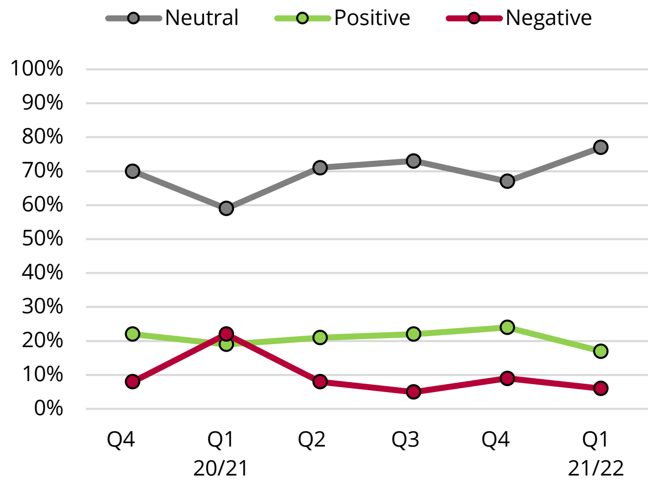
Core measures

External

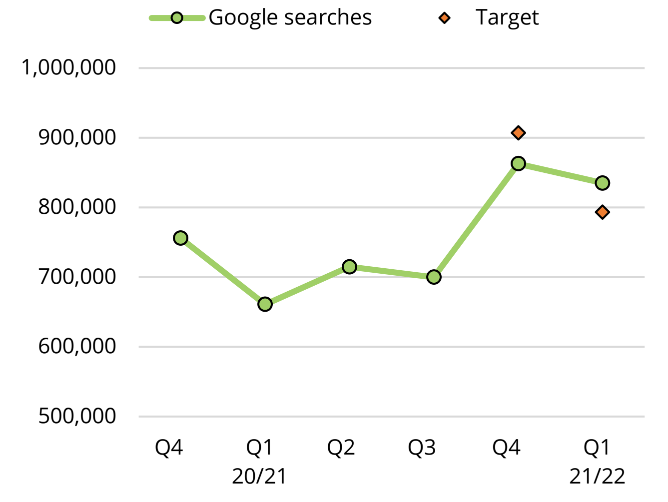
Sentiment of media coverage

Target: Positive should exceed negative



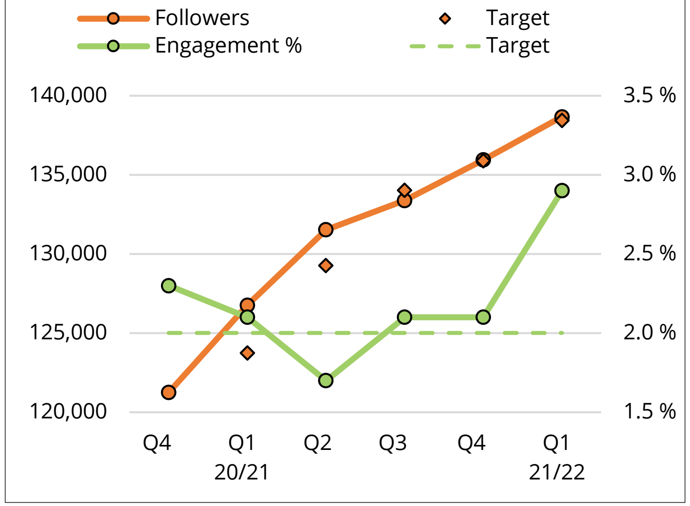
Click throughs to our website from Google searches

