



Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
Paper for the Board Meeting on Friday 11 June 2010
Performance Report: March 2010 (year to date)

1	Aim & Purpose
1.1	To provide the Board with an overview of the operational service position as at 31 March 2010.
1.2	To provide the Board with information on the new structure of service areas – see Appendix 1 (page 8).
2	Action For The Board
1.3	This report is for information and discussion only.
3	Recommendation
3.1	For the Board to note the report and key issues.
4	Key Strategic Issues For The Board To Consider issues.

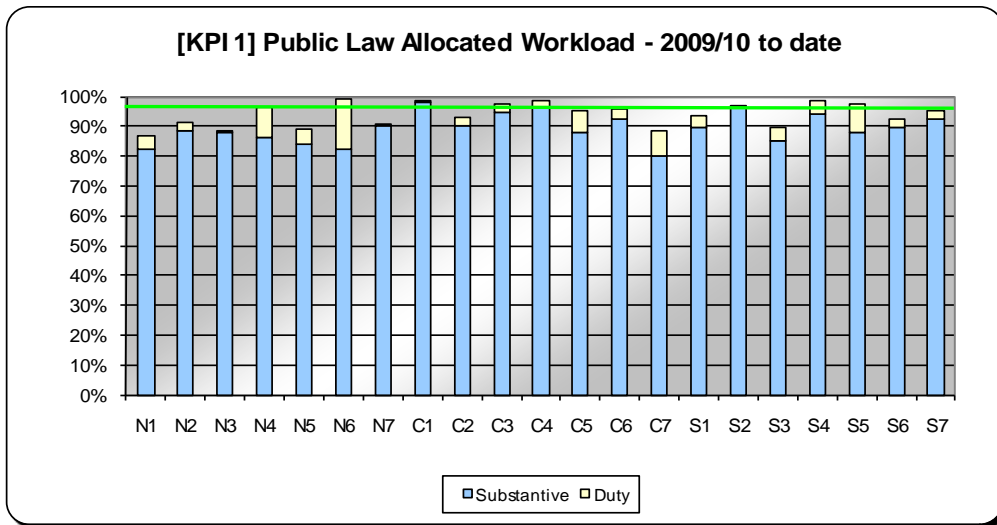
Key Performance Indicator Summary	Target	Performance	Trend
1. Public allocated workload	97%	93.1%	↑
2. Private allocated workload (by March 2010)	97%	91.9%	↑
3. Safeguarding assessments rated as satisfactory or higher	97%	95.3%	↑
4. Service users expressing overall satisfaction	65%	61.8%	↔
5. Every Child Matters outcomes rated as satisfactory or higher		tbc	

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KPI 1: Public law workload allocated at month end

Target:	97%
Performance:	93.1%
Trend:	↑

This indicator measures all public law cases received and ongoing, as a snapshot at the end of the month. All public law cases should be allocated upon receipt either to duty or substantive allocation. Cases should remain allocated until the case is closed, though this may involve reallocation or changes from duty allocation to substantive allocation.



For this measure a year to date average is reported to build a picture of performance for the financial year as it progresses.

Performance for this indicator has increased from the previous month's figure of 92.9% to 93.1%.

All three operational areas have been able to maintain performance in the amber range despite the continuing care demand increases (see page 3 for further details), in part through the use of duty advice arrangements.

The target of 97% was exceeded historically from September 2007 to October 2008, with April 2008's figure of 98.9% the highest performing month since the inception of this KPI.

The decline in performance from December 2008 coincides with the sharp rise in demand for care cases for the same time period, coinciding with the Baby Peter case (see page 3 for further details). At the end of March, care cases accounted for 82.8% of the total public law open workload.

The increase (from 405 to 474) in the number of unallocated case cases in the past month reflects the fact that March experienced the highest number of new applications ever recorded.

For further information, detailing the stocks and flows for public law in 2009/10, please see Appendix 2 of this report (page 9).

Best Performance: N6 is achieving 99.3% this year to date, aided by its Early Intervention team for public law work,.

Service Area Hotspots: N1 (86.9%), N3 (87.8%), N5 (88.9%), and C7 (88.4%), are all below target this year to date.

Comparison: Performance last year to the end of March for this indicator was 97.3%.

Unallocated: At end of March 2009 = 660 cases (525 Care Cases)
 At end of February 2010 = 598 cases (405 Care Cases)
 At end of March 2010 = **649** cases (**474** Care Cases)

