

*NRA - annual reports/
corporate plans.*

(Annex 1)

**CORPORATE PERFORMANCE
MONITORING REPORT**

**QUARTER 2 (JULY - SEPTEMBER)
1996/7**

Produced : December 1996

**Corporate Planning Section
Head Office**

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



122729

Explanatory Notes

This document sets out a selection of indicators of the Agency's Performance during the second quarter of 1996/97.

For comparison purposes, actual performance for the quarter is measured against either a target published in the 1996/97 Corporate Plan, a national standard of service, or against an actual figure for a previous period.

Full year actuals for these and a wider suite of measures will be published in the 1996/97 Annual Report and 1997/98 Corporate Plan.

The reporting period is based on the Agency's *financial year*. This second quarter report covers the period from 1 July 1996 through 30 September 1996.

The report is arranged in the following sections :

SECTION 1: Pollution Prevention & Control

- (a) Water Quality
- (b) Integrated Pollution Control
- (c) Radioactive Substances
- (d) Waste Regulation

SECTION 2: Water Management

- (a) Water Resources
- (b) Flood Defence
- (c) Fisheries, Recreation, Conservation & Navigation

SECTION 3: Multifunctional

Key to Regional legend used in graphics :

NE	=	North East
NW	=	North West
WL	=	Welsh
MD	=	Midland
AN	=	Anglian
TH	=	Thames
SO	=	Southern
SW	=	South West
ALL	=	aggregate total of all regions

The order in which the regions have been presented within the graphs is on a North-South geographical basis rather than alphabetical.

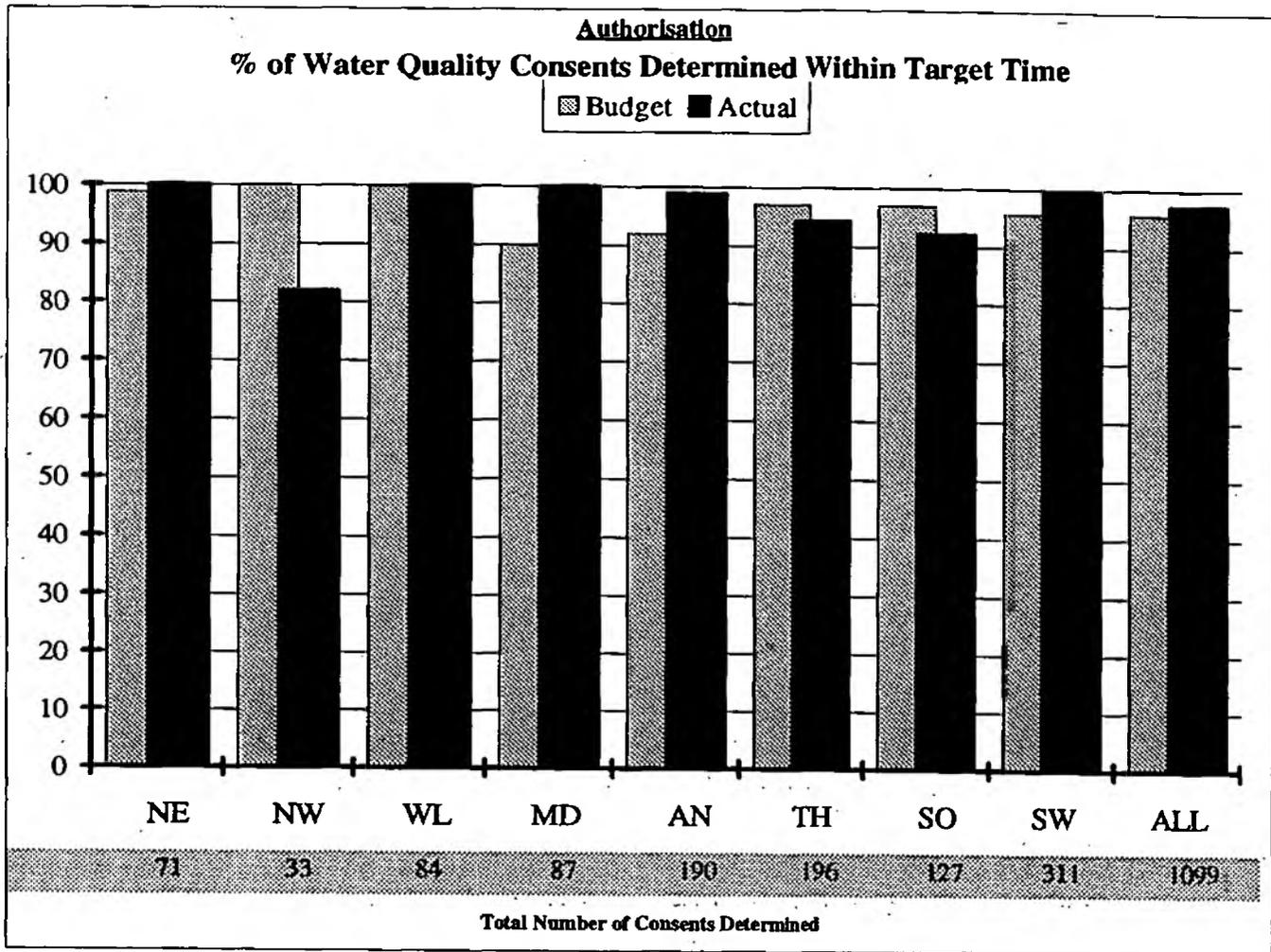
SECTION 1

POLLUTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

(a) Water Quality

	page
<u>AUTHORISATION</u>	
% discharge consents determined within target time	1.1
number & age profile of consents awaiting determination	1.2
<u>INSPECTION & MONITORING</u>	
Consented Discharges	
% achievement of routine inspection monitoring programme	1.3
% compliance with discharge consent conditions :	
WSplc STWs	1.4
Significant Private STWs	1.5
Trade Discharges	1.6
Monitoring of Controlled Waters	
% achievement of routine sampling programme	1.7
<u>ENFORCEMENT</u>	
No. of Prosecutions Concluded	1.8
<u>POLLUTION INCIDENTS</u>	
No. of Cat 1 pollution incidents; % attended in target time	1.9
No. of Cat 2 pollution incidents; % attended in target time	1.10
<u>NATIONAL LABORATORY SERVICE (NLS)</u>	
% of water quality samples analysed / reported in target time	1.11
% of analyses meeting specified quality requirements	1.12

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph looks at the percentage of discharge consents determined by the Agency within target time ie within the 4 month statutory period, or for more complex applications, within an extended period agreed with the applicant at the time of application. This measure forms one of the Agency's Customer Charter suite of measures.

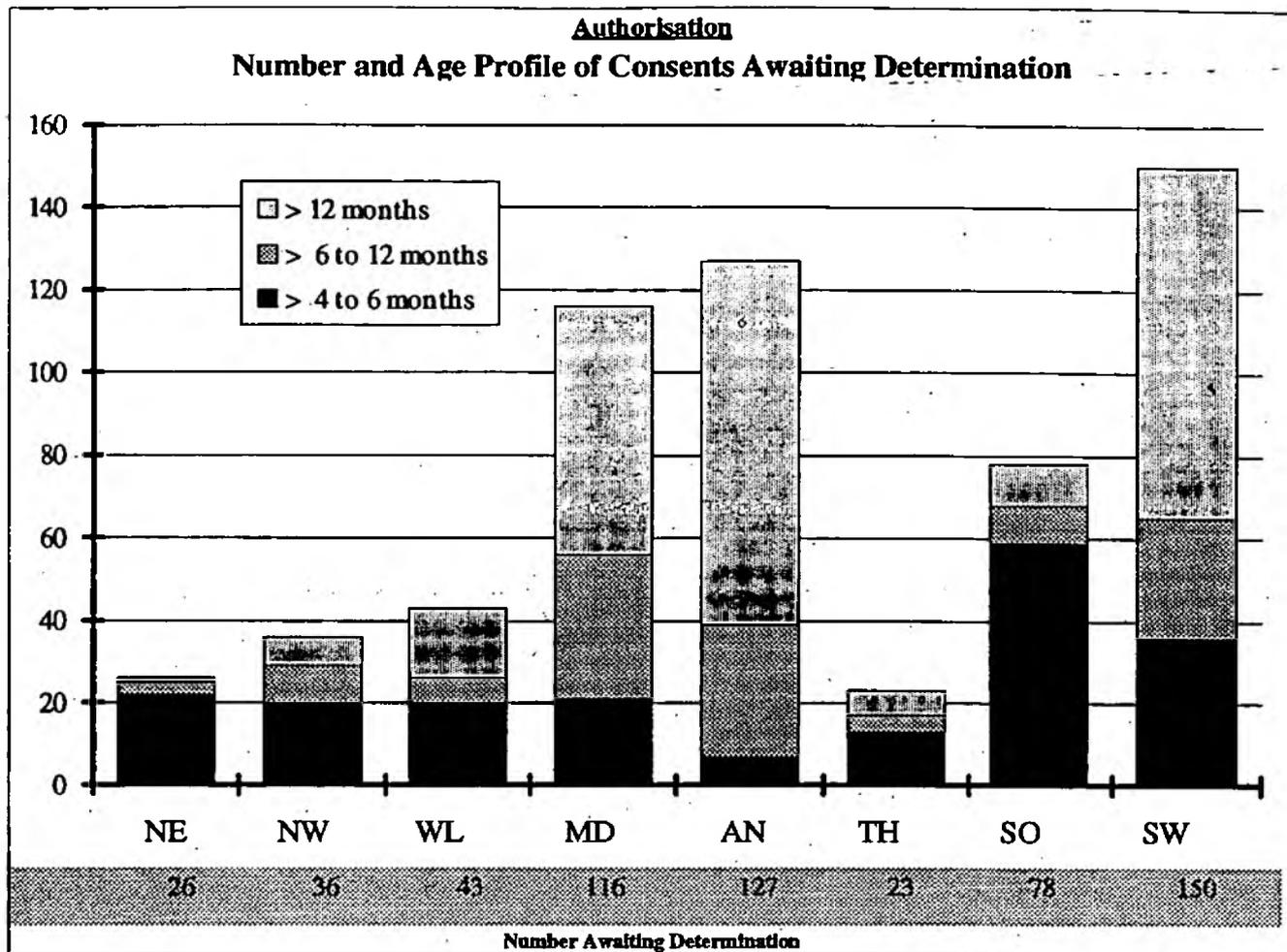
Comment: Nationally, 97.3% of applications were determined within target time against an annual budget target of 95.8%. By way of further comparison, published results for the full year 1994/95 showed a performance of 96% in target time and in 1993/94 a performance of 94%. However, the data is not sufficiently refined to distinguish between the relative complexity of applications, which will, of course, affect the size of the workload.