Target: 20% up from the same quarter a year earlier



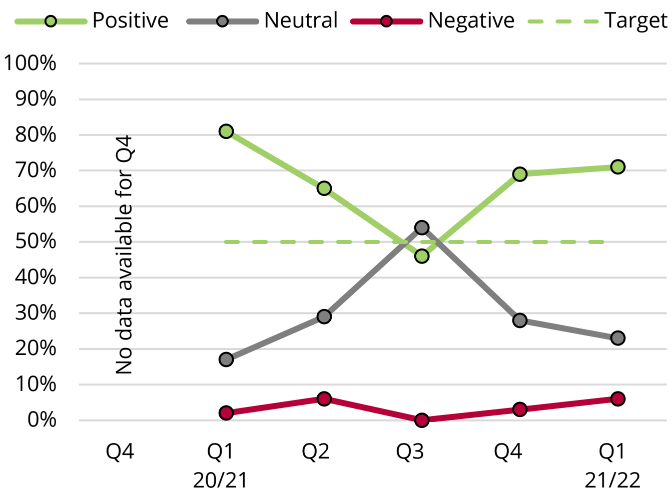
Social media engagements and followers

Target: Followers - 2,500 increase per Q, Engagement % - 2%



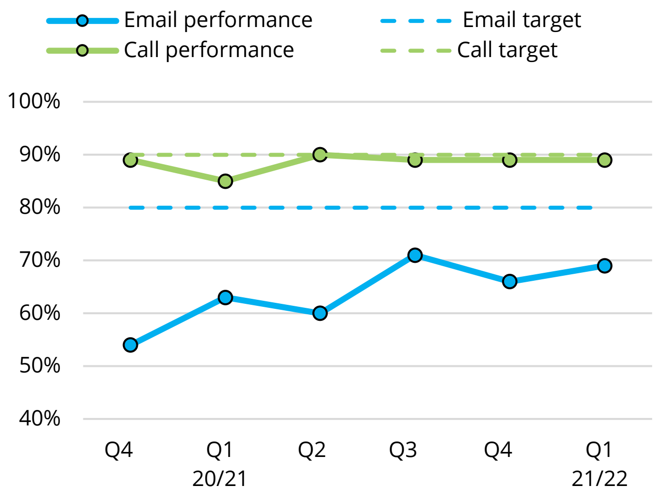
How stakeholders who attend our events view the SRA

Target: Positive feedback 50%



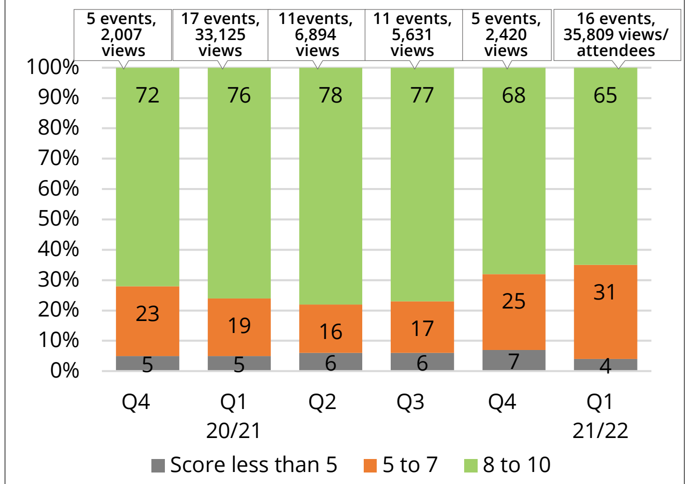
Customer feedback on our Contact Centre calls and emails

Target: % of satisfied responses – calls 90%, emails 80%



Events feedback – usefulness rating

Target: 60% score of 8 or above



Scale: 1 = not useful at all, 10 = extremely useful

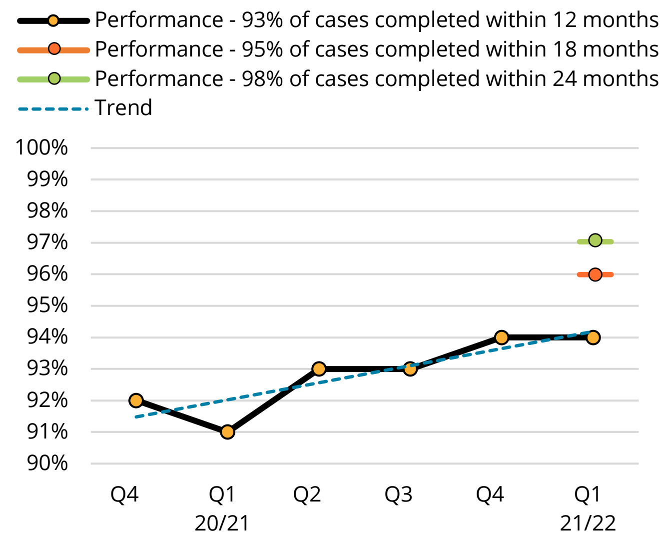
Narrative

1. Events feedback - from September 2021 this includes virtual and in person.
2. Telephone satisfaction rate increased month on month (86% Nov, 88% Dec, 91% Jan) as we moved away from the main PCRE window.
3. Email verbatim feedback indicates a lack of satisfaction around processes that are impacted by defects in mySRA – especially in November and in January. Our satisfaction in December was much higher than the other two months, as we were responding to emails within a day or two.