Supporting Information

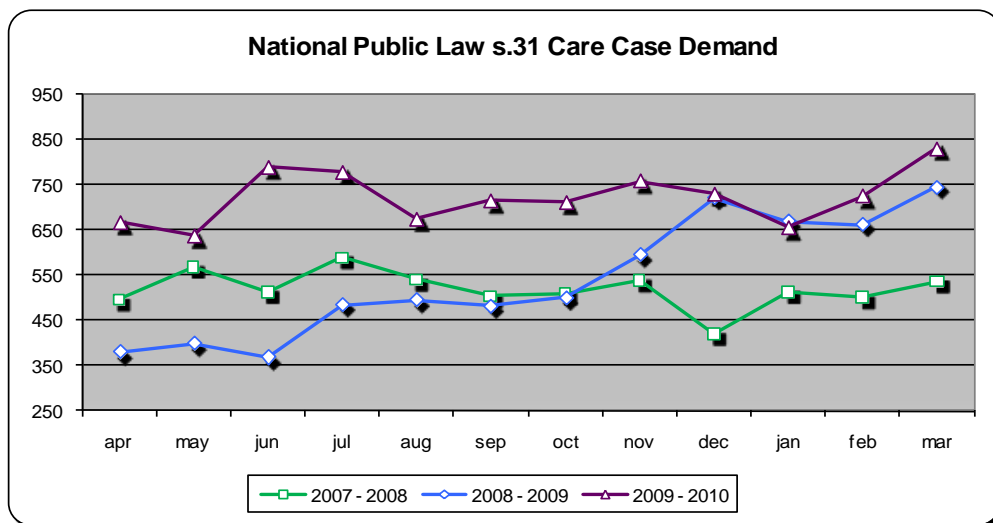
Year to date performance for care cases allocated within 2 days of receipt is up from 56.6% reported in February to 57.4% in March. Performance is up for care cases allocated within 7 days of receipt from 66.6% as reported in February to 67.7% in March. Performance is up for care cases allocated within 28 days of receipt from 80.6% as reported in February to 81.5% in March.

Public Law Demand

Following the implementation of the Public Law Outline (PLO) in April 2008, Cafcass experienced a 27.5% drop in demand for **Care cases** across the country from April to June 2008, in comparison to the same period the previous year.

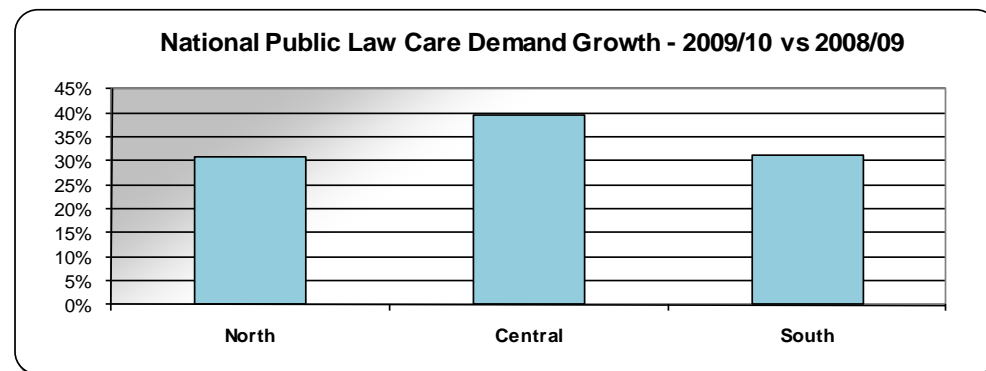
Demand levelled off for the period of July to October 2008 but then rose sharply resulting in a significant increase in applications, coinciding with the Baby Peter case.

Care demand from November 2008 to March 2009 resulted in a 34.8% increase compared to the previous year.



This trend has continued into the 2009/10 financial year where care demand of 832 cases for March 2010 was the highest figure ever recorded for a single month.

The increase in care demand is affecting all three operational areas.



The North area received 2,595 care cases from April 2009 to March 2010, a 30.7% increase when compared to the 1,984 cases received in the same period in 2008/09.

The Central area received 2,886 care cases from April 2009 to March 2010, a 39.6% increase when compared to the 2,068 cases received in the same period in 2008/09.

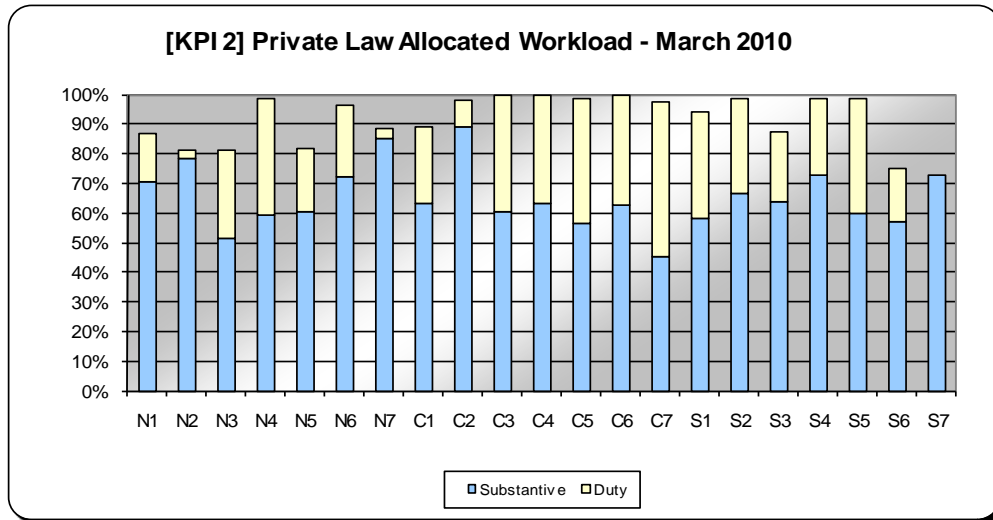
The South area received 3,203 care cases from April 2009 to March 2010, a 31.1% increase when compared to the 2,444 received in the same period in 2008/09.

Nationally, the number of new care cases in 2009/10 was 8,684, an increase of 33.7% on the 6,496 cases received in 2008/09.

KPI 2: Private law workload allocated at month end

Target:	97%
Performance:	91.9%
Trend:	↑

This indicator measures all private law cases received and ongoing, as a snapshot at the end of the month. By March 2010, it is expected that all private law cases will be allocated upon receipt, and that they will remain allocated, either to duty or substantively, until the case is closed.