Most regions met or exceeded their budget targets. However, there were marginal shortfalls in Thames and Southern regions, and a substantial decline in the attainment of the budget target in the North West region.

A total of 1099 consents were determined during quarter 2. In simple number terms, the regional distribution of workload varied considerably with South West (311), Thames (196) and Anglian (190) determining a relatively high proportion of the total whilst North West (33) and North East (71) determined relatively few.

Action: Improvements in North West, Southern and Thames regions to bring performance up to budget targets. Longer term, all regions should aim to fully meet the 100% Customer Charter commitment.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above chart examines the number and age profile of discharge consent applications that were more than 4 months old (statutory period requirement) and were still awaiting determination at period end.

Lengthy determinations are often due to the technically complex nature of proposed schemes and/or the need to seek additional information from applicants, often at several stages. In this respect, the backlog does not necessarily compromise the Agency's Customer Charter commitment in relation to consent determination. Many complex applications will usually have an extended time period for determination agreed with the applicant; and the countdown time for determining an application does not begin until applicants have provided all the requisite information.

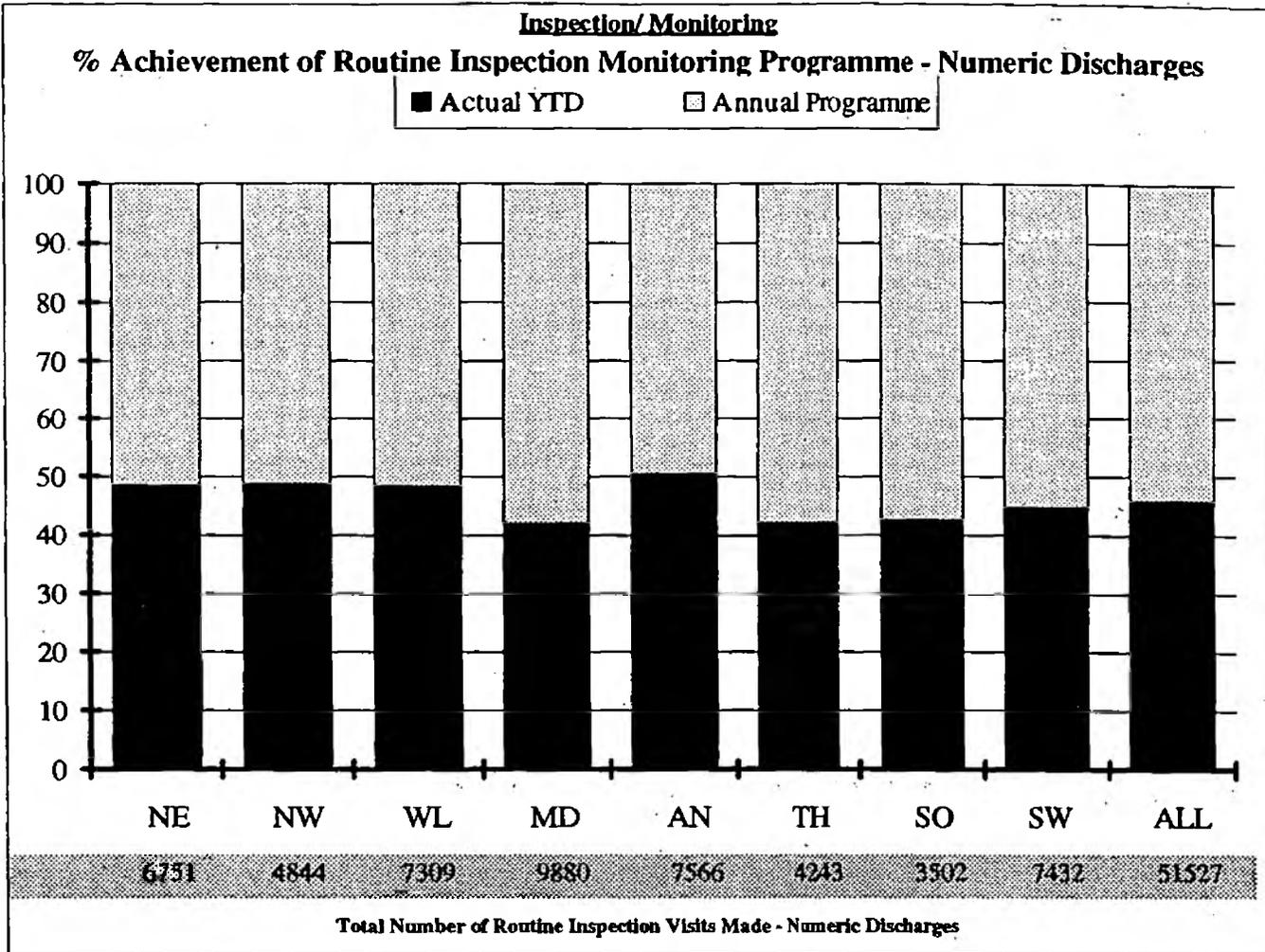
Comment: A total of 599 applications were outstanding at the end of the quarter. 198 were between 4 and 6 months old, 127 were between 6 and 12 months old and the remaining 274 were greater than 12 months old. All regions had some outstanding applications but a large proportion were concentrated in South West, Anglian and Midland regions.

Over time, the size of backlog has been considerably reduced. At the end of 1993, 1621 applications were outstanding; at the end of 1994, 1594 were outstanding; whilst at the end of 1995, the backlog had reduced to 606.

In quarter 2, the biggest reduction in the number of applications awaiting determination was in the Thames region (down from 55 in the previous quarter to 23 in the current quarter), followed closely by North West. In the South West region the backlog increased (from 126 in the previous quarter to 150 in the current quarter).

Action: Notwithstanding the above comment above the Customer Charter obligations, in the interest of providing a high quality service to customers, continuing efforts are required to deal with outstanding applications in all regions. For example, some of the earlier success in reducing the size of the backlog has been achieved by employing temporary staff to handle the routine workload thereby freeing up the time of the experienced staff to concentrate on complex applications. South West to take note of the increase, from the preceeding quarter, in the relative size of its backlog.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: It is the responsibility of the Agency to monitor consented discharges for compliance with consent conditions and, thereafter, to take appropriate action, where necessary, to enforce compliance. Setting consents and monitoring compliance is the primary mechanism used by the Agency to regulate and improve water quality.

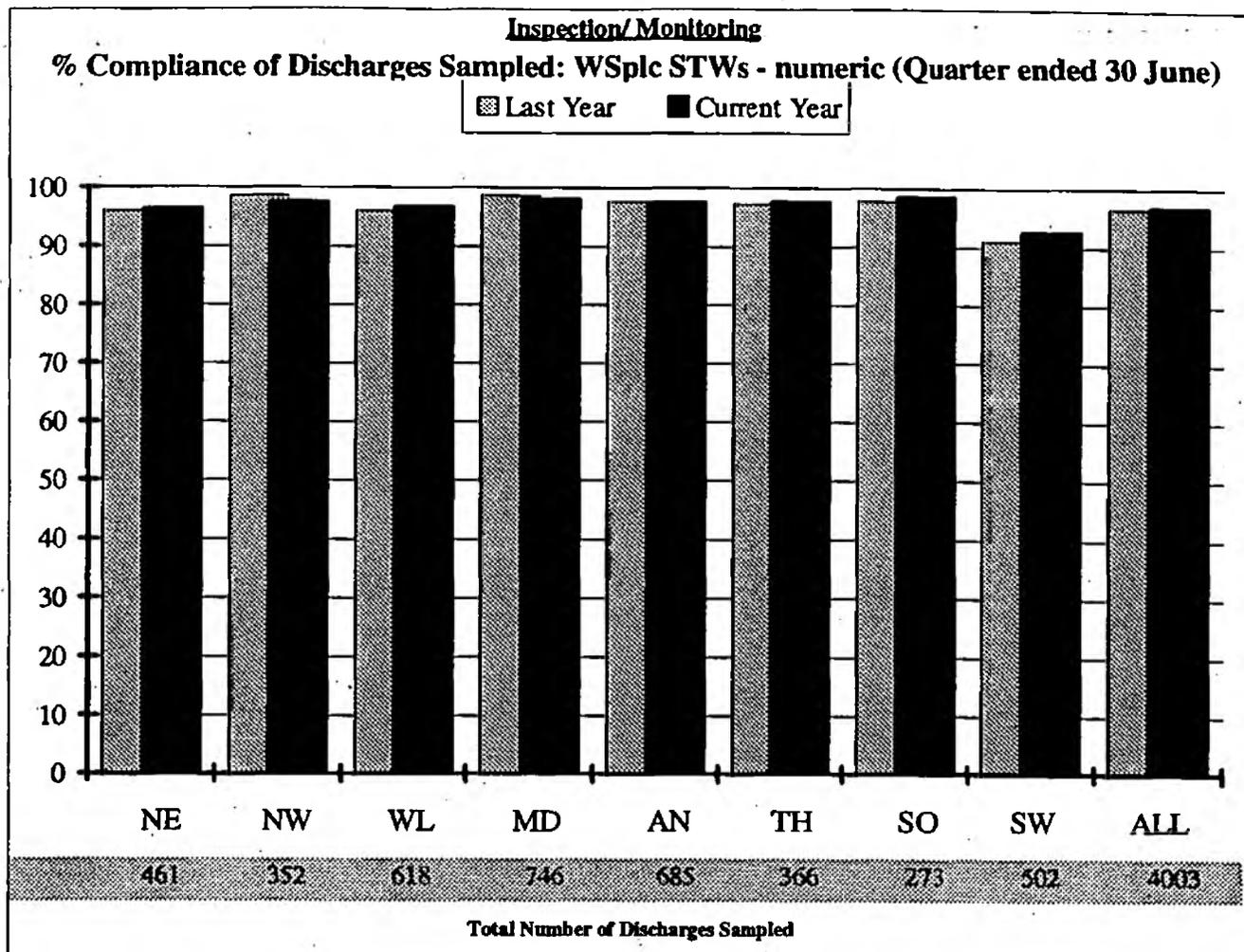
The above chart looks at the year to date attainment of the annual routine effluent sampling programme for consented discharges subject to numeric consent conditions. The programme includes effluent samples taken for consent compliance purposes, and routine tripartite samples taken at STW's for 95 percentile consent enforcement purposes.