Delivery

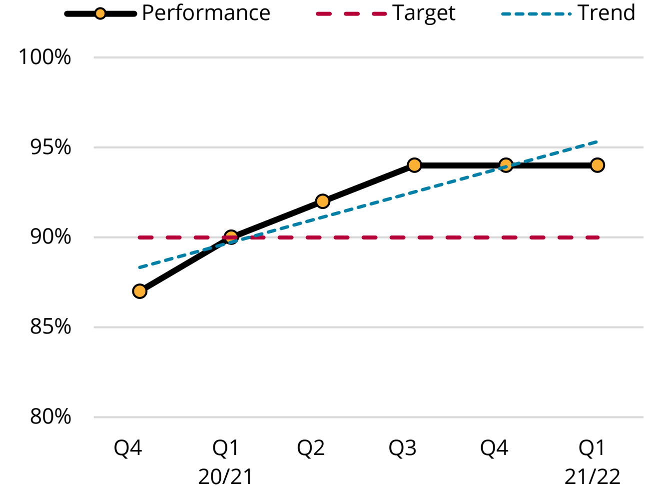
Core measures

Investigation and Enforcement



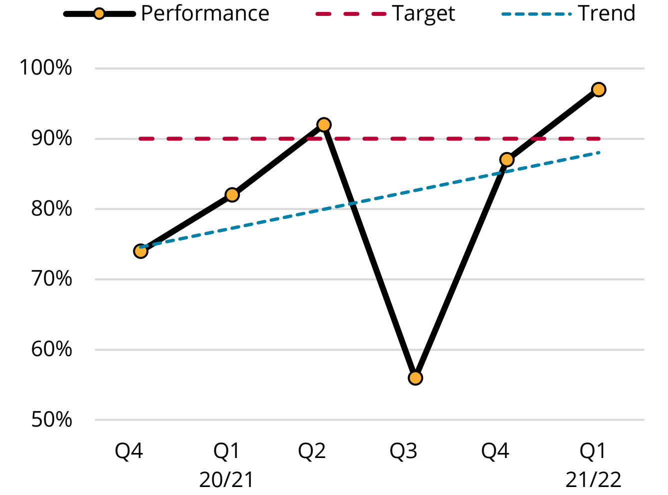
Firm based authorisation

Target: 90% of medium and high risk applications dealt with in 3/6 months



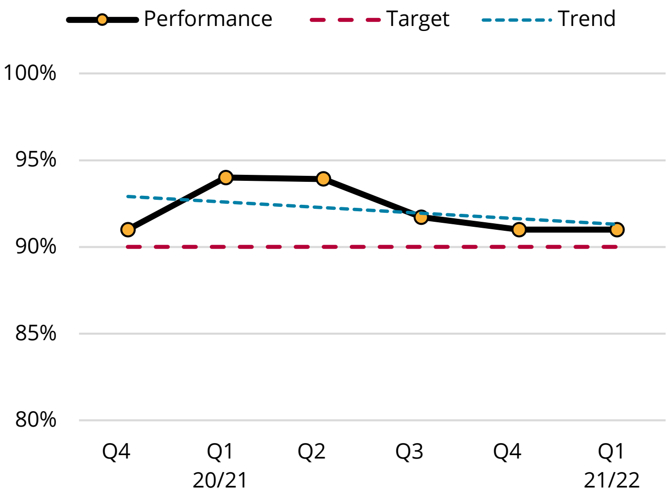
Individual based authorisation

Target: 90% of medium and high risk applications dealt with in 3/6 months



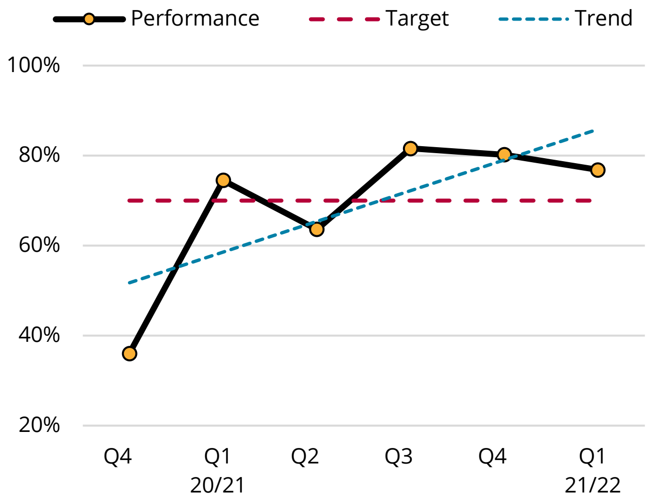
Compensation Fund

Target: 90% of compensation claims completed in 4/6/12 months

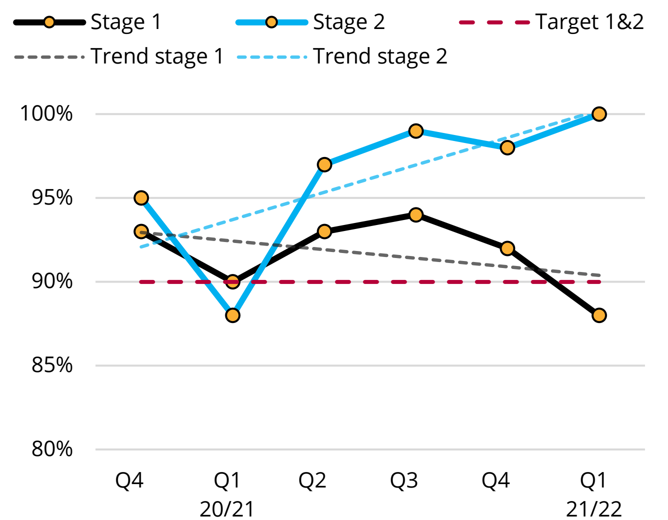


Contact Centre

Target: 70% of calls answered in 60 seconds



Stage 1 and 2 complaint handling



Narrative

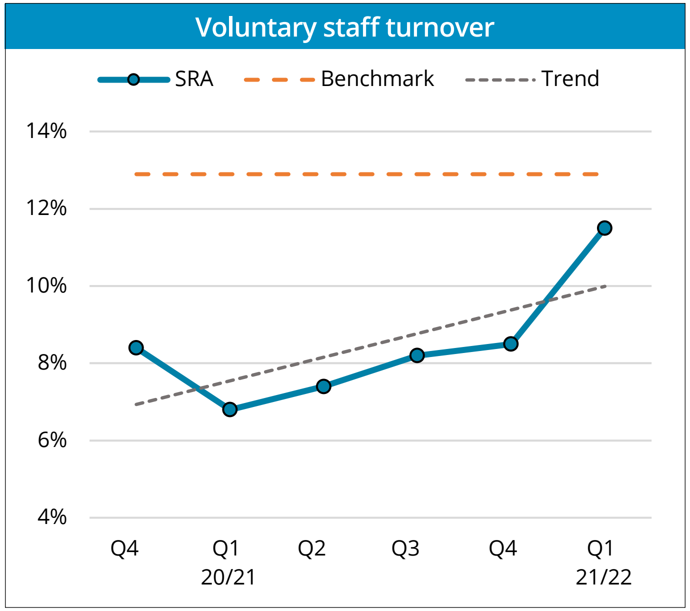
1. Two new KPIs were introduced in Q1 for Investigation and Enforcement – 95% of cases concluded in 18 months and 98% of cases concluded in 24 months.
2. Compensation Fund claim targets are: 90% of straightforward claims concluded in four months; 90% of moderate complexity claims concluded in six months; and 90% of complex claims concluded in 12 months.