For this measure only the most recent month is reported because the target of 97% is only to be achieved by the end of March 2010. This date has been selected to give time for teams across the country to fully establish duty allocation schemes. Performance for this indicator has increased from the previous month's figure of 81.2% to 91.9%.

For further information, detailing the stocks and flows for private law in 2009/10, please see Appendix 3 of this report (page 10).

Best Performance: C6 achieved 99.9% in March.

Comparison: Performance at the end of March 2009 for this indicator was 65.2% - this means that an improvement of 26.7 percentage points was achieved across the course of the year to March 2010.

Unallocated:

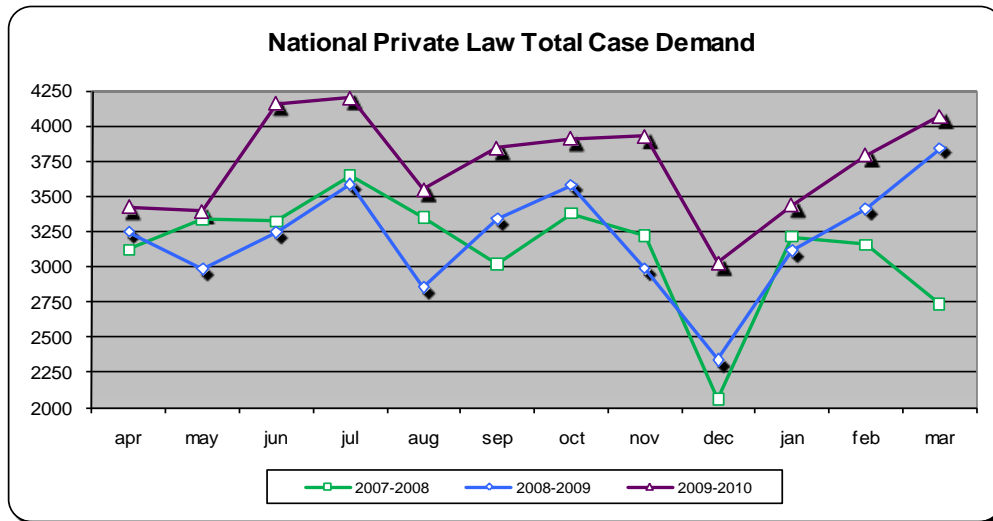
At the end of March 2009 =	9,359 cases
At the end of February 2010 =	5,272 cases
At the end of March 2010 =	2,181 cases

There are several different situations in which a private law case can have the status of 'unallocated' in Cafcass' Case Management System (CMS). Of the six sub-categories, only the fourth and fifth are problematic:

1. At the beginning of a case before a named practitioner is allocated either on a duty or substantive basis. Of the 2,181 unallocated cases, 234 (10.7%) have yet to reach the first hearing.
2. After a court hearing at which further Cafcass work has not yet been requested, but a further hearing may have been scheduled. Of the 2,181 unallocated cases, 466 (21.4%) fit into this category.
3. After a court hearing and Cafcass having been asked to prepare a report which has more than 10 weeks until the final hearing date. The remaining time is likely to be sufficient for the report to be filed on time. Of the 2,181 unallocated cases, 322 (14.8%) fit into this category.
4. After a court hearing and with an open report which has less than 10 weeks until the final hearing date. This category of unallocated cases is the most problematic, in that it may well be difficult to undertake the work and file the report on time. Of the 2,181 unallocated cases, 541 (24.8%) fit into this category.
5. After a court hearing and with an open report which has gone beyond the filing date. Of the 2,181 cases, 288 (13.2%) fit into this category. These cases are being carefully scrutinised to ensure the accuracy and validity of this classification.
6. After work has been sent to the court (e.g. report filed), but prior to learning the outcome of the court case, which enables closure of the case. Of the 2,181 unallocated cases, 328 (15.0%) have had all reports filed and are awaiting notification of the final outcome.

Private Law Demand

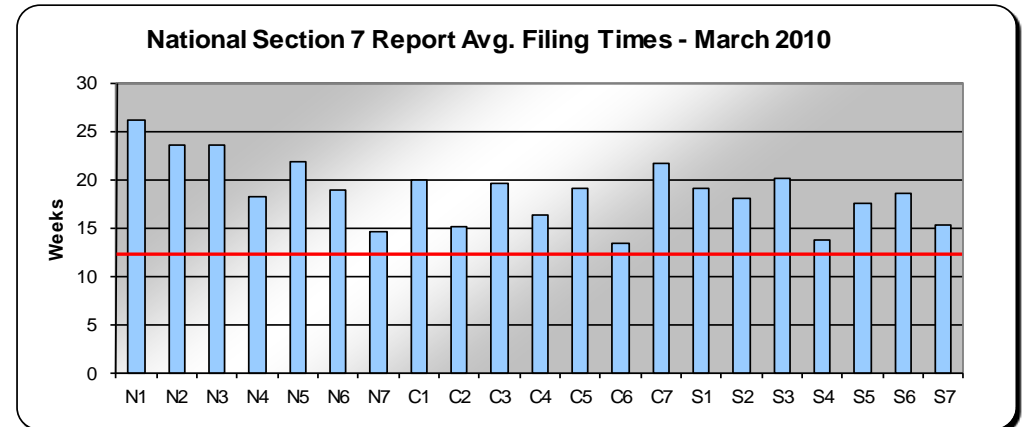
In comparison to the same period (April to March) in the previous year, **Private law case requests** are up 16.2% this year, which is equivalent to an increase of 6,221 cases. The total case demand for the year was 44,722 cases. A total of 4,201 cases were received in July 2009, which is the highest private law case demand figure ever recorded for a single month. One factor in this increase is the continuing work to improve the transmission of C100s from the Courts to Cafcass.