Programme inspection frequency in each region is primarily determined by the number and size (in terms of daily volume) of discharges together with an assessment of their environmental impact on receiving waters.

Comment: At the half year stage 46% of the national annual programme had been completed. This is less than the 50% which might be expected at this point, assuming an even distribution of the programme throughout the year. Anglian (50.5%) was the only region to achieve at least 50% of its annual programme by the end of the second quarter. All other regions were behind schedule.

Action: Regions with the exception of Anglian, need to step up inspections in the subsequent quarters, with a view to achieving their planned annual targets.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph shows compliance with consent conditions for Water Company Sewage Treatment Works, subject to numeric consents, which were sampled over the 12-monthly rolling period ended 30 June 1996. A comparison with the corresponding period of the previous year is provided.

Within the numeric consent, criteria are set on the quality, concentration or load of any substance, and on the discharge flow. In most cases discharges operated by the Water Companies must adhere to 95 Percentile limits. This means consent criteria must be met 95% of the time.

Comment: At the half year stage, 96.8% of discharges inspected were found to be compliant, slightly above the 89% compliant in the corresponding period of the previous quarter.

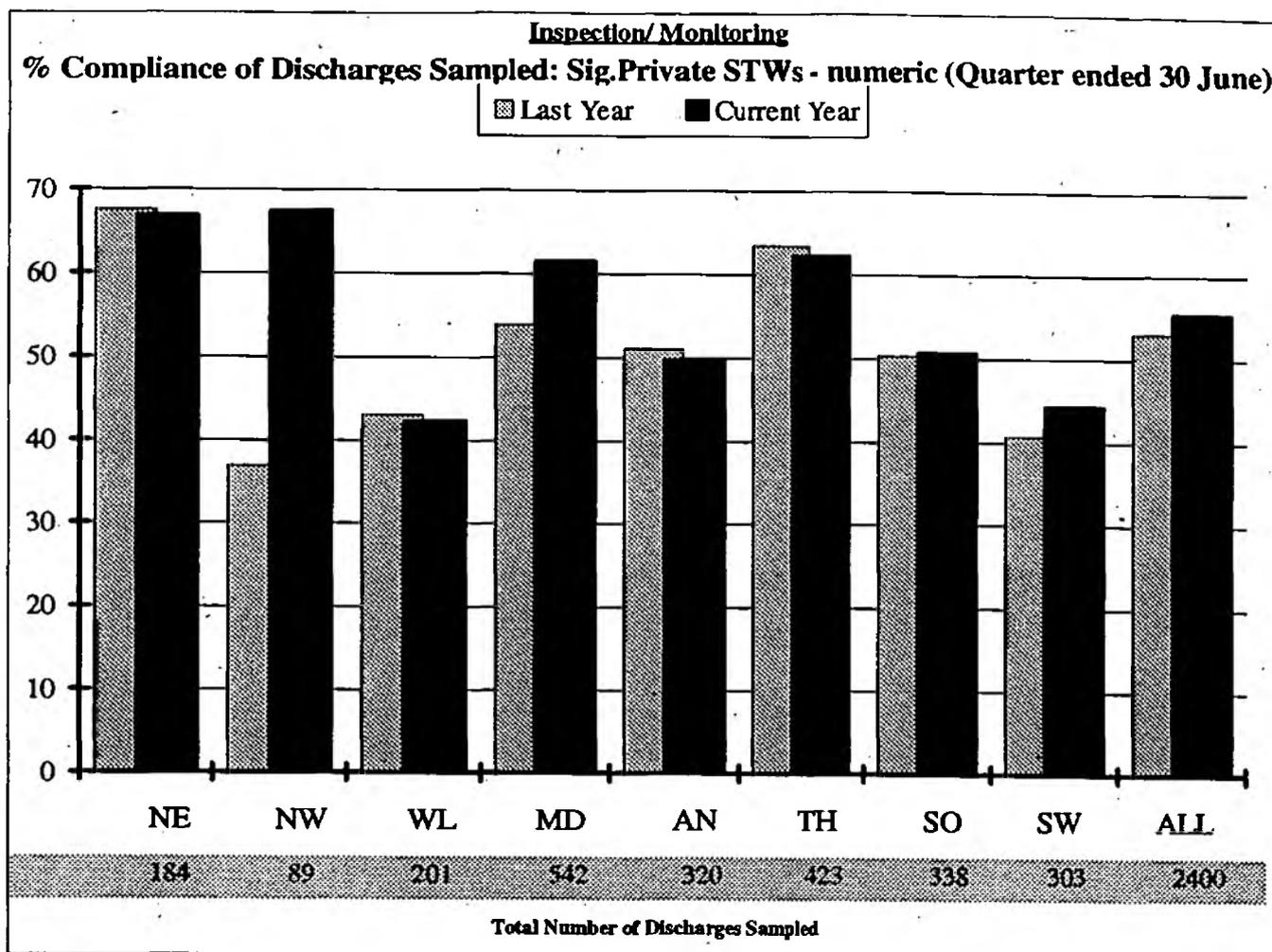
Year-on-year compliance declined marginally in the North West and Midlands region but increased slightly or stayed constant in the 6 other regions.

Looking at longer term trends in performance, in 1990, 90% of WSplc discharges complied with numeric consent conditions. However, because consent conditions change as new standards are introduced, it is not possible to compare true changes in discharge quality over time. All that can be compared is compliance with the standards in force at the time, ie compliance with the legal requirement.

Similarly, the data should be used carefully when comparing compliance between regions. Consent conditions are not consistent nationally but are a reflection of inherited and locally set conditions subject to regional based policies. Differences between regions are also to be expected given the differences in topography, demography and agricultural and industrial infrastructures.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph shows compliance with consent conditions for Significant Private STWs, subject to numeric consents, which were sampled over the 12-monthly rolling period ended 30 June 1996. A comparison with the corresponding period of the previous year is provided.

Unlike Sewage Treatment Works operated by the Water Companies, private STWs are subject to numeric consent conditions with Absolute Limits. These are numerical standards which must never be exceeded.

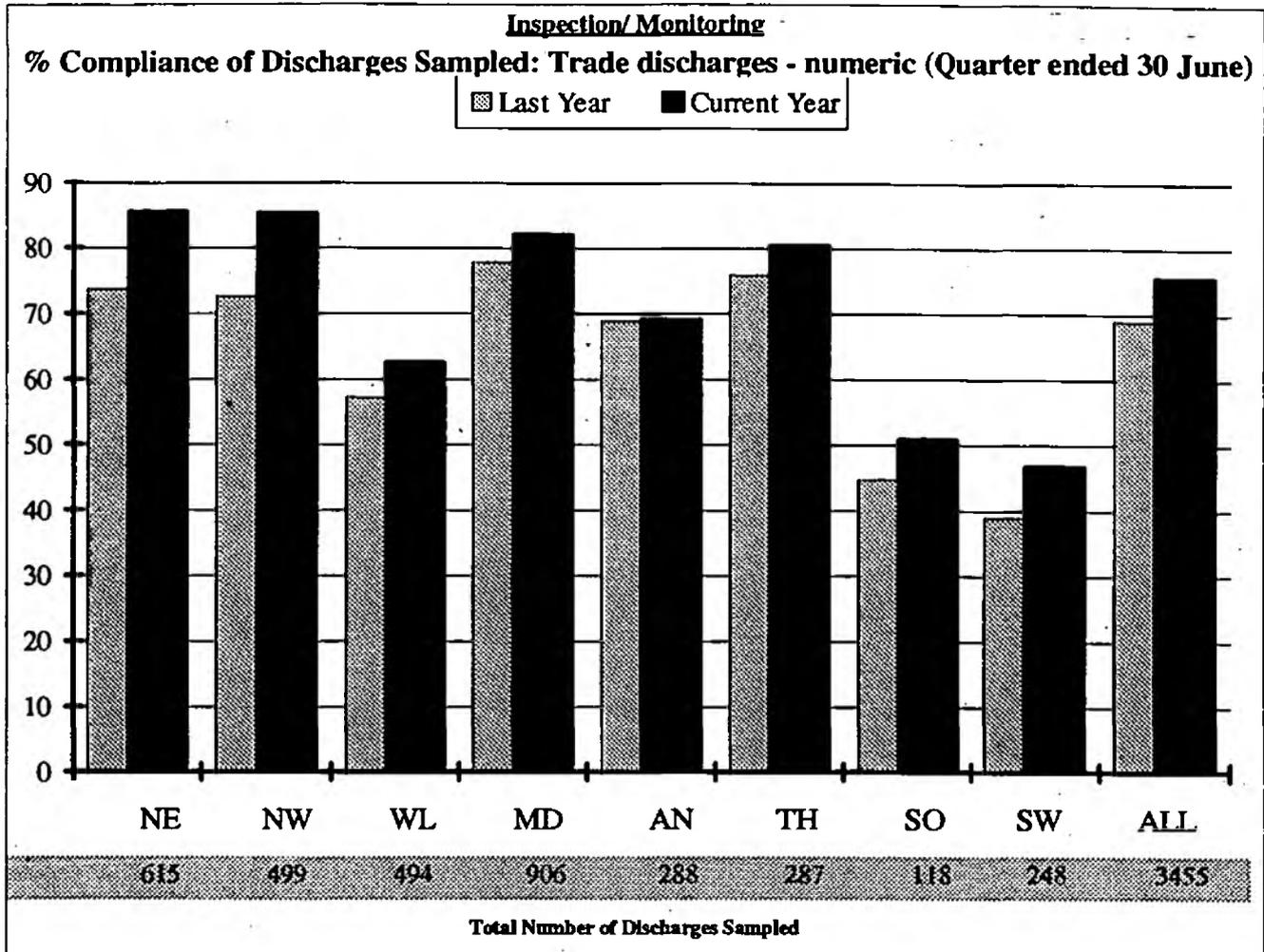
Comment: Nationally, 55.3% of discharges inspected were found to be compliant. This is a slight increase on the compliance figure for the previous quarter, but a significant decline in the compliance rate when compared with the corresponding period of the previous year (79%).

Year-on-year compliance has increased dramatically in the North West region, increasing from 37% compliance in the corresponding period of the previous year to 68% for the current quarter.