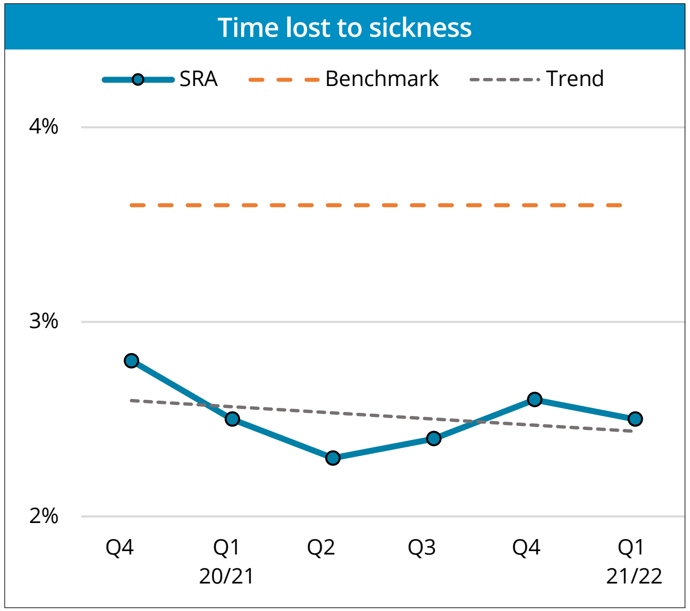
Complaint handling

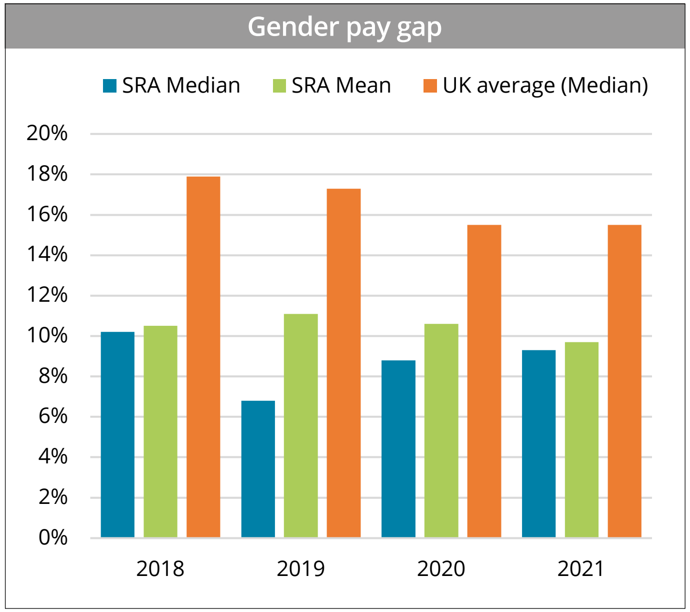
Our target is to handle stage 1 complaints within 10 days.
Our target is to handle stage 2 complaints within 20 days.
Stage 1 is the response from the team concerned. Stage 2 is the response from our Corporate Complaints team, where the matter is not resolved at stage 1.

