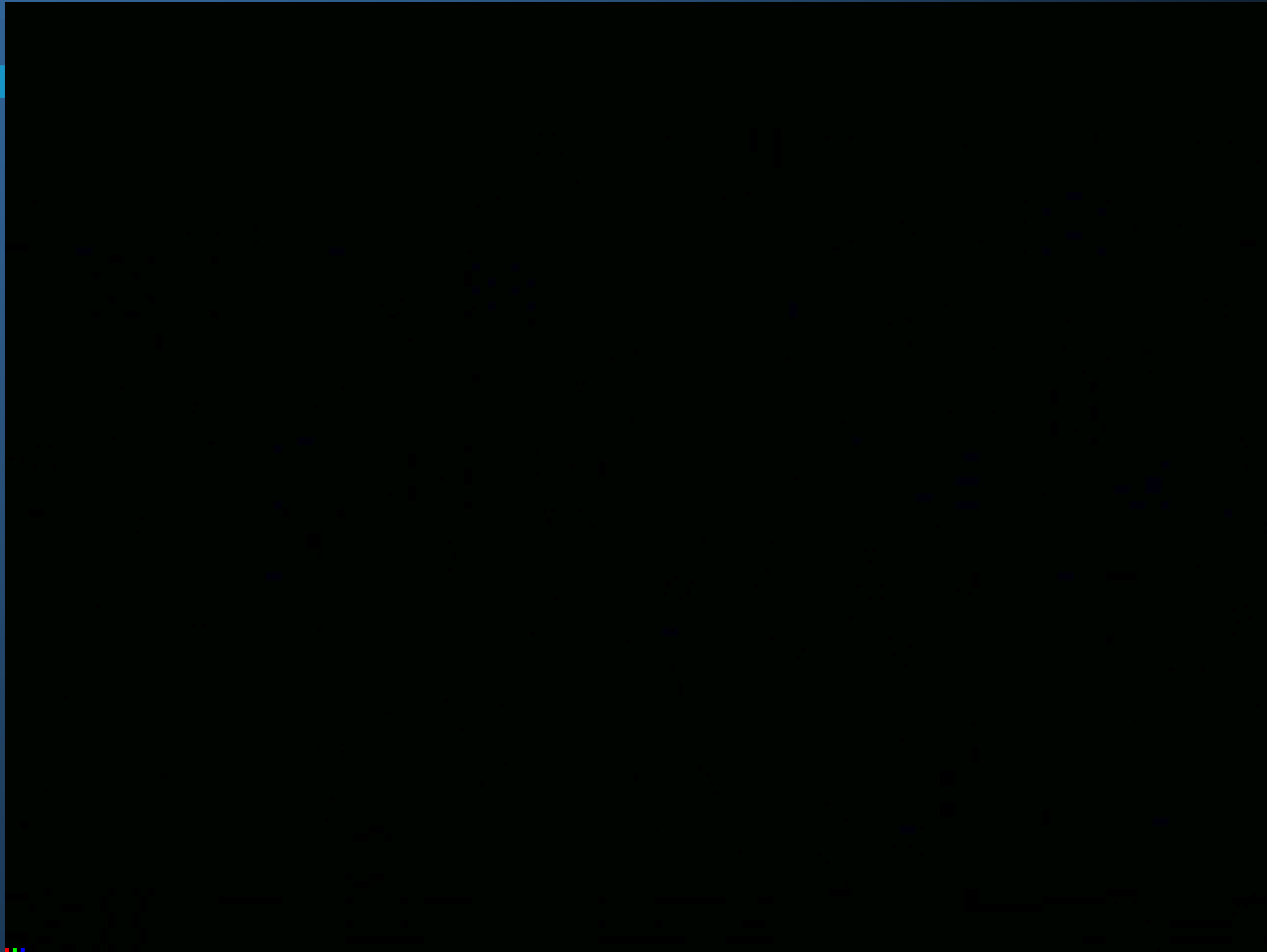
Getting cases to court

- Coleraine Custody Suite
- Landrover

Custody suite incident