As with the previous graph, the data should be used carefully when comparing compliance between regions. Consent conditions are not consistent nationally but are a reflection of inherited and locally set conditions subject to regional based policies. Differences between regions are also expected given the differences in topography, demography and agricultural and industrial infrastructures.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph shows compliance with consent conditions for Trade Discharges, subject to numeric consents, which were sampled over the 12-monthly rolling period ended 30 June 1996. A comparison with the corresponding period of the previous year is provided.

As with Significant Private STWs, Trade Discharges (discharges made by Industry, Trades and Commerce) are subject to Absolute Limit consent conditions.

Comment: Nationally, 75.6% of Trade discharges inspected were found to be compliant. This is an improvement on the 69% compliant in the corresponding period of the previous year.

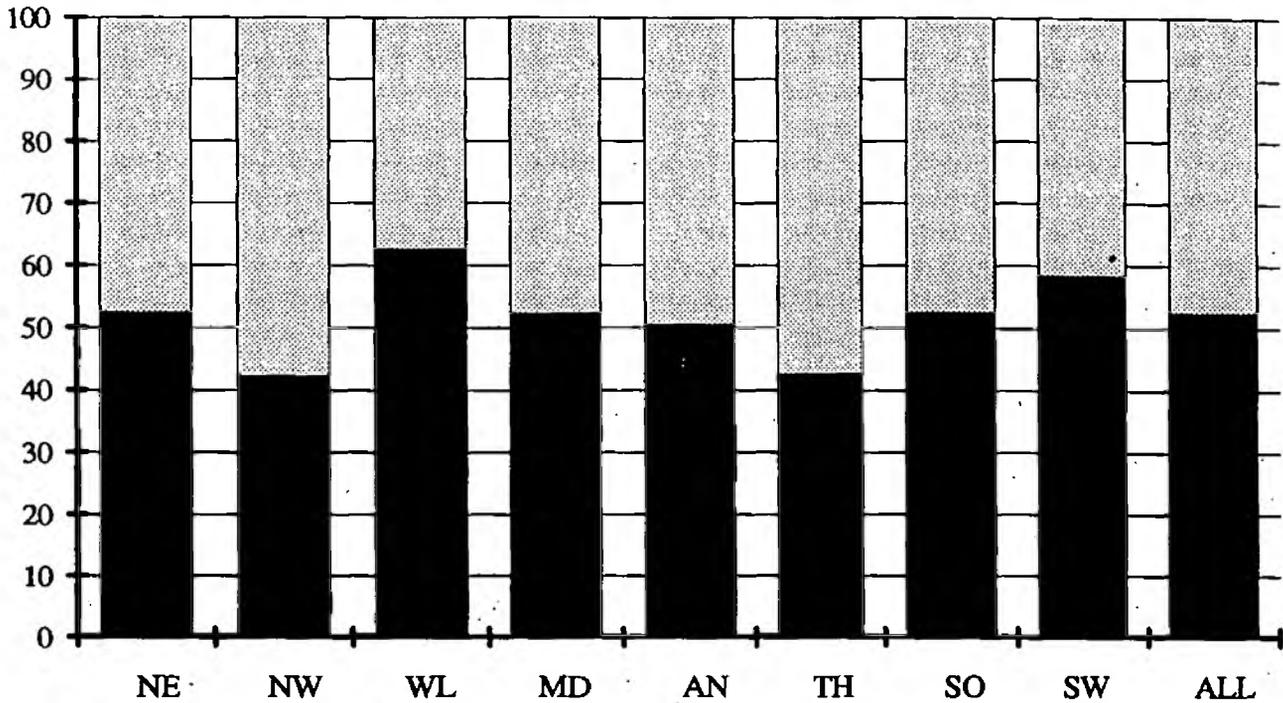
Year-on-year compliance improved in all regions.

As with the previous graph, the data should be used carefully when comparing compliance between regions. Consent conditions are not consistent nationally but are a reflection of inherited and locally set conditions subject to regional based policies. Differences between regions are also to be expected given the differences in topography, demography and industrial and agricultural infrastructures.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control

Monitoring of Controlled Waters
 % Achievement of Routine Sampling Programme
 ■ Actual YTD □ Annual Programme



	NE	NW	WL	MD	AN	TH	SO	SW	ALL
Statutory	3591	4288	4740	5504	4344	2070	4759	10759	40055
Nat'l surveillance	4390	4017	4230	6340	2643	2478	2709	5520	32327
Permissive	5258	2422	6606	4761	9329	3014	2272	7979	41641
Total	13239	10727	15576	16605	16316	7562	9740	24258	114023

Number of Samples Taken

Introduction: The above chart looks at the year-to-date attainment of the annual sampling programme for controlled waters (i.e. all non-effluent sampling). It comprises chemical, microbiology and biology samples whether taken for statutory, national surveillance or permissive (local operational) monitoring purposes.

Comment: In line with expectations, at the half year stage, just over half (52.5%) of the national annual monitoring programme had been completed.

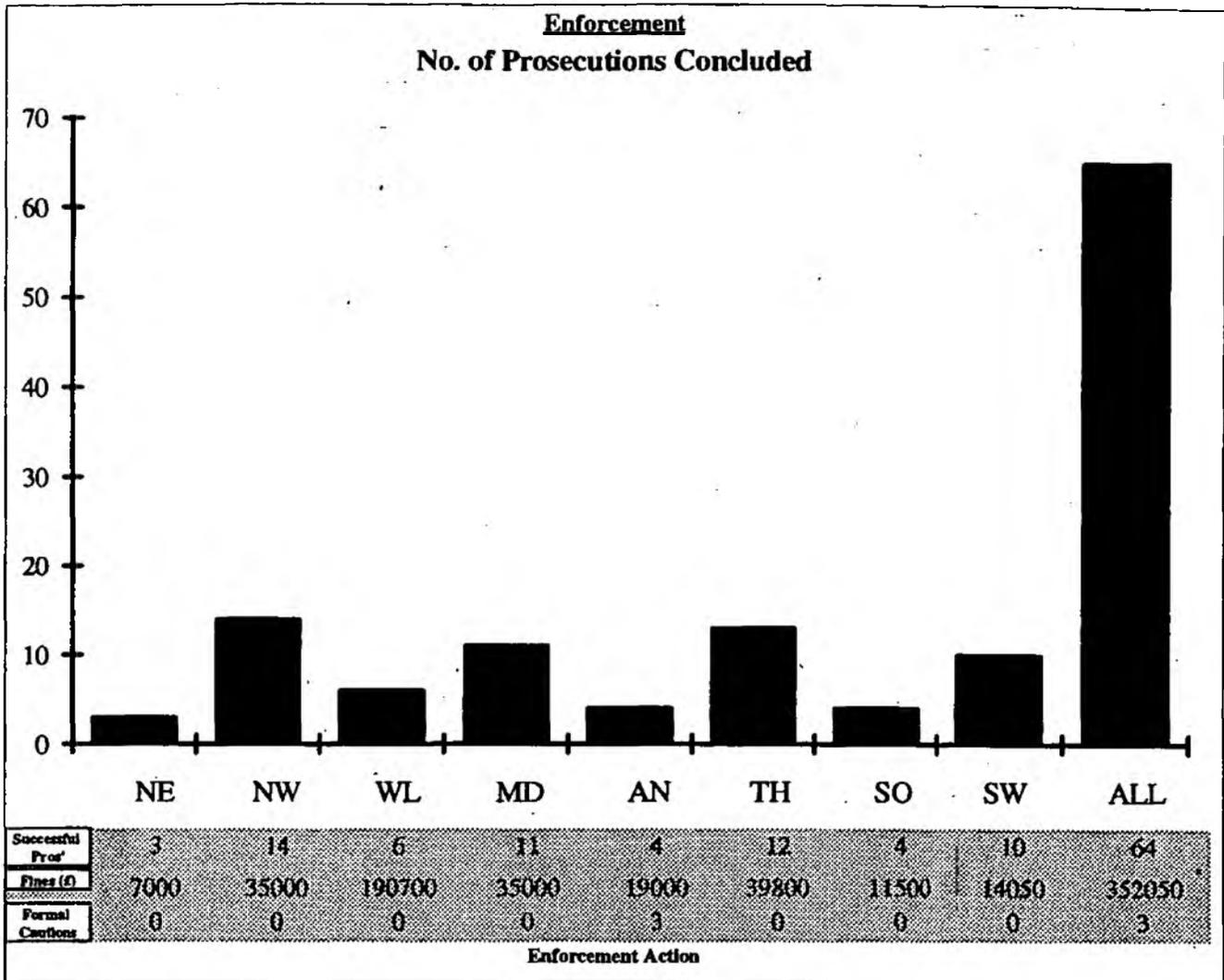
Regionally, North West (42.4%) and Thames (42.7%) appear to be running a little under programme whilst Welsh (62.6%) and South West (58.4%) appear to be ahead of schedule.

The table under the graph shows the number of samples taken by each region under each component of the programme. Whilst there is considerable variation, this, in part reflects differences in workload requirements between regions.

Nevertheless, the level of permissive sampling in Anglian region continues to appear high in relation to other regions. This may in part, be explained by the fact that, within the chemical category of the permissive sampling programme, Anglian region takes a large number of groundwater samples, Broads Research samples (unique to Anglian), as well as special survey samples and others relating to pollution incidents.

Action: Thames and North west to take note of progress with programme to date.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph looks at the number of water quality prosecutions concluded by the Agency during thesecond quarter of 1996/97. Some of these may have been initiated by the NRA for offences which occurred in periods before the Environment Agency came into being.

Whilst it is Agency policy to take legal action against polluters who blatantly or persistently offend, the Agency's first aim is to prevent pollution from occurring in the first place. This it aims to achieve through targeted education campaigns and pollution prevention site visits and by using new powers to serve enforcement notices when the liklihood of pollution is uncovered.