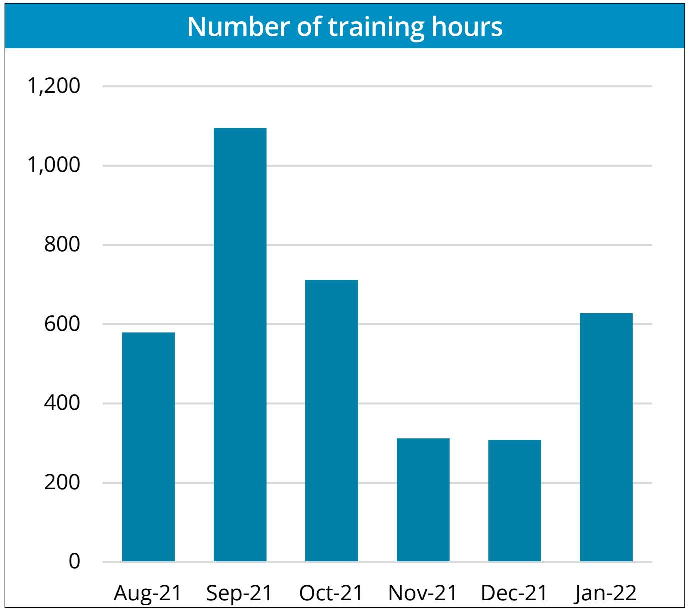
Core measures | Topical measures

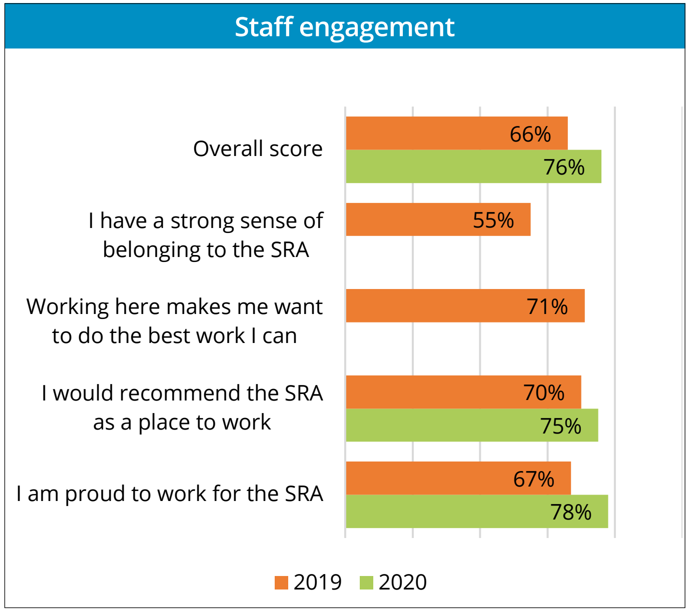
Internal











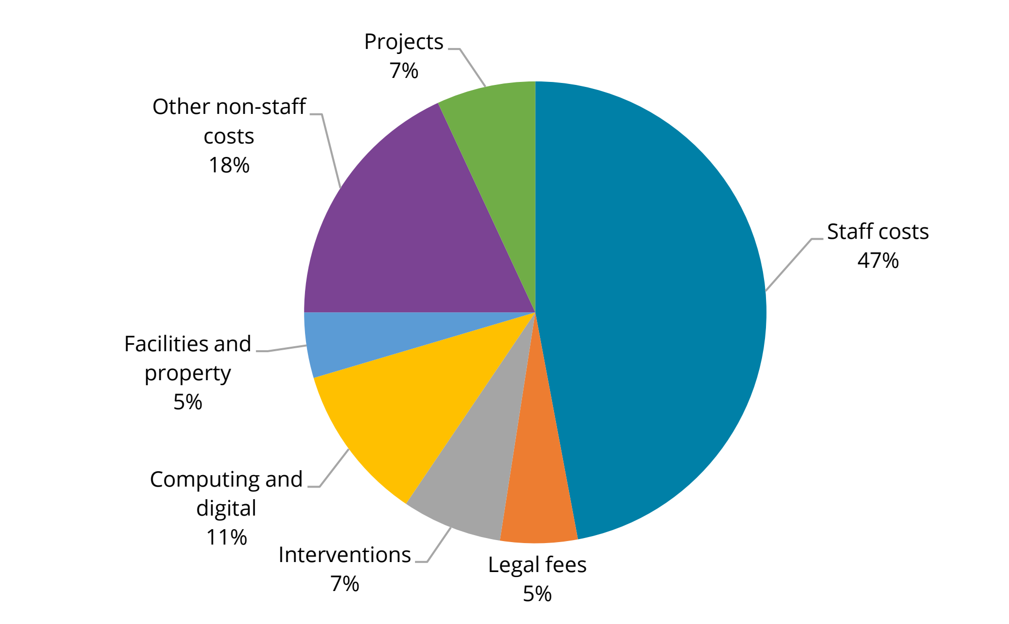
Narrative

1. Time lost to sickness in Q1 has decreased slightly as the daily rates of COVID-19 slowly decline.
2. We also see an increase in voluntary staff turnover. As the government roadmap out of the pandemic heads towards a return to workplaces, we believe this may continue to be the reason for the increase in turnover.
3. The benchmark for voluntary turnover is based on 2019 data. The source of the benchmark has recently explained that the current sample size is not large enough to provide a more up to date benchmark.
