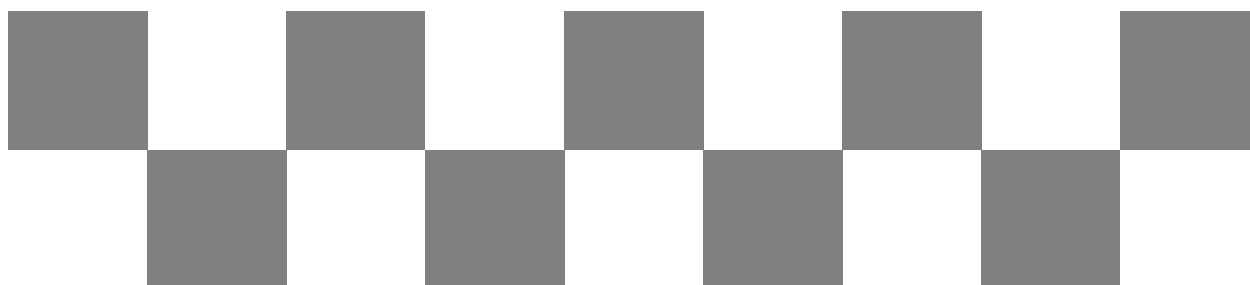




Revenues Service Investigation Team

2007 – 2008 Performance Report

Countering Fraud Housing and Council Tax Benefit System and Student Loan Scheme



Introduction

Since April 2002 the Council's Fraud Investigation Team have been working under the requirements of the Department for Work and Pensions Security Against Fraud and Error scheme (SAFE).

The aims of this scheme are quite simple, to professionally investigate allegations of fraud and successfully apply penalty based sanctions against those committing fraud.

Luton embraced this approach from the start and has worked hard since the inception of the scheme to successfully deliver a tough and robust response to fraud within the borough.

Joint working over the last financial year with colleagues from the Department for Work and Pensions and Bedfordshire Police has strengthened the Investigation Teams ability to deal effectively with fraudsters and bolstered the skills and expertise of all those involved.

The Investigations Team is back to full strength with two new Investigation Officers having been appointed in November 2007. Their training is progressing well and they have both recently submitted their first prosecution files to the Council's Legal Service.

Over the last year the Courts have taken a more robust stance and there has been a considerable increase in the number of suspended sentences, Fines and Community Punishment orders handed down to offenders.

It is hoped that these *Performance Statistics* can provide a useful guide to the on going efforts of the Revenues Investigations Team in combating fraud and abuse within the benefits system.

Paul Lincoln Taylor
Fraud Investigation Manager
May 2008

Summary

These statistics show that since the council's investigation team started working under the Security Against Fraud and Error Scheme (SAFE) in April 2002:

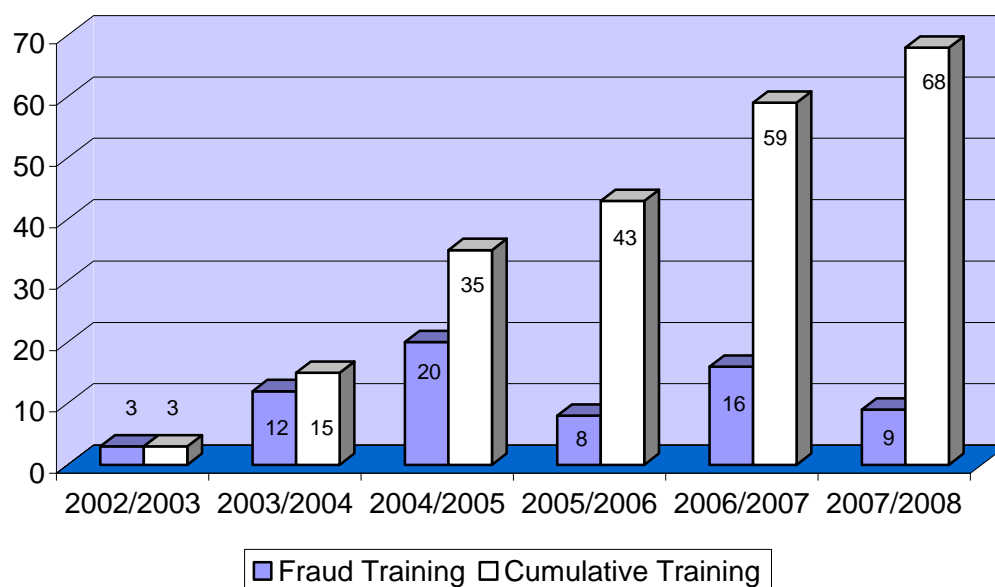
- ❑ There have been **143** successful prosecutions against housing and council tax benefit and student loan fraudsters.
- ❑ There have been **156** summonses issued against housing and council tax benefit fraudsters.
- ❑ **50** housing and council tax benefit fraudsters have been cautioned.
- ❑ **68** fraud awareness and document verification presentations have been delivered to key LBC staff and other agencies.
- ❑ **784** calls have been received on the confidential fraud hotline from concerned members of the public.
- ❑ **92** press releases have been issued to the media promoting our successful prosecution cases.