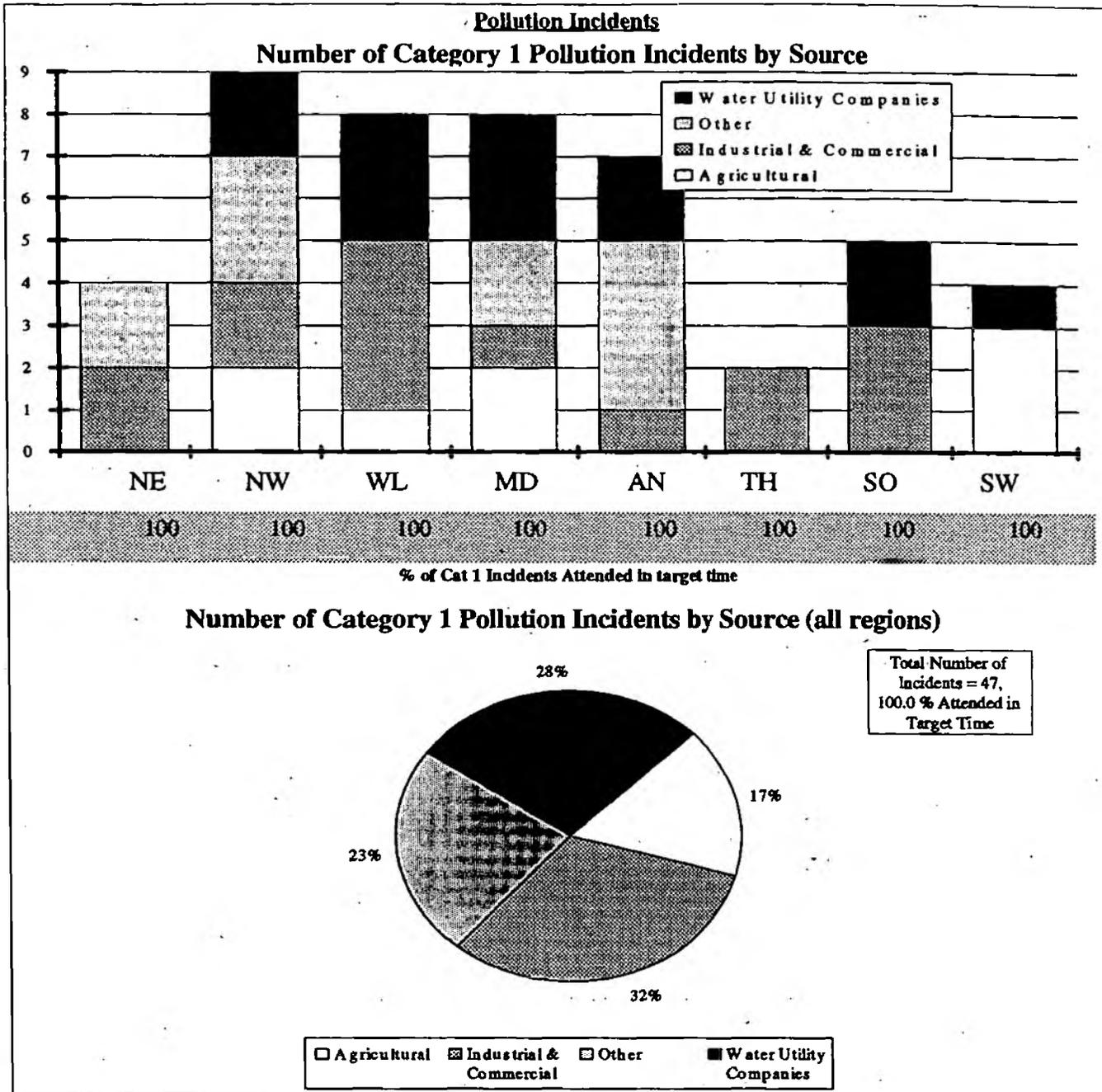
Comment: Nationally, 65 prosecutions were concluded in the second quarter. 64 of these were successful and resulted in fines totalling, £352,050. In addition to court action, 3 formal cautions were issued and accepted by offenders. No Enforcement Notices were issued.

Welsh region is accountable for a large proportion of the total fines in Quarter 2 (54%). 1 prosecution action with an outcome fine of approximately £170,000 is responsible for this high figure.

In aggregate, at the end of the half year stage, 129 successful prosecutions have been concluded, totalling £542,700 in fines and 33 formal cautions have been issued.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



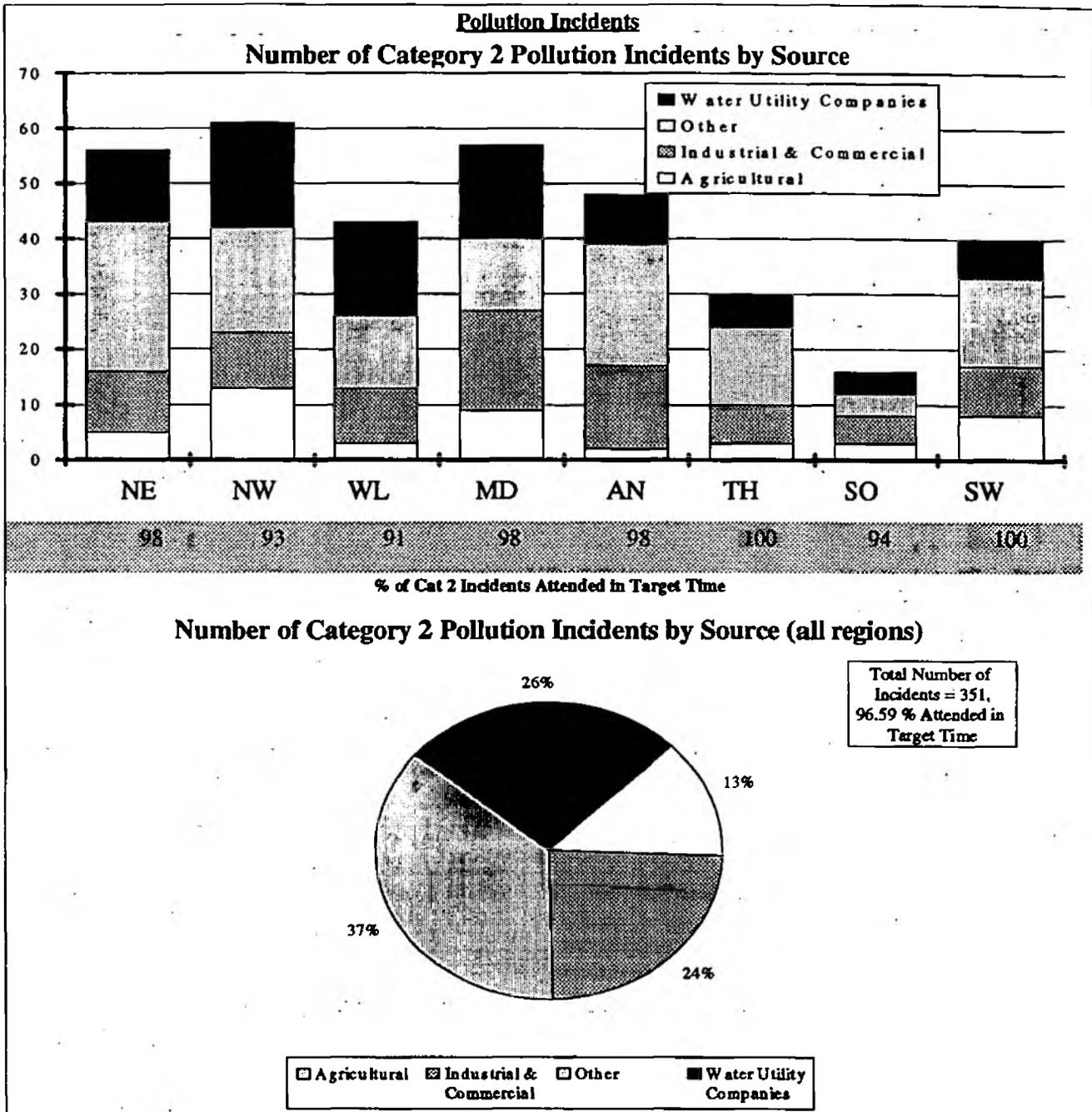
Introduction: The above charts examine the occurrence of major (Category 1) pollution incidents. The shaded block below the top graph shows the operational response for attending the incidents within the target time set out in the Customer Charter ie. to attend all pollution emergencies within 2 hours of reporting during normal working hours and within 4 hours at all other times. A speedy response is often crucial in limiting the environmental impact of pollution incidents.

Comment: In quarter 2 there were a total of 47 category 1 incidents. This compares with 77 in quarter 2, 1995/96 and 87 in quarter 2, 1994/95. Regionally the distribution of incidents varied from 2 in Thames region to 9 in the North West region.

100% of all incidents were attended within target time. By comparison, an average of 97% of incidents were attended in target time in the full year of 1995/96, and 93% in the full year of 1994/95.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



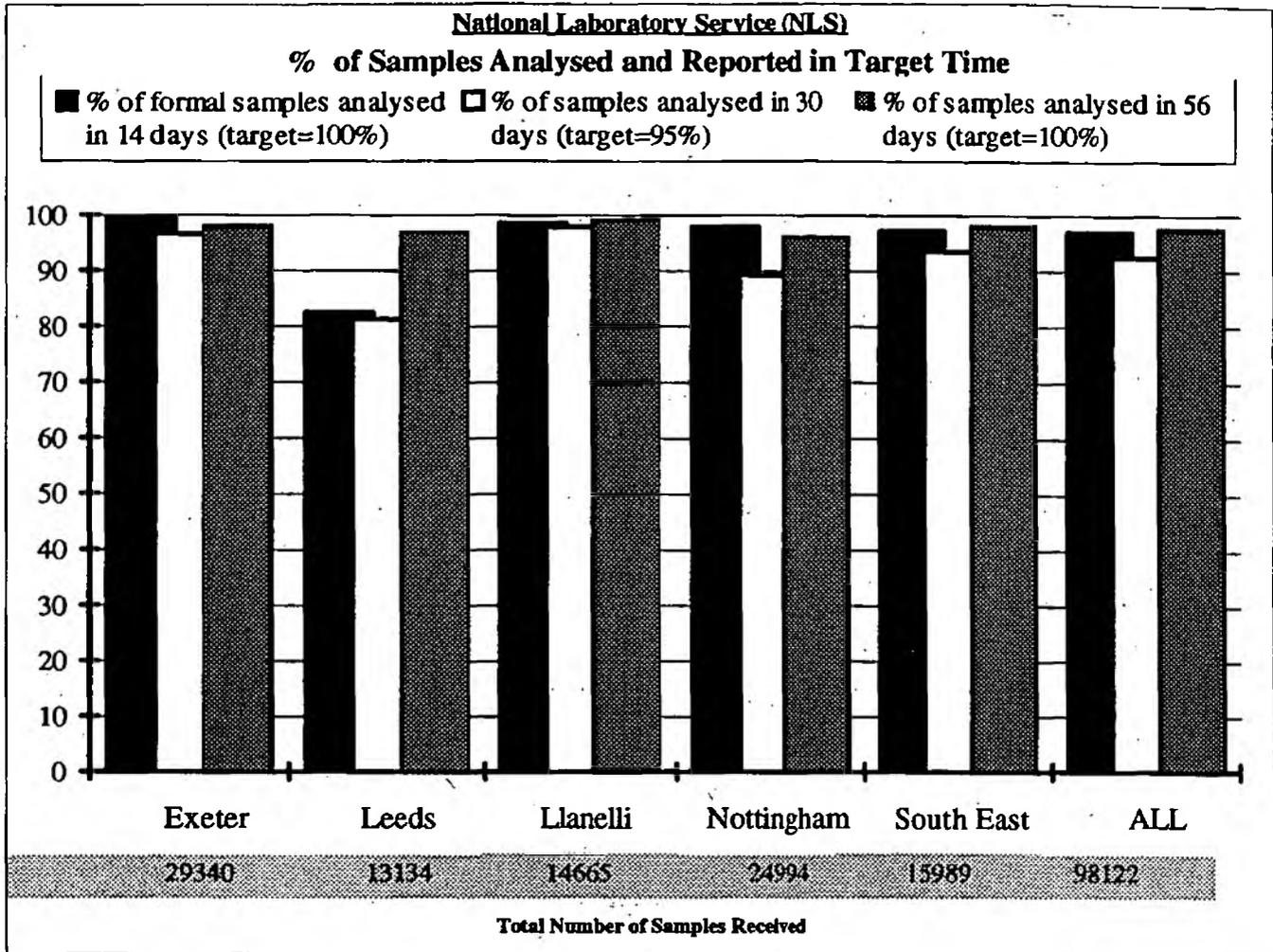
Introduction: The above charts examine the occurrence of Category 2 pollution incidents. The shaded block below the top graph shows the operational response for attending the incidents within the target time set out in the Customer Charter ie. to attend all pollution emergencies within 2 hours of reporting during normal working hours and within 4 hours at all other times. A speedy response is often crucial in limiting the environmental impact of pollution incidents.