4. Our staff engagement survey runs on a two year cycle whereby we asked four engagement questions in the longer survey every two years and two engagement questions in the shorter survey in the alternate years.

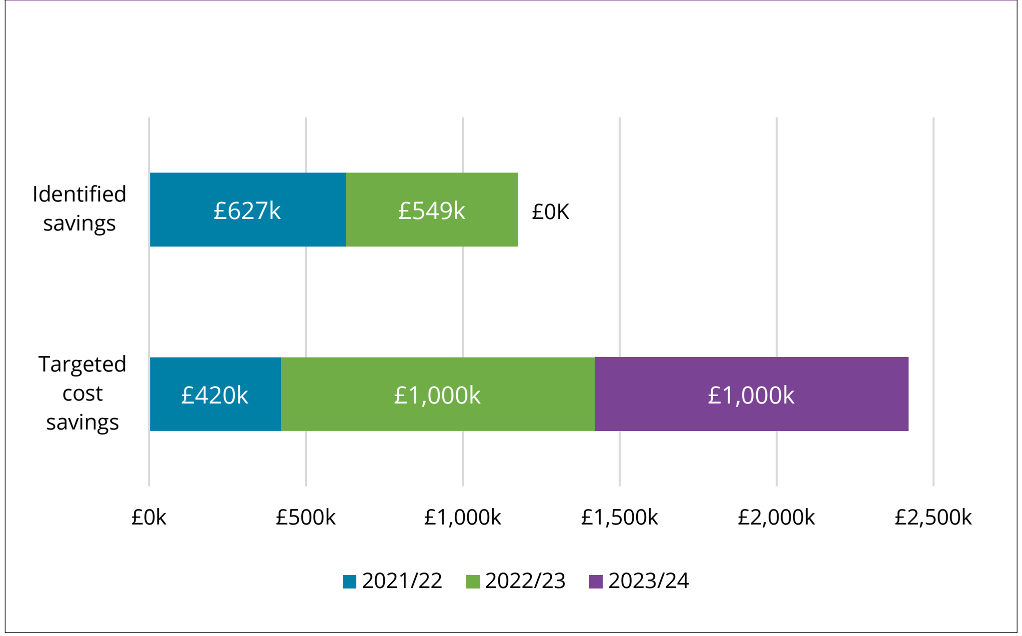
Financial

Core measures

Where our money is spent



Continuous Improvement Programme progress



Variance to budget 2021/22 Q1

£m	Actual	Budget	Variance	Variance %
Income	18.35	18.34	0.01	0.1%
Staff costs	8.52	8.48	-0.04	-0.5%
Other costs	9.59	9.65	0.06	0.6%

Narrative

1. Income for the first quarter is in line with budget. The full year outcome is likely to be in excess of budget due to additional practising fee income.
2. Staff costs and other costs are broadly in line with budget.
3. A reforecast is currently being undertaken which will give greater clarity over the position for the full financial year.