Land Rover driving



Growing community confidence

- Sean Brown

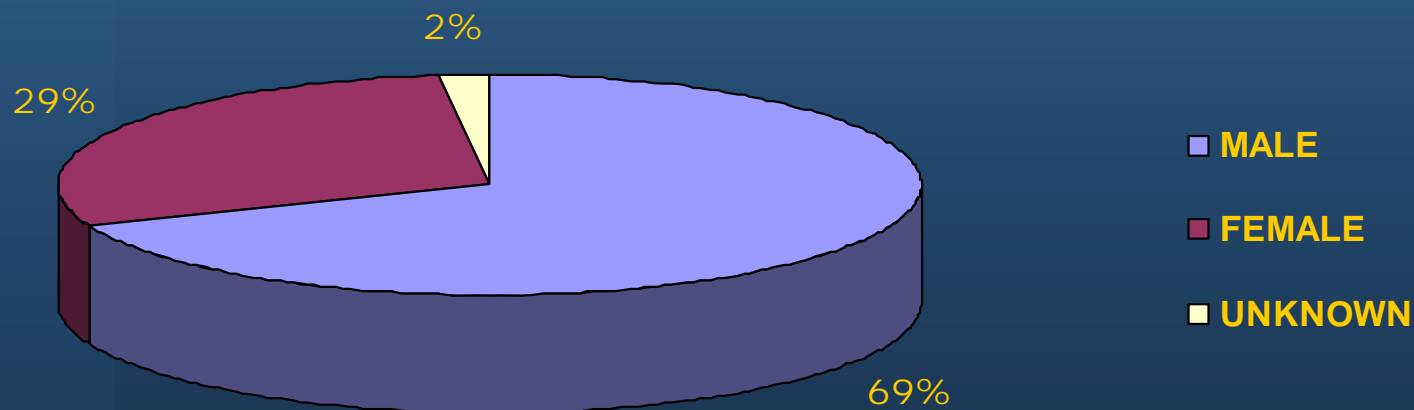