Comment: In total there were 351 category 2 incidents in the quarter. This compares with 545 in quarter 2 of 1995/96. Regionally the distribution varied from 61 in the North West region and 16 in the Southern region.

97% of incidents were attended within target time. This is a slightly higher performance rate than achieved on average, in the full year of 1995/96. 5 out of 8 regions attended 98% or more of incidents within target time. Response rates for North West (93% attended in target time), Welsh (91% attended in target time) and Southern (94% attended in target time) were behind those achieved in other regions.

Action: Improvements in response rates in the North West, Welsh, and Southern regions are needed to bring performance up to the level attained by other regions.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above chart looks at the percentage of water quality laboratory samples analysed by the National Laboratory Service (NLS) which were fully analysed and reported to Agency regional clients within specified target times. Achievement of target turnaround time is important not least because there is a statutory requirement for the Agency to place sample results on the public register within 60 days of a sample being taken. This target is also one of our Customer Charter commitments.

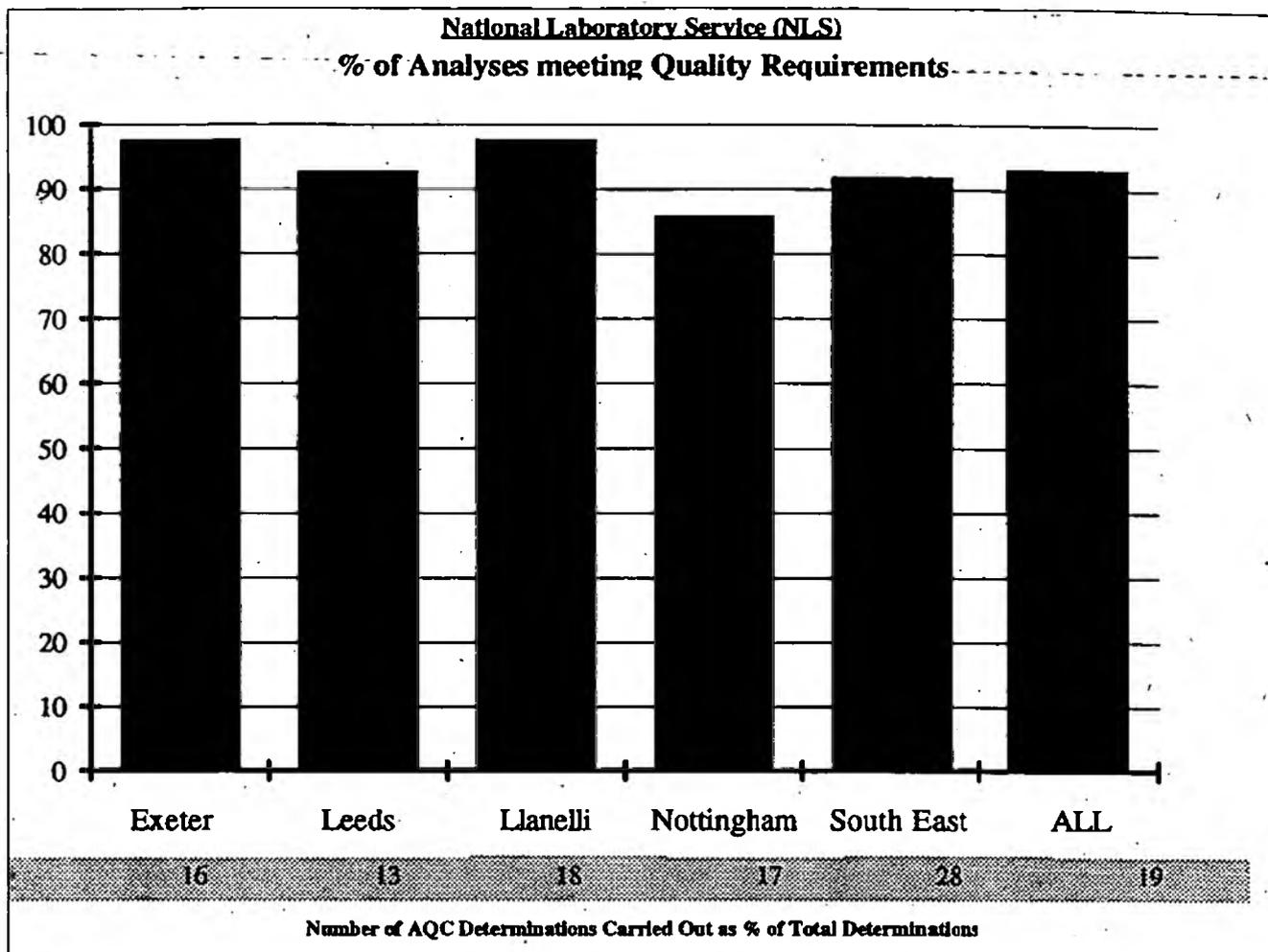
The graph shows details of turnaround times for each laboratory site and for the NLS in total. Results for the laboratories at Reading and Waterlooville have been combined and reported under the description "South East".

Comment: For the NLS in total (all sites) 99.2% of all samples were fully analysed and reported within 56 days, marginally below the target of 100% contained in the NLS/Agency Service Level Agreement. 94% of the sample results were reported within 30 days, slightly below the 95% target specified in the Service Level agreement. And for formal samples, 97% were reported within 14 days, compared with a target of 100% in the service level agreement. Whilst the latter figure is lagging behind target, it shows improvement over the figure of the previous quarter when 92.1% of formal samples were reported in 14 days.

Looking at individual sites, all laboratories reported 98% or more of sample results within the 56 day target. All sites except Leeds and Nottingham met the 95% target for 30 day turnaround. With the exception of Exeter, none of the laboratories met the target for formal sample turnaround, however there has been a significant increase in the performance at Leeds, which has improved from 53% in the previous quarter to 83% in the second quarter.

Action: Improvements are needed at Leeds and Nottingham to achieve the 95% within 30 days target, and at all laboratories (except Exeter) to achieve 100% within 14 days target for formal samples.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above data examine the quality aspect of sample analysis work carried out by NLS laboratories.

The results shown in the graph were obtained from the AQUACHECK programme run by the Water Research Centre (WRC) and provide an independent assessment of the quality of chemical sample analyses - in terms of accuracy and limits of detection - carried out by NLS laboratories.

The data in the shaded box below the graph show the number of analytical quality control (AQC) determinations expressed as a proportion of total determinations that were carried out by each laboratory to control the quality of its analytical workload. This is quite separate from the AQUACHECK programme.

Comment: An average of 93.1% of all analyses carried out by the NLS met AQUACHECK standards in Q2. This compares with a figure of 96.1% for the previous quarter. At individual site level, compliance with Aquacheck quality standards varied between sites from 85.9% in Nottingham to 97.6% at Exeter and Llanelli.

Action:

SECTION 1

POLLUTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

(b) Integrated Pollution Control (IPC)

Page

AUTHORISATION

Number of IPC Applications Determined within Selected Time Bands 1.13

Number of IPC Substantial Variations Determined in Selected-Time Bands 1.14

INSPECTION & MONITORING

Number of inspections of authorised processes 1.15

Percentage achievement of IPC policy requirement for programmed inspection visits 1.16