All court application forms received by Cafcass are screened for possible risks to the child or other family members. Depending on the level of identified safeguarding and welfare issues involved, some cases result in no further work for Cafcass beyond the first court hearing, while some others may be dealt with by local authority children's services.

Where the courts request further work by Cafcass, this can take one or more of a number of forms – the most usual type of work is the preparation of a section 7 report.

For the period of April 2009 to March 2010, **section 7 report requests** are down by 15.1%, which is equivalent to a decrease of 2,969 reports, when compared to the same period in the previous year. A total of 16,660 section 7 reports were requested in the 2009/10 year.



Section 7 report average filing times are based on the average number of weeks taken to file full and addendum section 7 reports. The starting point is the date on which the court's request is received by Cafcass.

- ↔ 10% of teams filed reports in less than 12 weeks in March.
- ↓ 25.7% of teams filed reports in 13 – 16 weeks in March.
- ↑ 64.3% of teams filed reports in more than 16 weeks in March.

Rule 9.5 appointments are made where the court decides, in more complex private law cases, that the child should become party to the proceedings and be separately represented by a guardian ad litem and a solicitor.

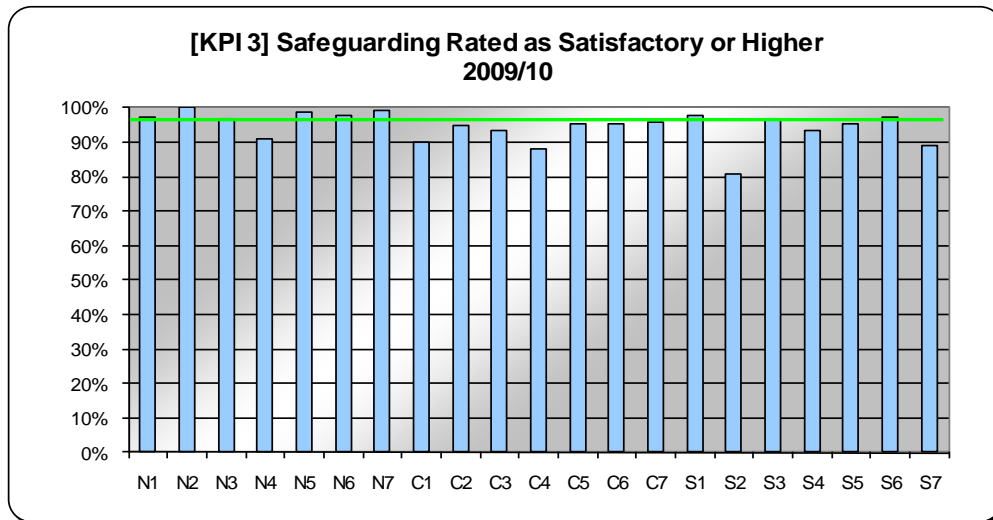
For the period of April 2009 to March 2010, Rule 9.5 appointments are down by 28.3%, which is equivalent to a decrease of 510 appointments, when compared to the same period in the previous year.

KPI 3: Safeguarding assessments rated as satisfactory or higher

Target:	97%
Performance:	95.3%
Trend:	↑

Safeguarding is monitored through routine supervision, audits and appraisal using the Quality for Children (Q4C) performance management system. Q4C contains a standardised toolkit that line managers and quality improvement specialist managers use as the basis for their assessment of the quality of staff work.

All Cafcass practitioners will have a sample of their case files assessed through supervision at least twice within the financial year by their line manager. Staff members with a safeguarding assessment rated as inadequate are supervised in accordance with the performance and conduct policy.



Performance for this indicator has increased from the previous month's figure of 95.1% to 95.3%.

Best Performance: N2 is achieving 100% this year to date.

Service Area Hotspots: C4 (88.2% - 179 of 203 assessments rated as satisfactory or higher), S2 (80.8% - 21 of 26), and S7 (89.0% - 113 of 127) are all below target this year to date.

Supporting Information

Nationally, 3,007 safeguarding assessments of practitioners have been carried out this year to date, with 2,865 or 95.3% rated as satisfactory or higher.

A total of 1,131 or 100% of practitioners have been assessed for safeguarding at least once in the year to date, and 925 or 81.8% have been assessed at least twice, out of a total active workforce of 1,131.

Safeguarding Checks

Requests for Local Authority checks in private law have been sent by Cafcass for 98.5% of private law cases received in the year to date. The average time for Cafcass to send for Local Authority Checks is 4.9 working days from receipt of the case.

Requests for Police checks have been sent by Cafcass for 95.2% of private law cases received in the year to date. The average time for Cafcass to send for Police checks is 7.6 working days from receipt of the case.

KPI 4: Service users giving feedback express overall satisfaction with the service they have received from Cafcass

Target:	65%
Performance:	61.8%
Trend:	↔

Cafcass launched HearNow in December 2007 as a mechanism for collecting service user feedback. It is an electronic feedback questionnaire that is completed online.