Saying the unsayable

- Omagh
- Sam Devenny

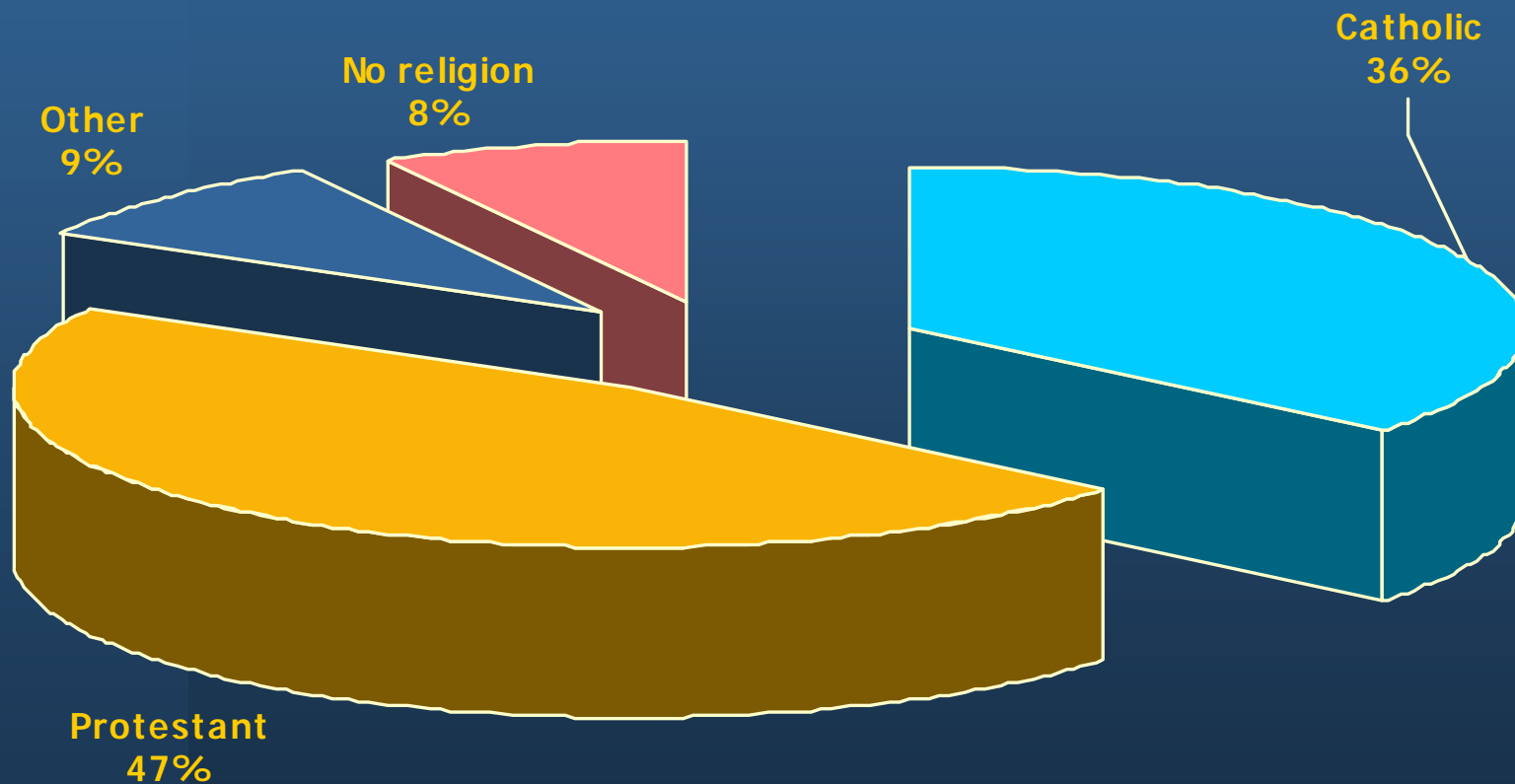
Making the accountability process effective