Communication

Media sentiment

Neutral coverage increased as a proportion of all media coverage during Q1 due to interest in Soophia Khan's contempt of court hearing, reporting of the imposition of the SRA's largest-ever fine and coverage of West Midlands solicitor Christine Lee, who was named in a cautionary note by MI5 for gaining access to MPs.

For a fourth straight quarter, positive media coverage exceeded negative coverage. Areas of our work that earned favourable coverage included the announcement of our Legal Services Board regulatory assessment scores, the release of the first Solicitors Qualifying Examination results and our consultation on financial penalties. There was continuing positive coverage of our business plan and anti-money laundering work. Our costs at the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal and our proposals regarding the Solicitors Indemnity Fund generated negative media coverage during Q1.

Web traffic

Visits to our website by Google web search users continued to climb in Q1. Google web search queries relating to the Solicitors Qualifying Examination and the Solicitors Register explained much of the year-on-year growth (26%) in click-throughs from Google.

Events

We held 16 events during Q1, generating attendance of almost 36,000 in total (in person, virtual streaming and virtual on-demand). Almost two-thirds of attendees who scored the usefulness of our events rated it as 8 out of 10 or higher.

Nearly three-quarters of all event attendees who responded to the question said they had a positive perception of the SRA.

Social media

The number of SRA followers across all social media platforms reached almost 139,000 by the end of Q1, up 9% from a year earlier.

The rate of engagement with our social media content during Q1 was up markedly, at 2.9%, compared to 2.1% in the same quarter a year earlier.

Customer feedback on Contact Centre calls/emails

We continued to receive positive feedback regarding our calls to the Contact Centre and achieved a 90% positive response rate in quarter one (against our target of 90%). We continue to fall slightly short of our target for emails and achieved a positive response rate of 70% against our target of 80%. We have seen this improve over the last 12 months and were impacted by a small number of application issues during the PCRE window. We expect to see the results improve over the next quarter and at this stage are forecasting to meet the target by the end of quarter two.

Delivery Measures

In the last performance update, we forecast that we would hit all our high-level delivery KPIs. At the same time, we added two new KPIs to the balance scorecard, following our discussion with the board in December about the appropriateness of the current measures. Over the last quarter we have achieved the forecast with all existing KPIs met. Of the two new KPIs, which focus on our end-to-end Investigation and Enforcement reporting, one was met (to conclude 95% of complaints within 18 months) and the other was missed (to conclude 98% of complaints within 24 months).

A key focus of the previous update was on the board's concerns around the growing numbers of Investigation and Enforcement cases that are over 12 and 24 months. This was explored further in a board workshop in January and a paper setting out the current position and the steps that we are taking in response is attached at Annex 4. More of an update is provided below within Investigation and Enforcement.

The update on the key deliverable KPIs for the quarter is as follows:

Investigation and Enforcement

We maintained an improved level of performance against the 93% KPI in quarter 1, achieving 94% (in line with performance in quarter 4 and up from 91% in quarter 1 2021). Performance against the two new KPIs introduced this quarter (which followed discussion with the board in December) were 96% (against the 95% 18-month KPI) and 97% (against the 98% 24-month KPI) respectively. We are anticipating meeting all three KPIs next quarter as the steps we are taking to tackle delay and reduce the number of cases over 12 and 24 months begin to take hold. Indeed, in February we concluded 98% of complaints in 24 months, the first time we have hit this level of performance since August 2021.

The number of open cases over 12 and 24 months old has also continued to reduce this quarter, with cases over 12 months old reducing to 623 and cases over 24 months old reducing to 251 (from 719 and 286 respectively at the end of quarter 4).

The immediate steps that we are taking to tackle the rising volume of cases over 24 months (as set out in Annex 4) is progressing well and has included recruitment of 12 new Investigation Officers who will start in April. We have also utilised overtime to provide additional capacity for the team to allow them to focus on progressing older cases. As previously mentioned, we are aiming to bring the numbers of over 24 month cases to below 100 by the end of the year and at this stage, based on the forecasting we have done, we remain confident that this can be achieved.