From 1st December 2007 to 31st March 2010, we received 1,462 responses complete enough to be included in this analysis of overall satisfaction with Cafcass' service. Of these responses, 224 children, aged 5-8 years, 439 young people aged 9-17 years and 799 adults completed the survey.

Of the 1,462 responses collected, 1,420 answered questions about their overall satisfaction with Cafcass' service and of these 877, or 61.8% expressed a positive overall opinion. The confidence interval for this analysis is 4.1%, which is within the desired level of 5%. The confidence interval tells us that if the exercise were repeated one hundred times under the same conditions, the results would fall within 5% either side of our stated result on ninety-five of those one hundred occasions. A confidence interval of 5% is the standard point at which results can be considered universally representative.

18.7% of services users were either "not sure" or "didn't know" their level of satisfaction with the level of work performed by their Cafcass practitioner. 19.5% of service users expressed dissatisfaction with Cafcass' services.

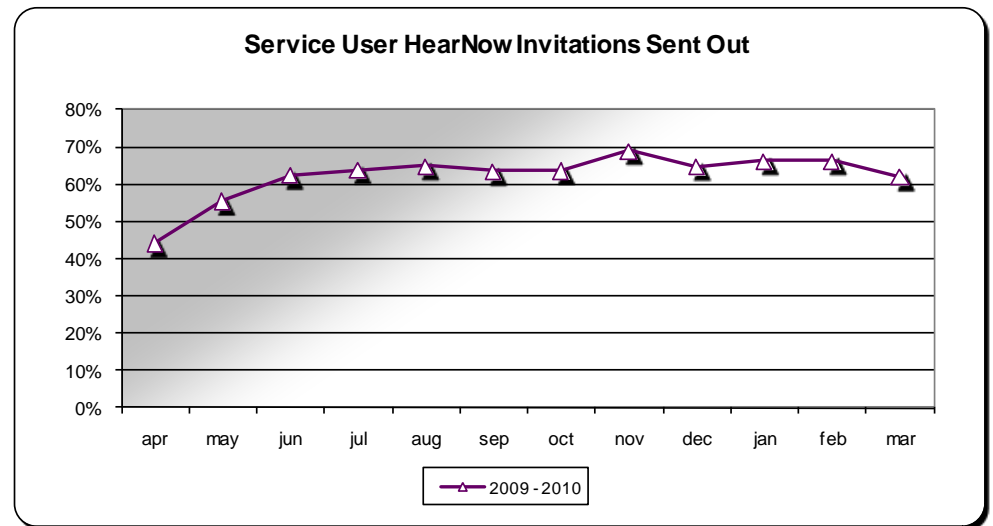
5 – 8 Years Old: Younger children (aged 5-8 years) who responded to the survey were most satisfied with Cafcass' work, with 83.5% (187 children) reporting that their Cafcass workers' were either "great" (58.0%, 130 children) or "ok" (25.4%, 57 children).

9 - 17 Years Old: Among young people (aged 9-17 years), 65.8% (289 young people) have reported being either "very satisfied" (40.3%, 177 young people) or "fairly satisfied" (25.6%, 112 young people) with the service Cafcass provided since the survey began.

Adults: Among adults, 50.2% (401 adults) have expressed satisfaction with our service, with 29.8% (238 adults) stating that they were "very satisfied" with our work and 20.4% (163 adults) being "fairly satisfied".

Cafcass Performance Report: March 2010 (year to date)

The graph below displays the percentage of service users who are being given the opportunity to record their feedback via HearNow. The introduction of welcome packs in April 2009 initially increased the number of HearNow invitations sent to service users, although this has levelled off in recent months. Following feedback from staff, the contents of the welcome packs have been revised into a more simplified format, which was introduced in November 2009. The revised packs are expected to have a positive impact on the number of questionnaires that will be completed in the future.



KPI 5: ECM outcomes rated as satisfactory or higher

The Every Child Matters checklist section of the case plan was to have been assessed through audit. The proposal that Cafcass, for 2010/11, instead introduces a KPI that is focused on the extent to which Cafcass' section 16A Children Act 1989 risk assessment duty has now been approved by Ministers.