Development of the anti-fraud culture

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Fraud awareness training	3	12	20	8	16	9
Cumulative fraud awareness training	3	15	35	43	59	68

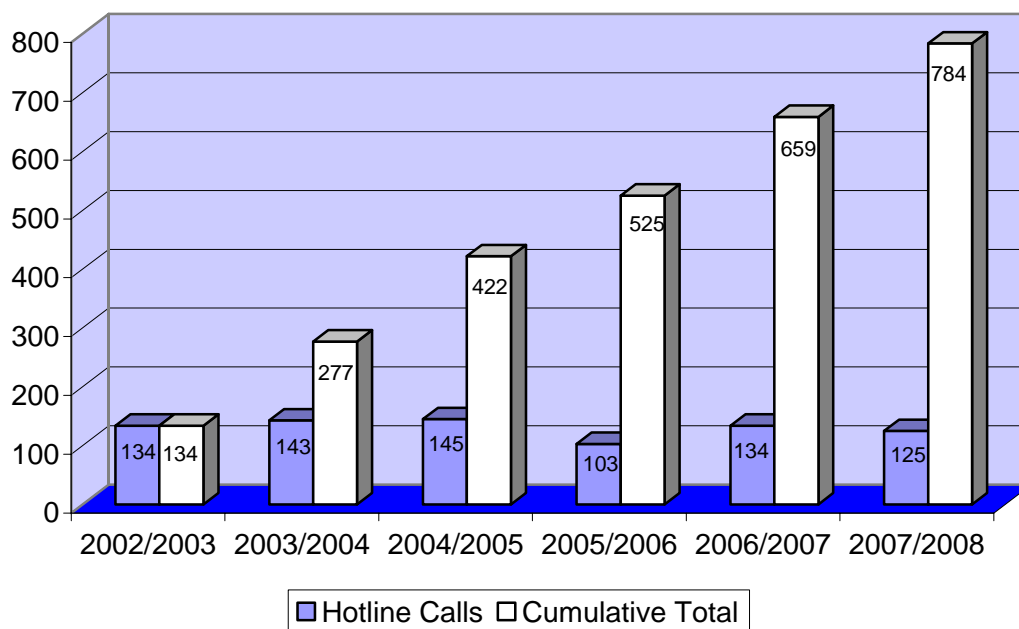
Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information



Fraud Hotline

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Fraud hotline referrals received	134	143	145	103	134	125
Cumulative total	134	277	422	525	659	784

Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information



The deterrent effect

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Press releases	9	8	14	15	27	19
Running total	9	17	31	46	73	92

Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information

Note: These statistics reflect the number of media articles or stories, which referred positively to LBC counter fraud work for each year. The LBC investigation team works to publicise each aspect of what it does. This is not to seek publicity for it's own sake but to create a strong deterrent effect.