We have also established the Investigation and Enforcement Case Handling Improvement Project. This will explore and implement opportunities to streamline and speed up our existing processes. The project is being led by Juliet Oliver and Robert Loughlin and is aiming to roll-out improvements over the next 6 months to realise further timelines improvements by the end of the year. Although still in the early stages of development, 18 workstreams have been identified and are being progressed by the project team.

Authorisation

Both Individual Individual-based (IBA) and Firm-based Authorisation (FBA) performed well during the first quarter achieving 98% and 94% respectively against the 3/6 month 90% targets, and in doing so maintained the upward trend in performance that we have seen in this area since quarter three 2021. This is particularly good performance as the team not only dealt with the Practicing Certificate Renewal Exercise (PCRE) peak during this quarter, but also supported the SQE roll-out programme and the operational impacts that have resulted from this.

Contact Centre

We had a successful first quarter of the year in the Contact Centre (during the busy PCRE period), with an overall performance of 77% against our target of answering 70% of calls in 60 seconds.

Client Protection

Client Protection has maintained performance against KPIs over the last quarter. The key KPIs in terms of overall closure of Compensation Fund claims has been achieved each month with an average of 91%. It is noted that there is a marginal downward trend in performance since the peaks in Q1 and Q2 last year. However, that peak performance was driven by high volumes of straightforward claims which were similar in nature (predominantly those that resulted from the Kingly intervention). We were therefore able to introduce a streamlined process to manage those claims. We are now seeing a return to a more varied portfolio of claims.

Complaint Handling

The number of corporate complaints being made to us remain stable and comparable to previous periods with no new trends of note emerging. We fell a little short against our target response times at stage 1. In the last quarter overall 88% of our stage 1 responses were sent within 10 working against our target of 90%. We will monitor this to make sure our customers continue to receive speedy responses to concerns wherever possible.

Internal Measures

Staff turnover has increased again for this quarter. We continue to observe the volatile recruitment market and it continues to indicate uncertainty. As the government roadmap out of the pandemic heads towards a return to workplaces and the SRA start to define the future ways of working, we believe this may be the reason for the increase in turnover. The percentage increase this particular quarter is now demonstrating staff are starting to make a move.

Time lost to sickness has decreased slightly as the daily COVID-19 figures in the UK start to decline. As we prepare staff to gradually return to work towards a hybrid way of working, we continue to promote well-being initiatives and other interventions such as our employee assistance and occupational health provisions.

Both the turnover and sickness continue to be below the external benchmark. However, the benchmark for voluntary turnover is based on 2019 data. The source of the benchmark has recently communicated that the current sample size is not large enough to provide a more up to date benchmark.

The number of training hours is consistent for this time of year although there is a spike in training hours during January where a new elearning module was launched on conscious inclusion - equality, diversity and inclusion in practise.

The latest gender pay gap data for 5 April 2021 is reported in this quarter. We have seen a 0.9% decrease in the mean from 10.6% to 9.7%. We have seen a slight increase in the median to 9.3% from 8.8%. Although we have seen the pay gap narrow significantly in some of our upper pay bands, our middle pay bands have all slightly widened creating overall a slight increase in the median. The gap is still significantly below the UK median benchmark of 15.5%.

We introduce our staff engagement index for the first time to this scorecard. We have traditionally run our staff engagement survey on a two year cycle asking four engagement

questions in the larger survey run every two years and two engagement questions in the shorter survey every alternate year. The overall staff engagement index score increased ten percent in 2020. This particular survey produced one of our best surveys outcomes in recent years. We have recently changed our approach to the staff engagement survey and will now run a shorter (35 questions) survey every year asking in particular five engagement questions each year that will allow us to fully benchmark our staff engagement index score against other organisations for the first time. The shorter survey approach enables more achievable action planning and the ability to run much shorter 'pulse' surveys throughout the year on certain subject matters such as the new working environment. The survey was traditionally launched in December of every year. We felt that the timing of the survey was perhaps not the best time in the SRA year as it follows directly after the PCRE process. We have moved the survey to February of every year so the change in approach meant we didn't run a survey in 2021. The next survey was launched on 14 February 2022.

Financial measures

Income for the year is broadly in line with budget, the largest element being practising fee income. These are likely to exceed budget for the full year due to increasing numbers of practising solicitors. Over the last decade we have seen consistent year on year increases in solicitor numbers.

Expenditure is being managed within the overall budget for the year. We are starting to see the impact of inflation on our costs, particularly in respect of energy bills, but we expect to manage the overall position within the agreed budget for the year.

The ongoing Continuous Improvement Programme is expected to identify £2.4m of cost savings by the end of the 2022/23 financial year, of which £1.4m is expected to be identified by the end of the 2021/22 financial year. The programme remains on track to identify these savings in line with the targets.