- Sunday Times
- Eoin Morley

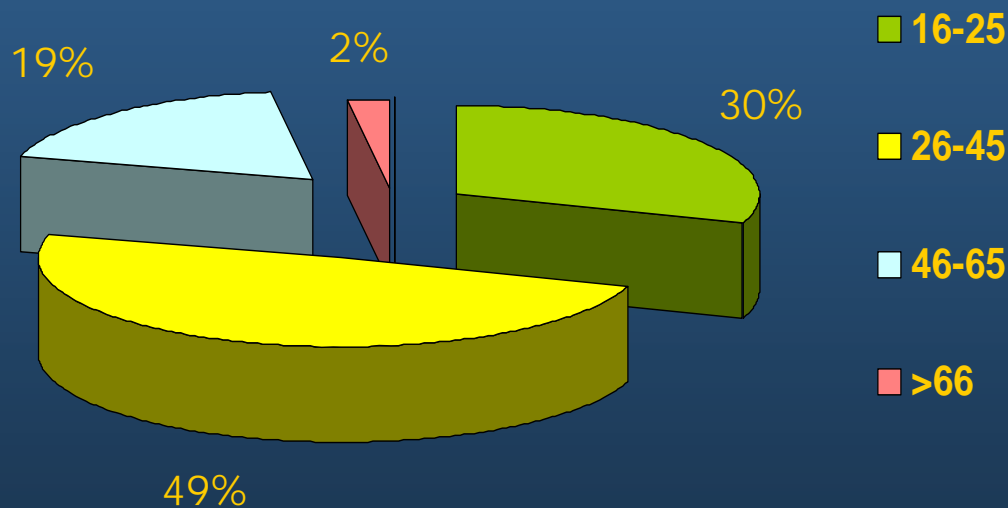
Gender of Complainants 2005-2006



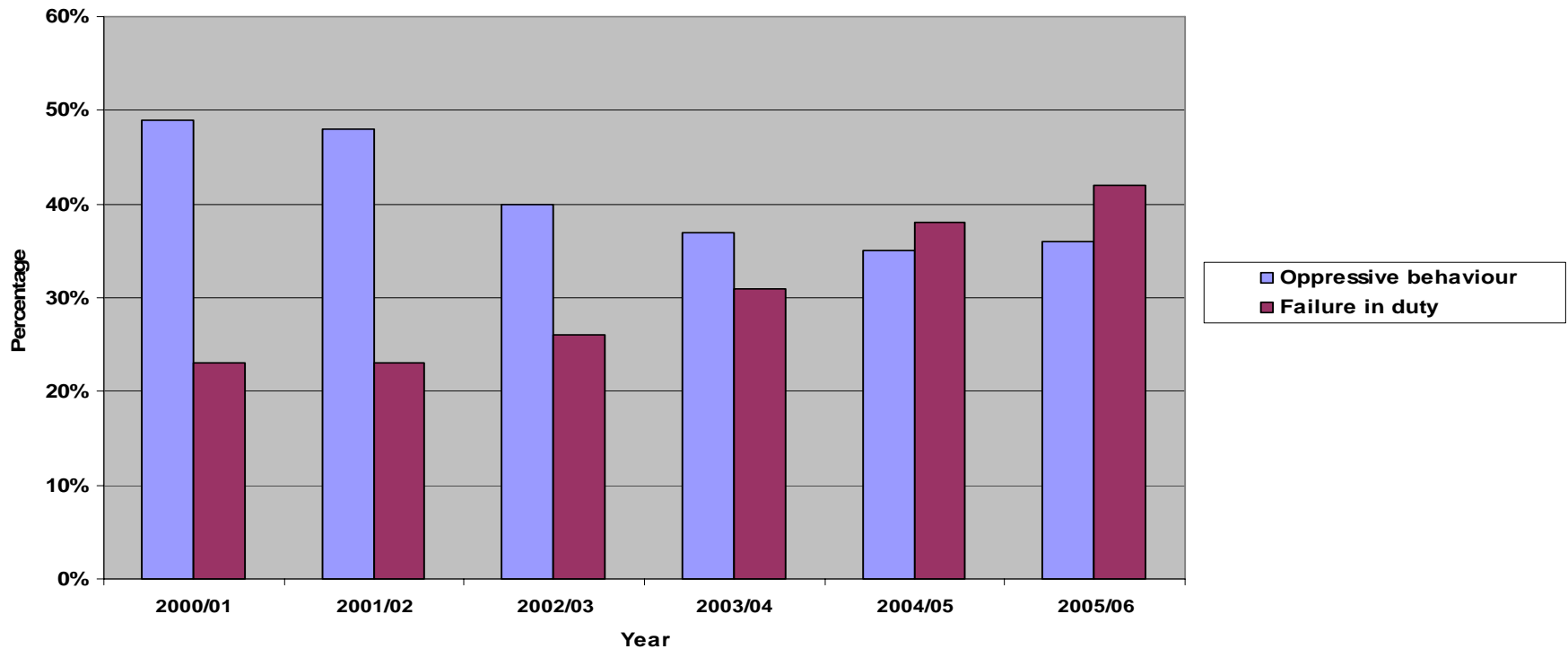
Complainants' religion - 2005/06



Age of Complainants 2005-2006



Allegation Types 2001/01 – 2005/06



Directions by the Public Prosecution Service

2001/02 – 2005/06

Assault incurring actual bodily harm	7
Common assault	7
Causing death by dangerous driving	2
Dangerous driving	3
Careless driving	1
Perverting the course of justice	8
Criminal damage	1
Malicious wounding	1
Procession of a firearm with intent	1
Unlawful and injurious imprisonment	1
Breach of Data Protection Act	2