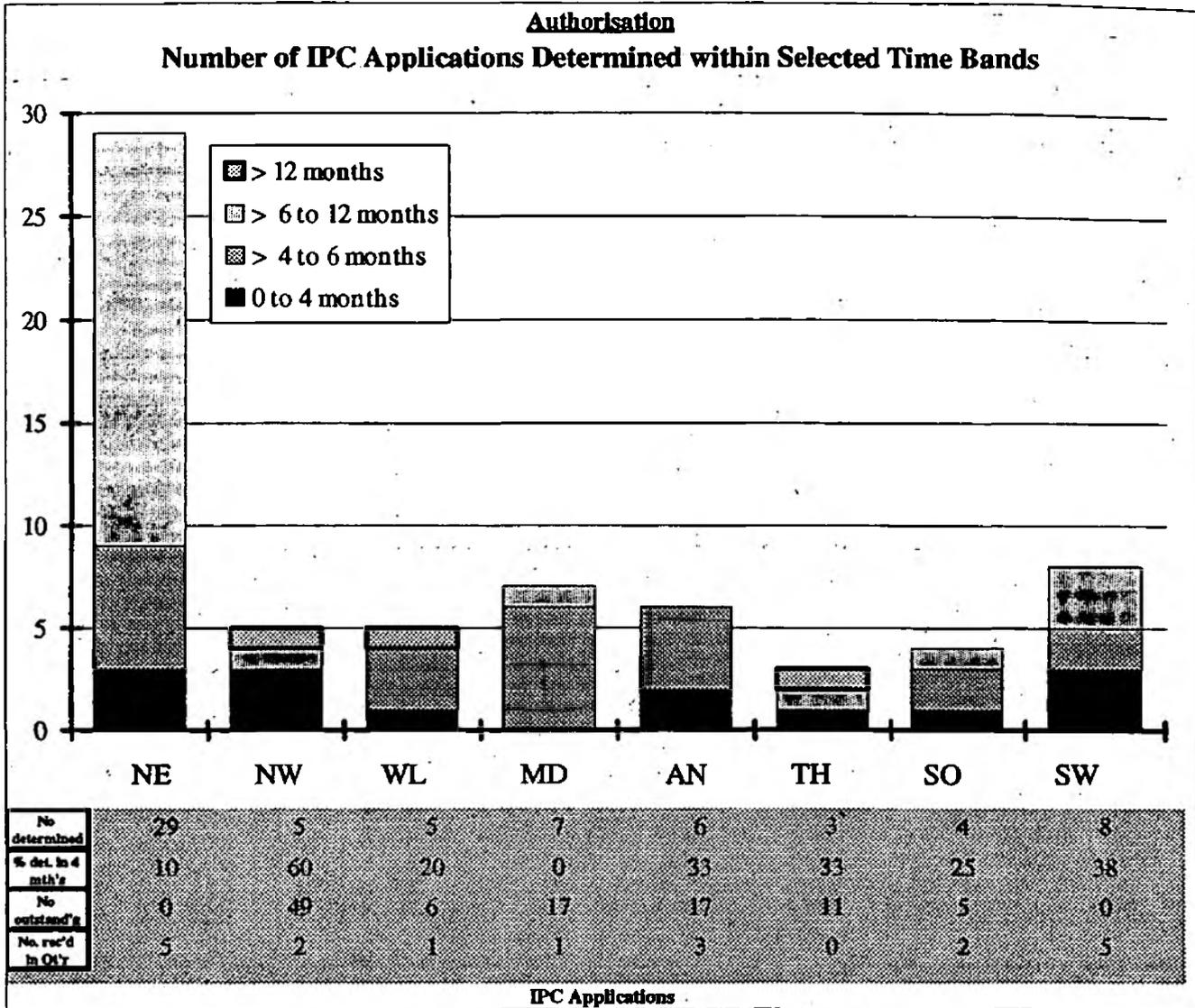
ENFORCEMENT

Number of Enforcement Actions 1.17

POLLUTION INCIDENTS

Numbers of reported substantiated pollution incidents 1.18

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The graph and table show, by region, the number of authorisations issued in the quarter, with details of time taken to issue them. The statutory target for issue is 4 months.

The table also shows the number of applications outstanding at the end of the quarter, and how many were received during the quarter.

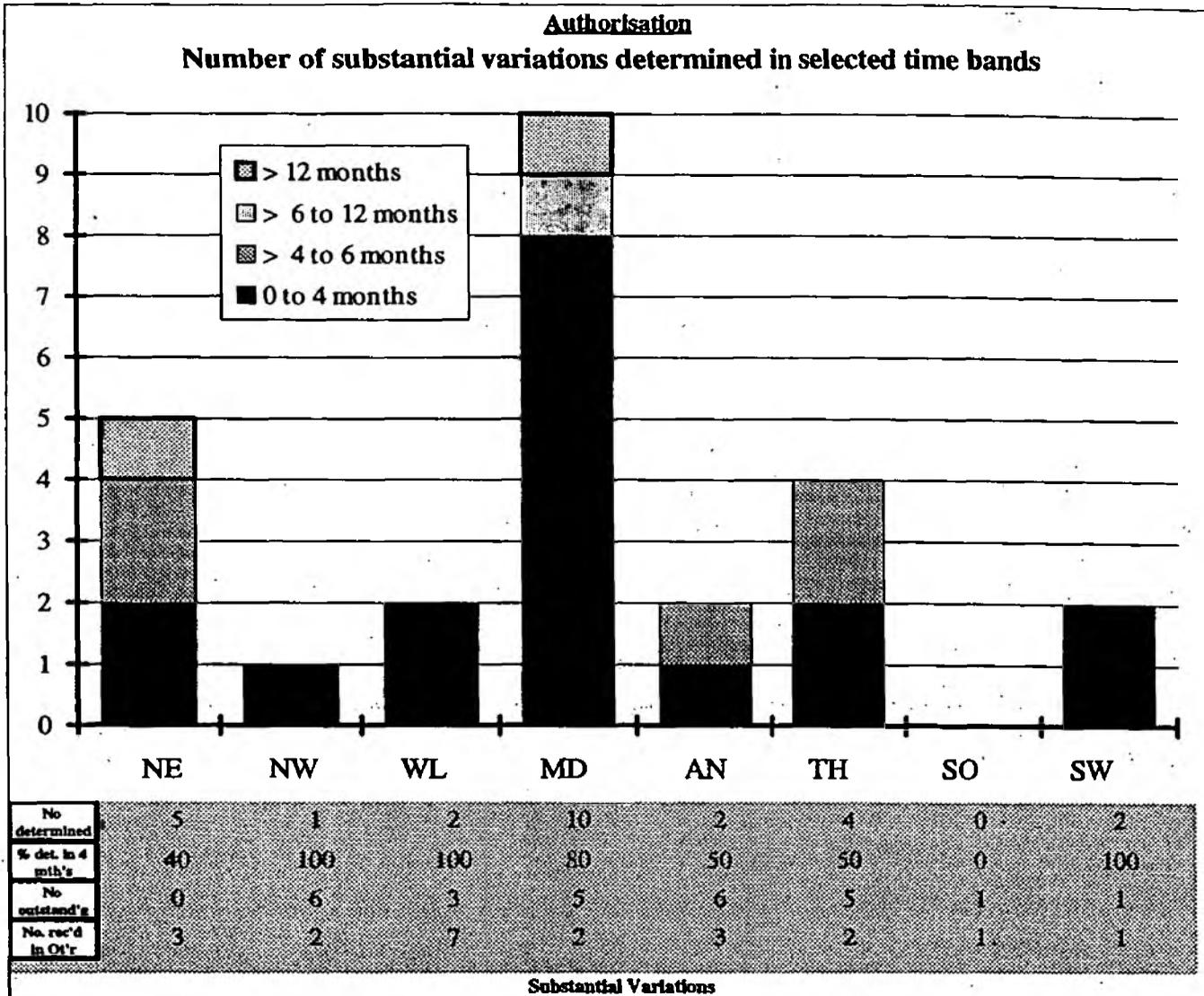
Comment: The Agency issued 67 authorisations in the second quarter which compares well with 56 issued in the previous quarter. However the percentage of applications issued within the 4 month target has fallen from 43% last quarter, to only 21% in the second quarter.

The number of outstanding applications has been reduced in most regions, the biggest reduction being in the North East region (from 33 outstanding in quarter 1, to zero in quarter 2).

North East region determined 43% of the total number of IPC applications in quarter 2.

Action: There should be a continuing effort to decrease the number of applications awaiting determination, and emphasis on improving the turnaround time for application determination. Aim for 100% determined in less than 4 months (subject to inspector availability).

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The graph and table show, by region, the number of variation notices issued for substantial changes to authorisations in the quarter, with details of time taken to issue them. The Agency target for issue is 4 months.

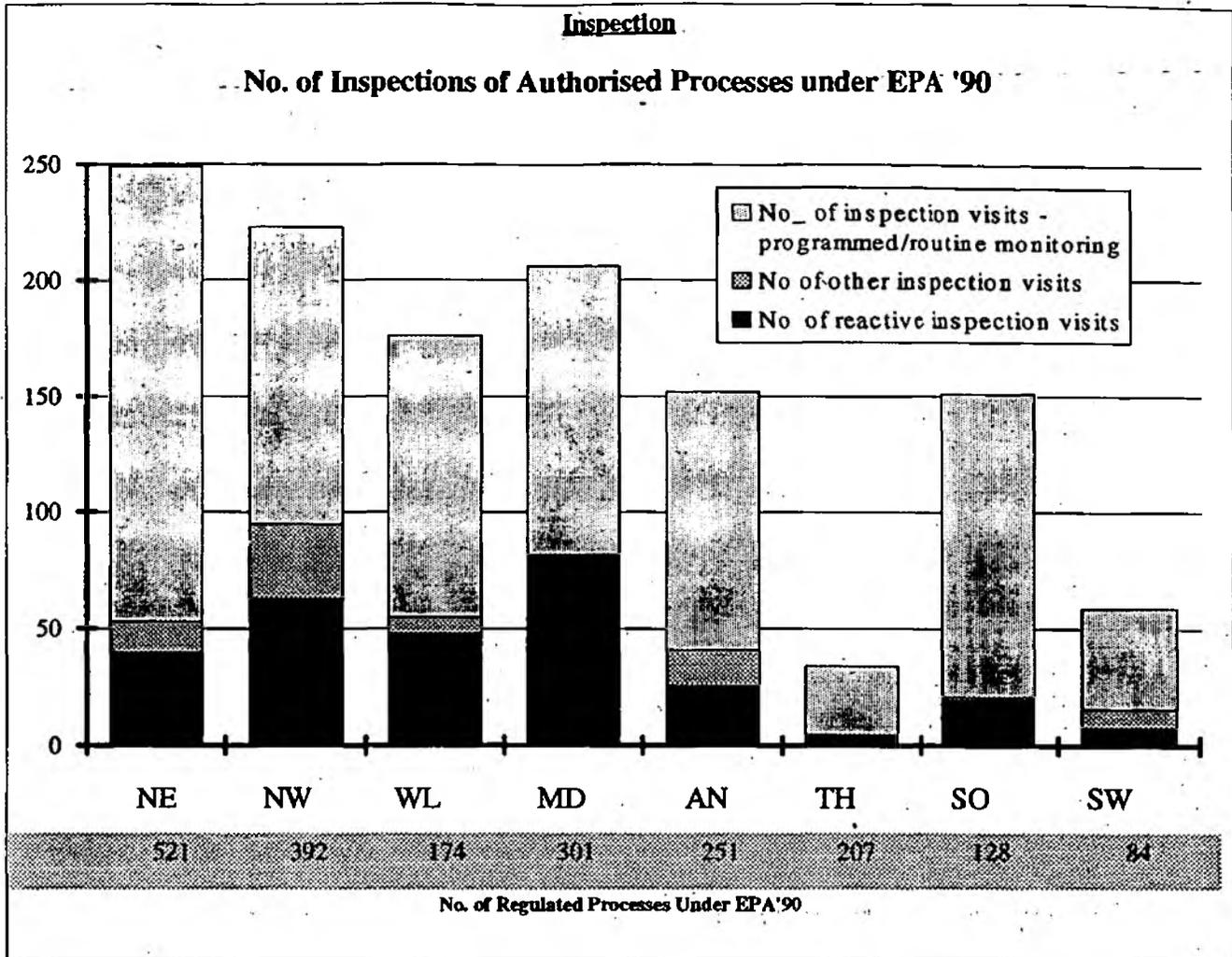
The table also shows the number of notices in the course of preparation at the end of the quarter, and how many applications were received or notices commenced during the quarter.