APPENDIX 1 – Cafcass Service Area Map 2009/10



North Teams

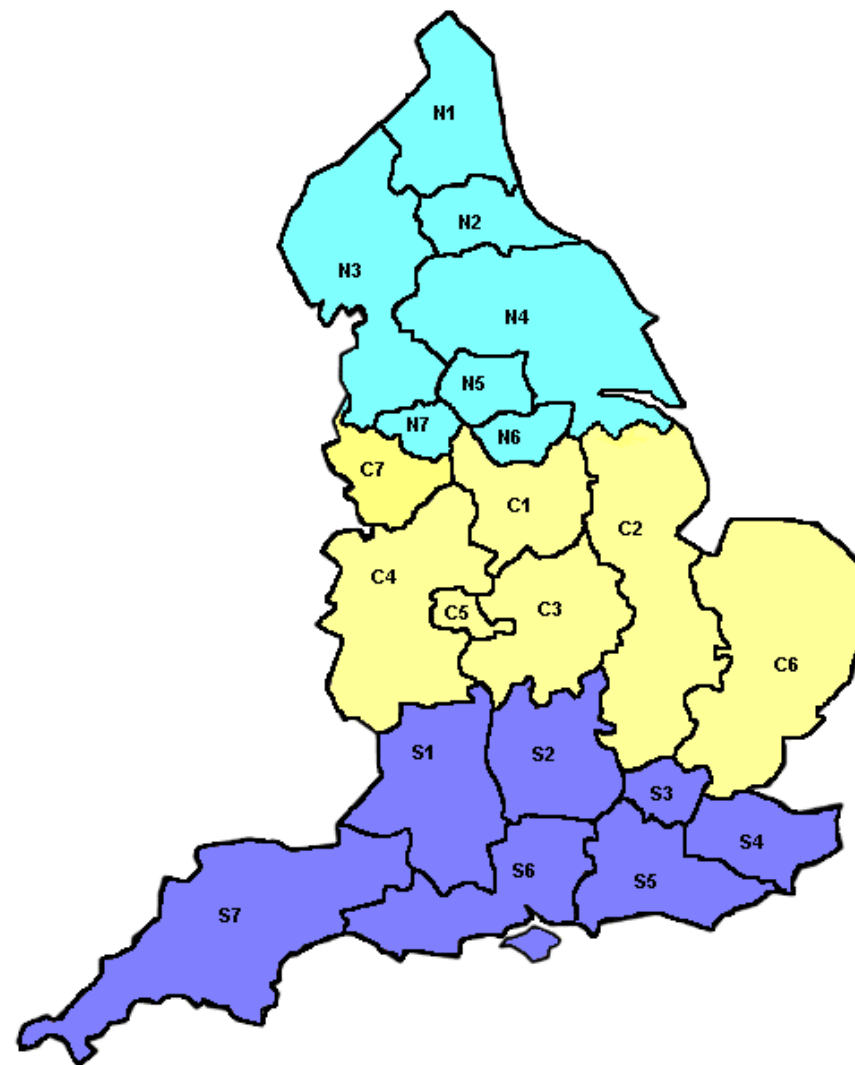
- N1:** North & South of Tyne
- N2:** Durham & Tees Valley
- N3:** Blackburn, Cumbria, Lancaster/Blackpool, & Preston
- N4:** Hull, South Humberside, & York
- N5:** Batley, Bradford, Leeds, & Wakefield
- N6:** Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, & Sheffield
- N7:** Bolton, Manchester, Rochdale, & Stockport

Central Teams

- C1:** Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire
- C2:** Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, & Cambridgeshire
- C3:** Coventry, Leicestershire, & Northamptonshire
- C4:** Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke, & Worcestershire
- C5:** Birmingham & Black Country
- C6:** Chelmsford, Colchester, Norfolk, & Suffolk
- C7:** Cheshire, Liverpool, Southport, & St Helens

South Teams

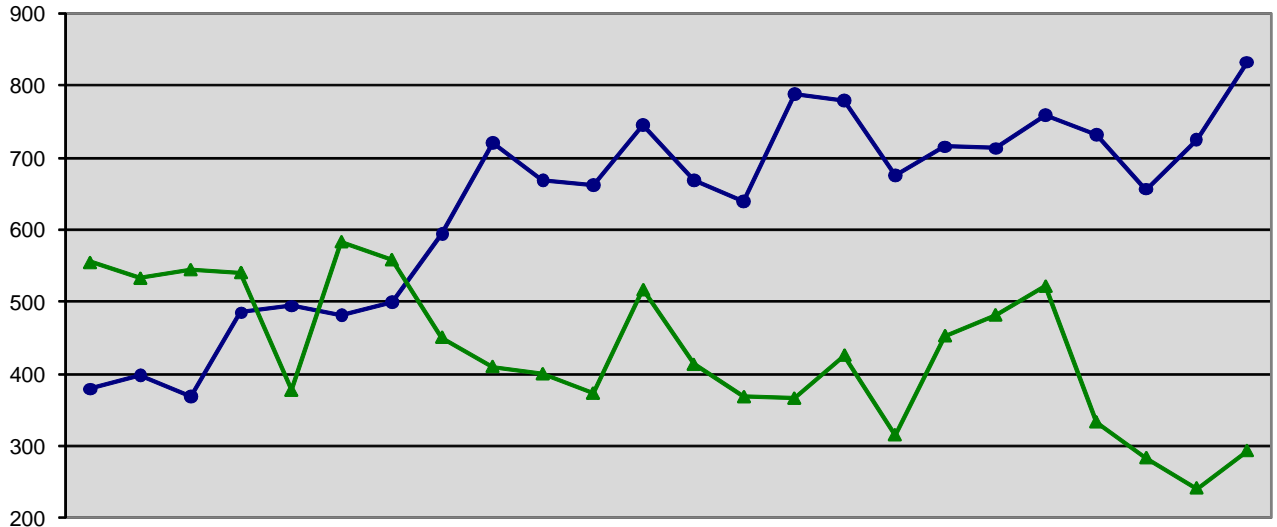
- S1:** Avon, Gloucestershire, & Wiltshire
- S2:** Berkshire, Milton Keynes, & Oxford
- S3:** Greater London & High Court Team
- S4:** East & West Kent
- S5:** East & West Sussex, & Surrey
- S6:** Dorset, Isle of Wight, North Hampshire, Portsmouth, & Southampton
- S7:** Cornwall, Exeter, Plymouth, & Somerset



