

Measuring up to expectations

It is widely recognised that to provide effective policing the community must have confidence in the integrity of its police service.

The effectiveness of police services across the country is often measured by surveying members of the public about their level of satisfaction, including feelings of safety, perceptions of police integrity, and satisfaction with the way complaints are handled.

Superintendent Ian Limbach, Ethical Practice Branch, said public satisfaction surveys were regularly undertaken by the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC), the National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing (NSCSP) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

“In all surveys, the Queensland Police Service consistently rates favourably with other Australian police jurisdictions,” Superintendent Limbach said.

“However, there is always room for improvement within a discipline and complaints management system.”

Project Verity, a joint QPS and CMC project recently reviewed the Service’s complaint handling system and as a result, is undertaking trials in the North Coast and Metropolitan North police regions.

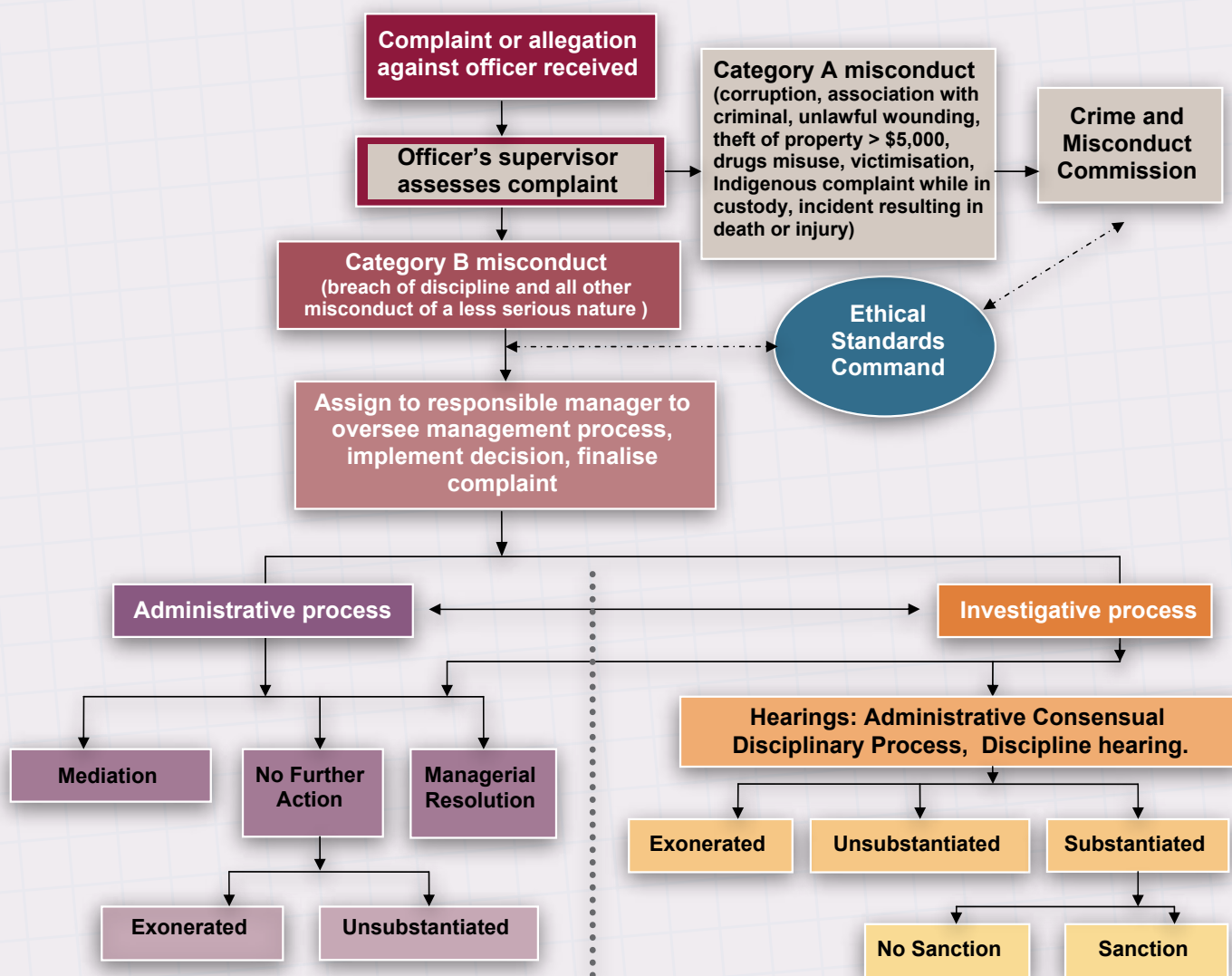
Superintendent Limbach said Project Verity was

transferring responsibility for the management, investigation and resolution of complaints to District Officers and Officers-in-Charge.

“It represents a fundamental shift in philosophy in the way the Service deals with internal disciplinary procedures,” he said.

“When administered by an external agency, discipline risks being viewed as a punitive and reactionary measure, with

The complaint handling and resolution process



Feelings of safety at home alone - during the day

Total safe %	Qld	Aust
2005-06	94.2	93.2
2006-07	93.6	93.0
2007-08	94.5	93.0

Feelings of safety at home alone - after dark

Total safe %	Qld	Aust
2005-06	81.2	83.4
2006-07	85.6	83.7
2007-08	85.4	83.1

Feelings of safety walking or jogging - after dark

Total safe %	Qld	Aust
2005-06	48.0	45.9
2006-07	60.3	60.8
2007-08	61.4	60.4

Queenslanders consistently indicate they feel safer at home, either in the daytime or at night, than the average Australian. Queenslanders also feel safer jogging and travelling on public transport than the national average.

managers excluded from the investigation and resolution of complaints.

“Project Verity empowers a member’s direct supervisors to resolve complaints where appropriate by managerial resolution.

“This is an administrative and educative process rather than undertaking a legalistic approach,

involving time-consuming investigations and applying punitive outcomes.”

A formal evaluation of Project Verity will be completed by the CMC in the near future, however, initial feedback from complainants and key stakeholders is very positive.

“The new system will ensure managers take ownership of

problems occurring amongst their staff, and maximise the opportunity for learning and improvement, not just for the individual concerned, but for the whole work unit,” Superintendent Limbach said.

General satisfaction with services provided by police

Total satisfied %	Qld	Aust
2007-08	69.5	66.3

Queenslanders rate their level of being ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with police services in their state 3.2 percentage points higher than the national average.

Opinions on statement ‘most police are honest’

Total agree %	Qld	Aust
2007-08	80.0	77.1

Queensland police received the highest rating for honesty in the country, (80%) which is nearly three percentage points above the national average.

Opinions on statement ‘police perform job professionally’

Total agree %	Qld	Aust
2005-06	80.1	80.1
2006-07	80.2	79.7
2007-08	81.2	79.4

The Queensland community’s perception is that police perform their duties professionally (the rating is consistently around 80% in Queensland).

The *Report on Government Services 2009* (RoGS) found the Queensland Police Service rated highly on issues such as public satisfaction, trust and feelings of safety.