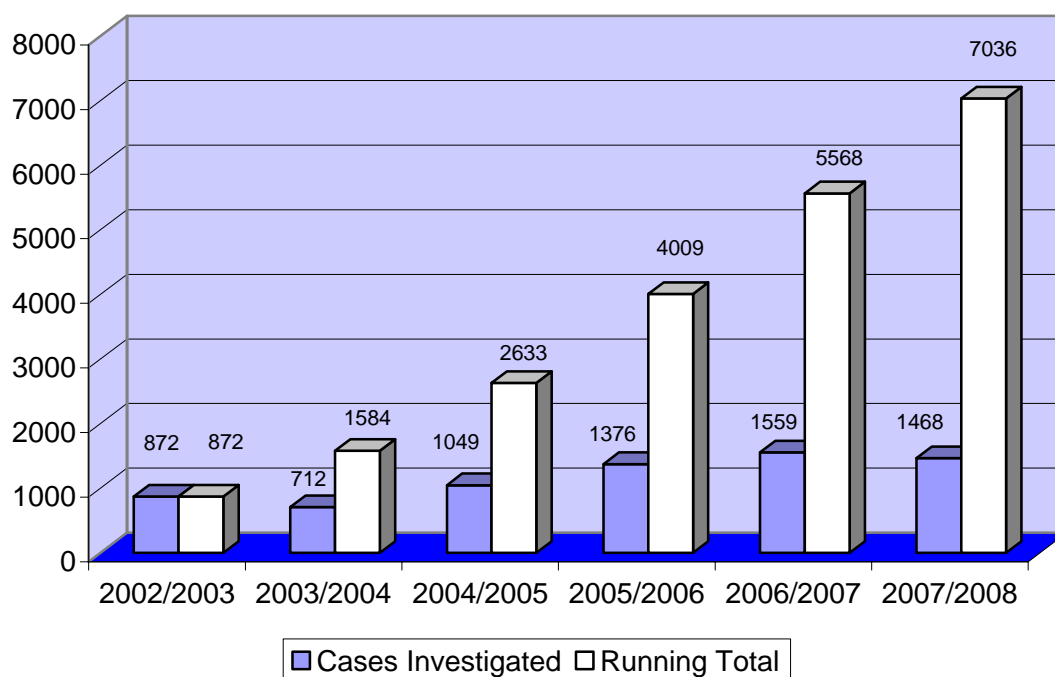


Detecting and preventing potential fraud

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Number of cases investigated	872	712	1049	1376	1559	1468
Cases investigated running total	872	1584	2633	4009	5568	7036

Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information

APPENDIX A



Interviews under caution

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Total interviews under caution	152	85	171	243	143	188
Running total	152	237	408	651	794	982

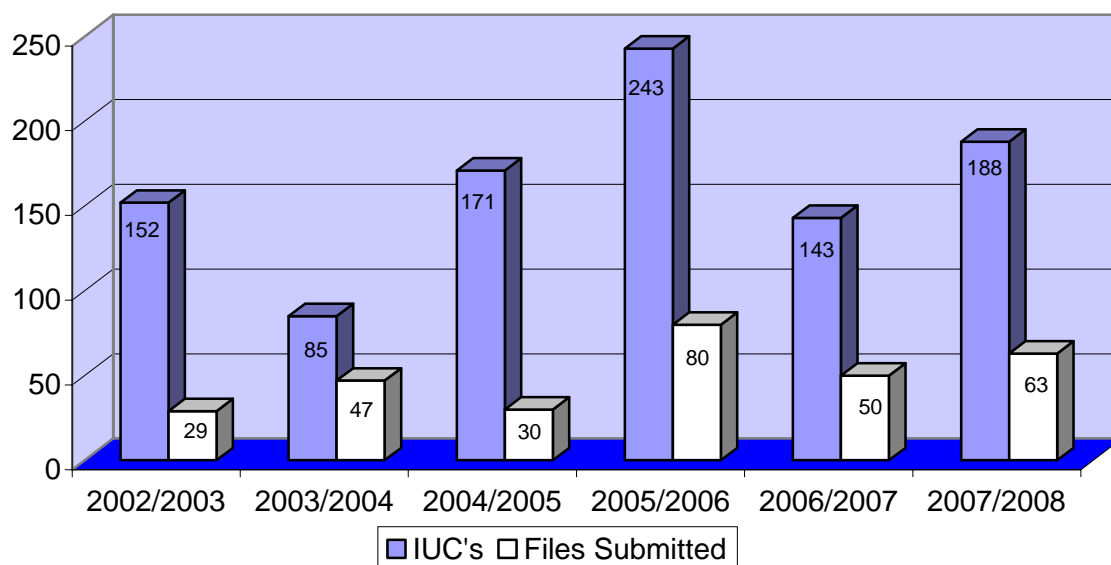
Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information