APPENDIX 2 - Cafcass 2009/10 Stocks & Flows – Public Law

Graph 1

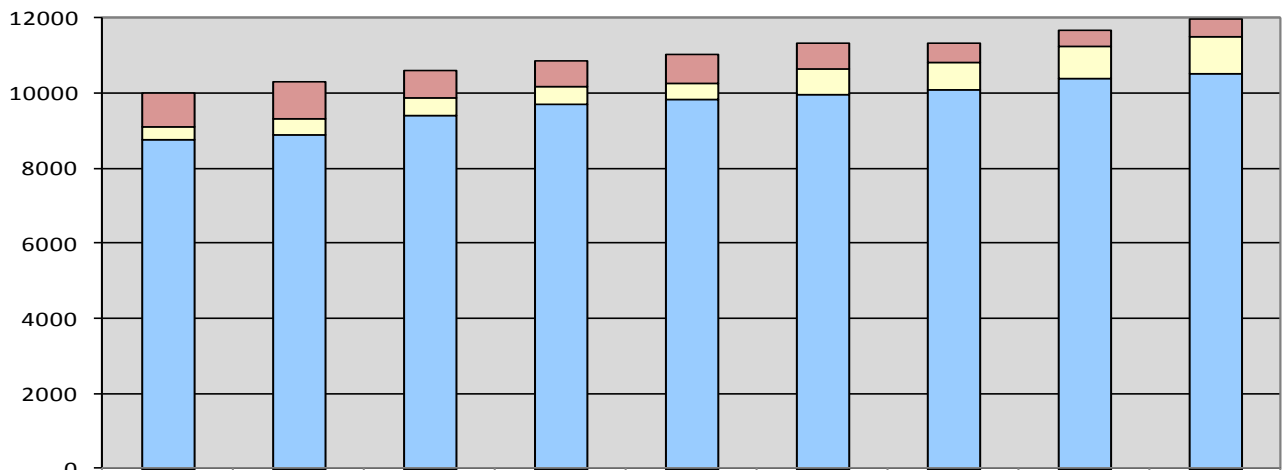
National - Public Law Care Case Trends



	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10
● Demand	379	398	368	485	494	482	500	594	721	668	662	745	669	639	789	779	676	715	713	759	732	656	725	832
▲ Closures	555	533	545	541	377	584	559	451	410	400	373	517	413	368	366	426	315	453	482	522	333	283	241	293