Disciplinary Issues

395 discipline recommendations
made to the Chief Constable,
since November 2000

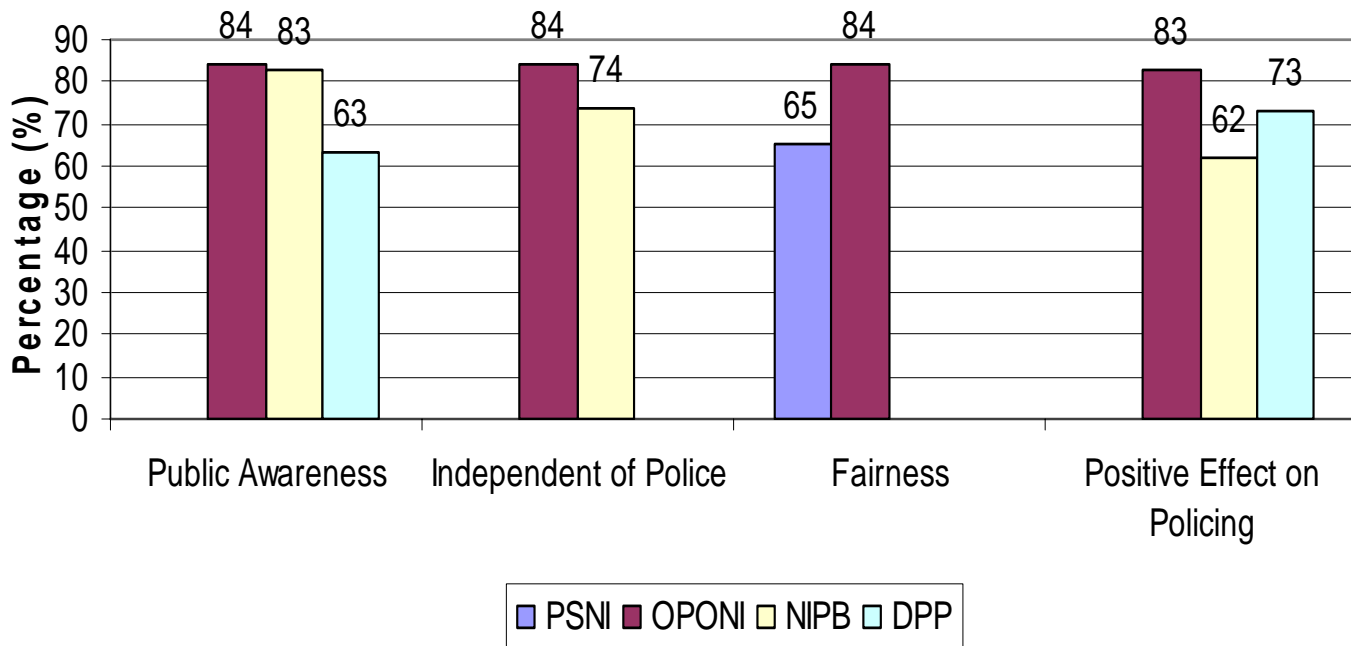
Community views of Police Ombudsman's Office

- Awareness 84%
- Independence 84%
- Impartiality 76%
- Fairness 84%
- Improving Policing 83%

Review and Oversight Mechanisms

1. Complaint to the SoS – independent investigation
2. Judicial Review
3. Annual Report to SoS for Parliament
4. Audit Process
5. Criminal Justice Inspectorate
6. Police investigation of any criminal allegation against the Police Ombudsman and her staff
7. Justice Commissioner
8. Oversight Commissioner
9. Children's Commissioner
10. Surveillance Commissioner

Public Attitude Survey 2006



www.policeombudsman.org

Thank you