Sanction files submitted

APPENDIX A

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Total sanction files submitted	29	47	30	80	50	63
Running total	29	76	106	186	236	299

Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information

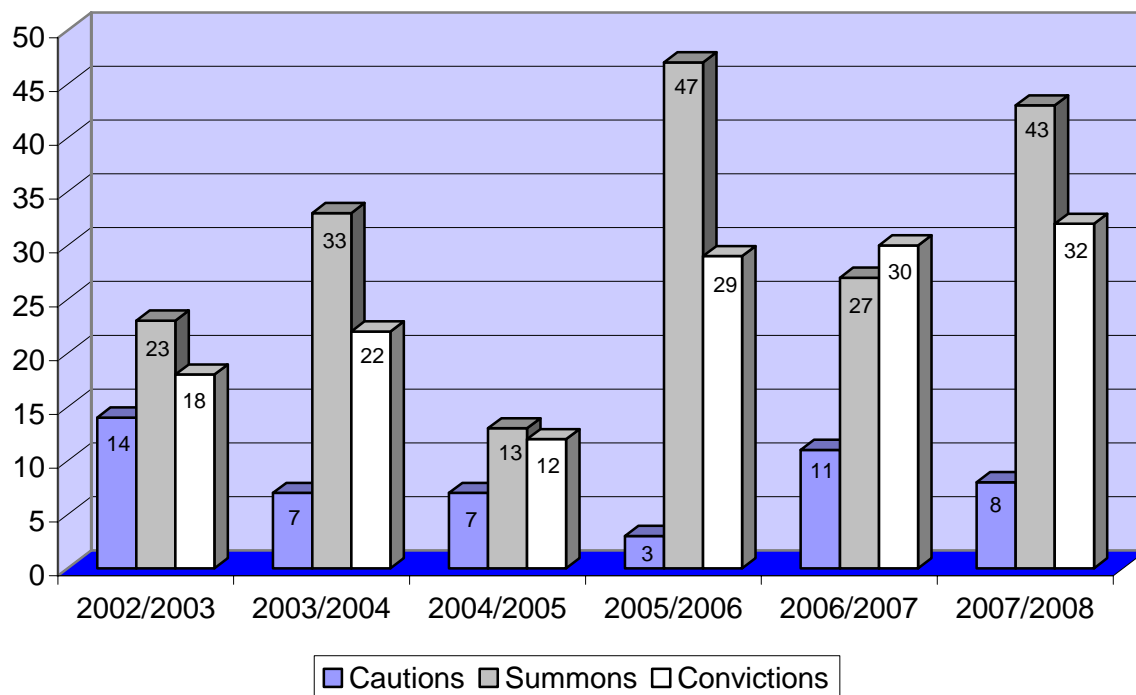


Applying Sanctions

APPENDIX A

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Total cautions per year	14	7	7	3	11	8
Total summons per year	23	33	13	47	27	43
Total prosecutions per year	18	22	12	29	30	32
Sanctions running total	55	117	149	228	296	379

Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information



Sanctions Breakdown

APPENDIX A

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Prison	2	–	–	1	5	–
Suspended sentence	–	–	–	–	1	4
Curfew	–	–	–	–	1	1
Community rehabilitation order	1	1	–	1	1	–
Fine	3	6	1	9	8	10
Probation order	1	–	–	–	–	–
Community punishment order	6	7	4	5	1	9
Conditional discharge	5	6	7	13	11	8
Total penalties	18	20	12	29	30	32

Source LBC Investigation Team Management Information