Graph 2

National - Public Law Care Workload



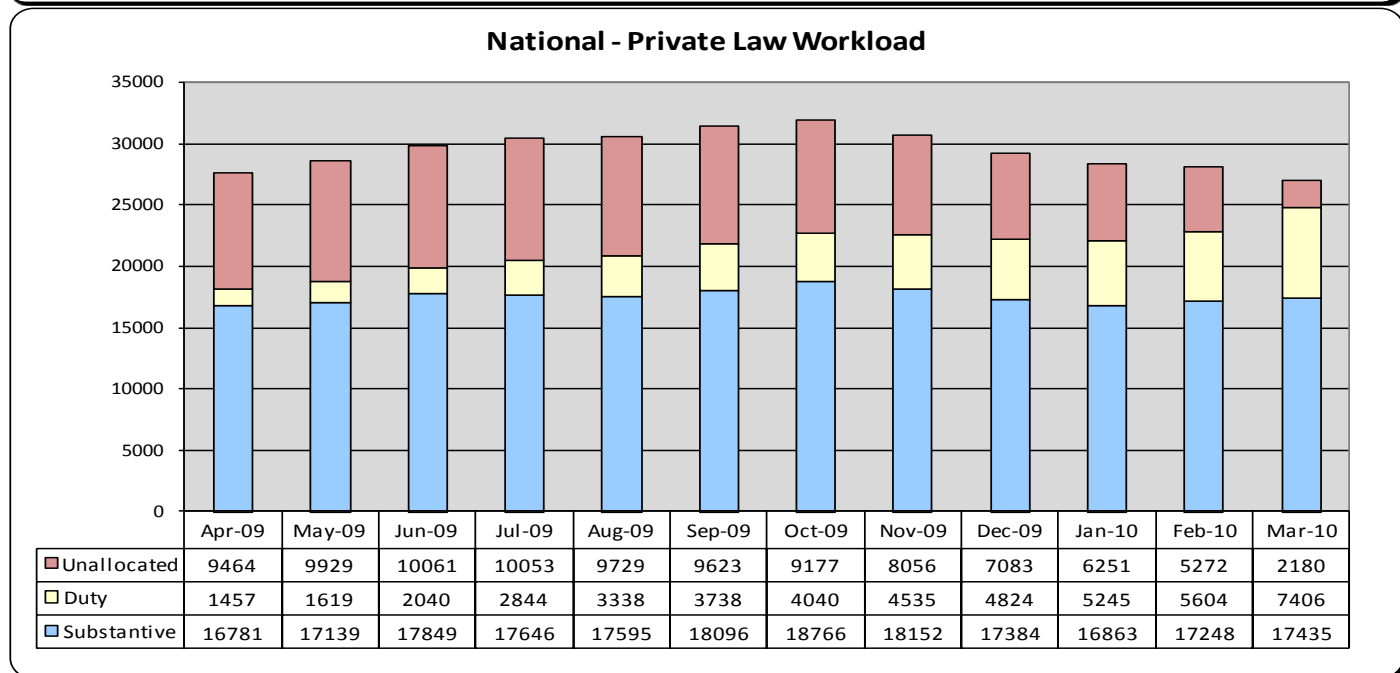
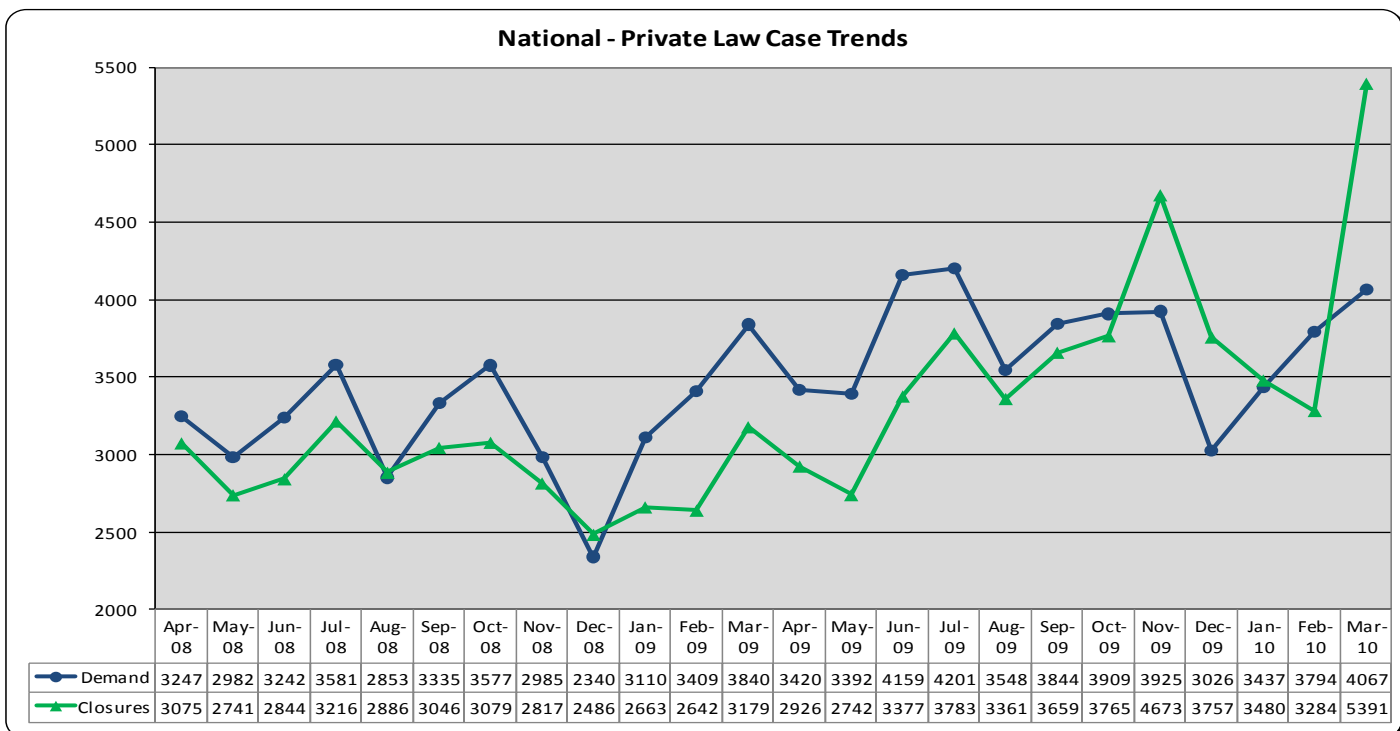
	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10
■ Unallocated	877	979	741	709	774	689	549	430	474
■ Duty	381	442	471	443	439	676	716	850	991
■ Substantive	8747	8889	9415	9723	9819	9981	10090	10383	10518

	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unallocated	8.8	9.5	7	6.5	7	6	4.8	3.7	3.9
Duty	3.8	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.0	6.0	6.3	7.3	8.3
Substantive	87.4	86.2	88.6	89.4	89.0	88.0	88.9	89.0	87.8

The above graphs demonstrate the unprecedented increase in Care applications since November 2008, linked to the publicity surrounding the death of Baby Peter. Demand for Care applications has averaged 700 a month, although with some slight seasonal variations. Graph 1 shows that the number of new cases entering the system has substantially exceeded the number leaving the system in each month since October 2008. The result of this has been a steady increase in the size of the overall national Public Law Workload, evidenced in Graph 2, which also shows the reduction of unallocated cases since summer 2009, and the increased use of duty schemes. On the whole, Cafcass is now dealing, on a substantively allocated basis (Children's Guardian appointed), with around 20% or 2,000 more public law cases in March 2010 compared to April 2009.

N.B. Collection of Care workload data began in July 2009, in accordance with the publication of the President's Interim Guidance in the same month.

APPENDIX 3 - Cafcass 2009/10 Stocks & Flows – Private Law



	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
Unallocated	34.1	34.7	33.3	32.9	31.7	30.6	28.7	26.2	24.2	22.0	18.8	8.1
Duty	5.3	5.6	6.8	9.3	10.9	11.9	12.6	14.8	16.5	18.5	19.9	27.4
Substantive	60.6	59.7	59.6	57.8	57.4	57.5	58.7	59.0	59.3	59.5	61.3	64.5

The above graphs clearly show the progress that has been made in reducing the private law backlog, even in the face of rising demand. The main contributing factors to this are that of the acceleration of case closures shown in Graph 3, and the increase of duty allocation schemes evidenced in Graph 4.

The revised model of private law work, combined with the increased administration efficiency in closing completed cases, has enabled Cafcass to ensure that case closure levels have run ahead of the number of new cases in the period since October 2009. The use of private law duty schemes, in ways that have proved acceptable to senior local judges, has steadily increased during 2009/10.