Comment: There was a significant increase in the number of substantial variations determined in quarter 2 of this year (26) in comparison with quarter 2 of the previous year (10). Midlands region issued the most at 38% of the total.

The number of substantial variations issued within the 4 months target time has decreased from 80% in quarter 2, 1995/96, to 69% in quarter 2 1996/97.

Action: There should be a continuing effort to decrease the time taken to determine the number of substantial variations within 4 months.

Pollution Prevention & Control



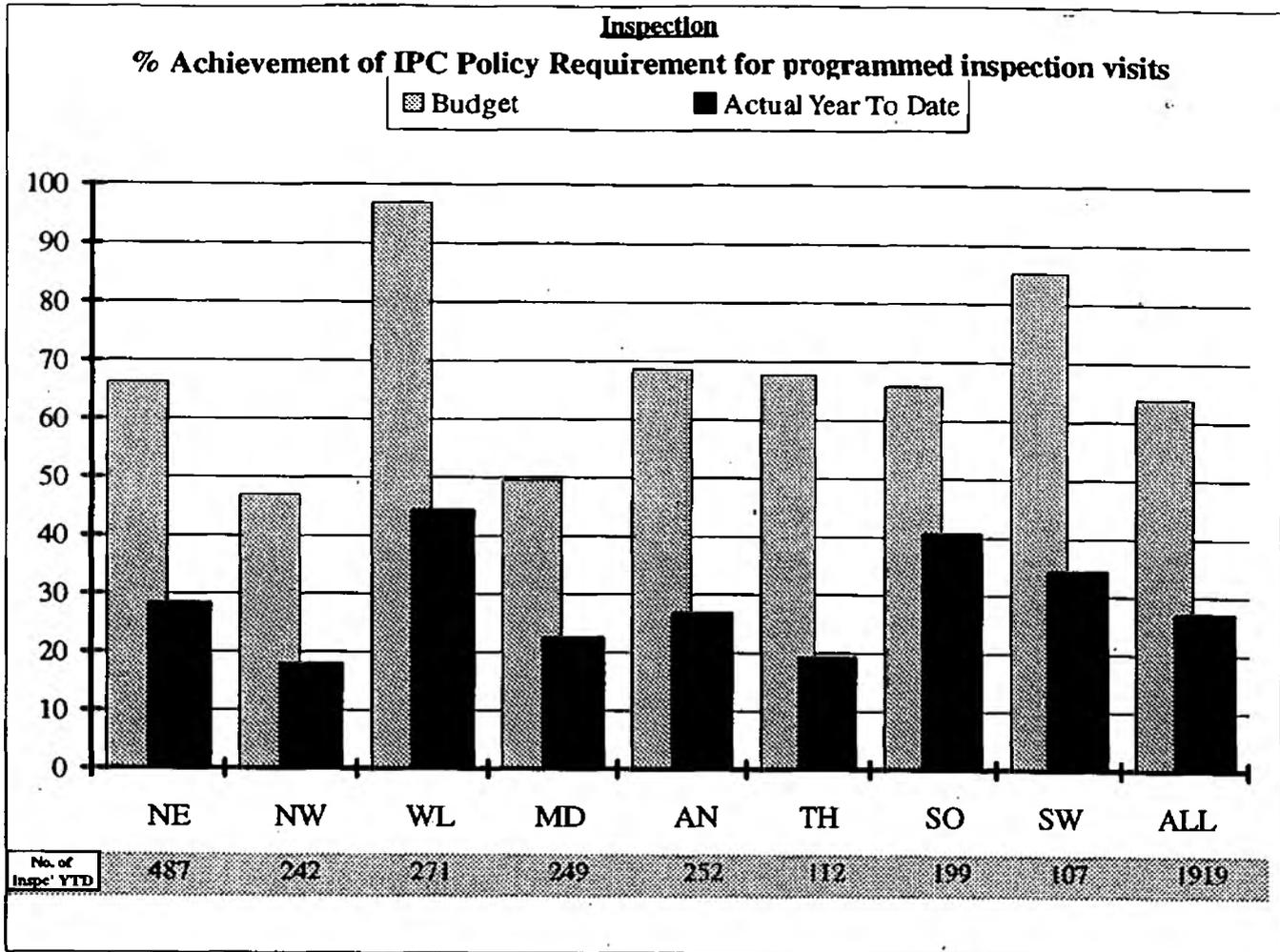
Introduction: The above graph looks at the number of inspections of IPC authorised processes which were carried out in the quarter. These are differentiated according to whether the inspection was routine (pre-programmed), reactive, or other.

The shaded block below the graph gives details of the number of authorised processes in existence.

Comment: The total number of inspections fell from 2171 in quarter 2 last year, to 1250 in the same period of this year. North East carried out more inspections of authorised processes than any other region. The density of sites doubtless helped the larger number of inspectors by reducing time spent on travelling to sites.

Action: With casework decreasing and providing adequate inspector effort is available the numbers of inspections should be significantly higher next quarter.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph shows, by region the year to date and annual budget figures, as a percentage of the annual policy requirement for IPC programmed inspection visits. The shaded block below the graph shows the number of programmed inspection visits made year to date.

With the exception of Welsh, all regions have budgeted well below the annual policy requirement.

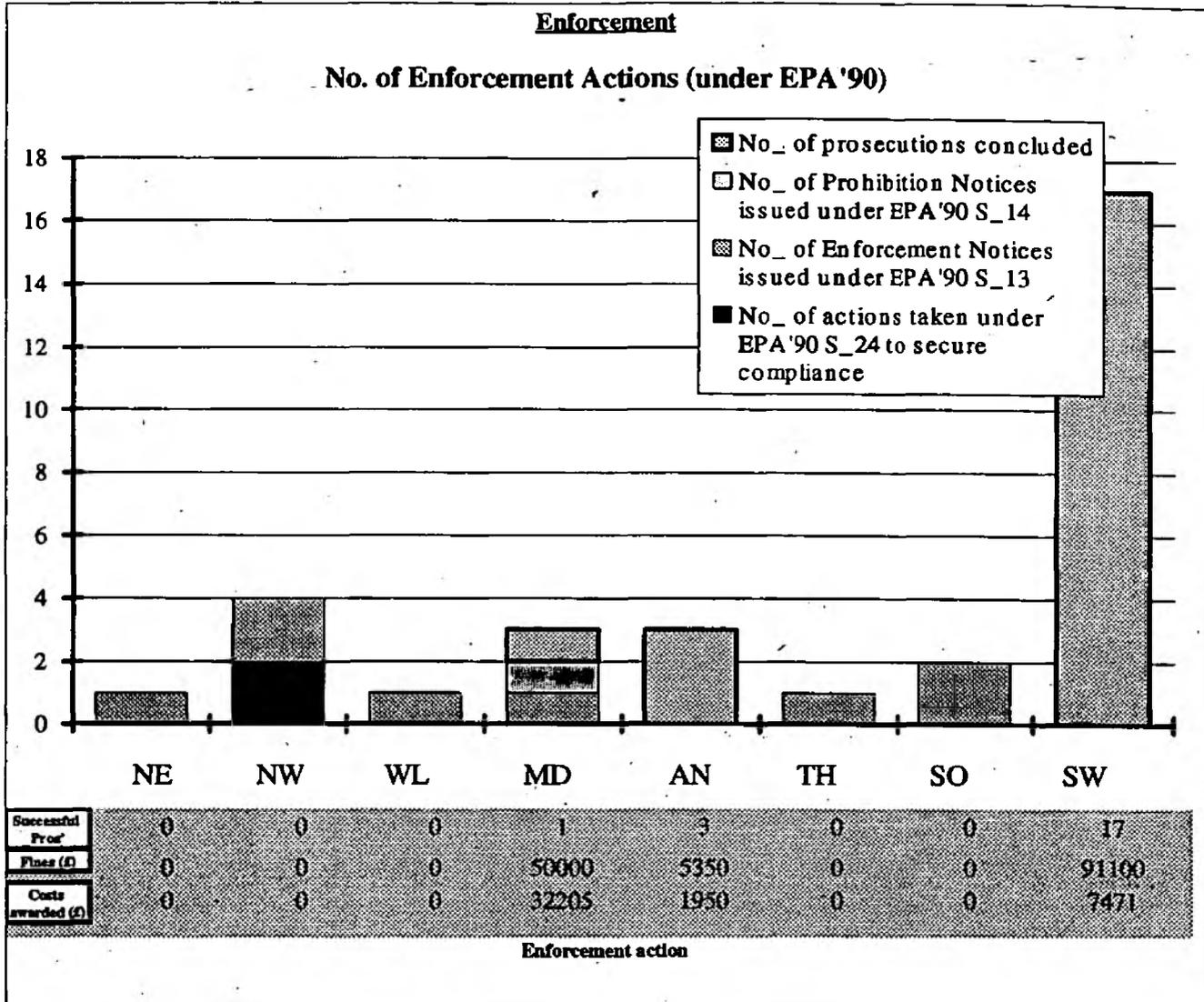
Comment: Nationally, the Agency has carried out 1,919 programmed inspection visits, this accounts for 27% of the annual policy requirement, which is significantly less than the 50% which might be expected at this stage, assuming an even distribution of inspection visits throughout the year.

All regions are significantly behind in the achievement of the annual policy requirement at the half year stage, particularly North West and Thames which are below 20%.

Resource availability and allocation may be partially responsible for the low budget figure across regions and will be a limiting factor when carrying out inspection visits.

Action: All regions need to step up inspections in subsequent quarters with a view to achieving their policy requirement.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph looks at the number of enforcement actions under EPA'90, taken by the Agency during the second quarter of 1996/97.

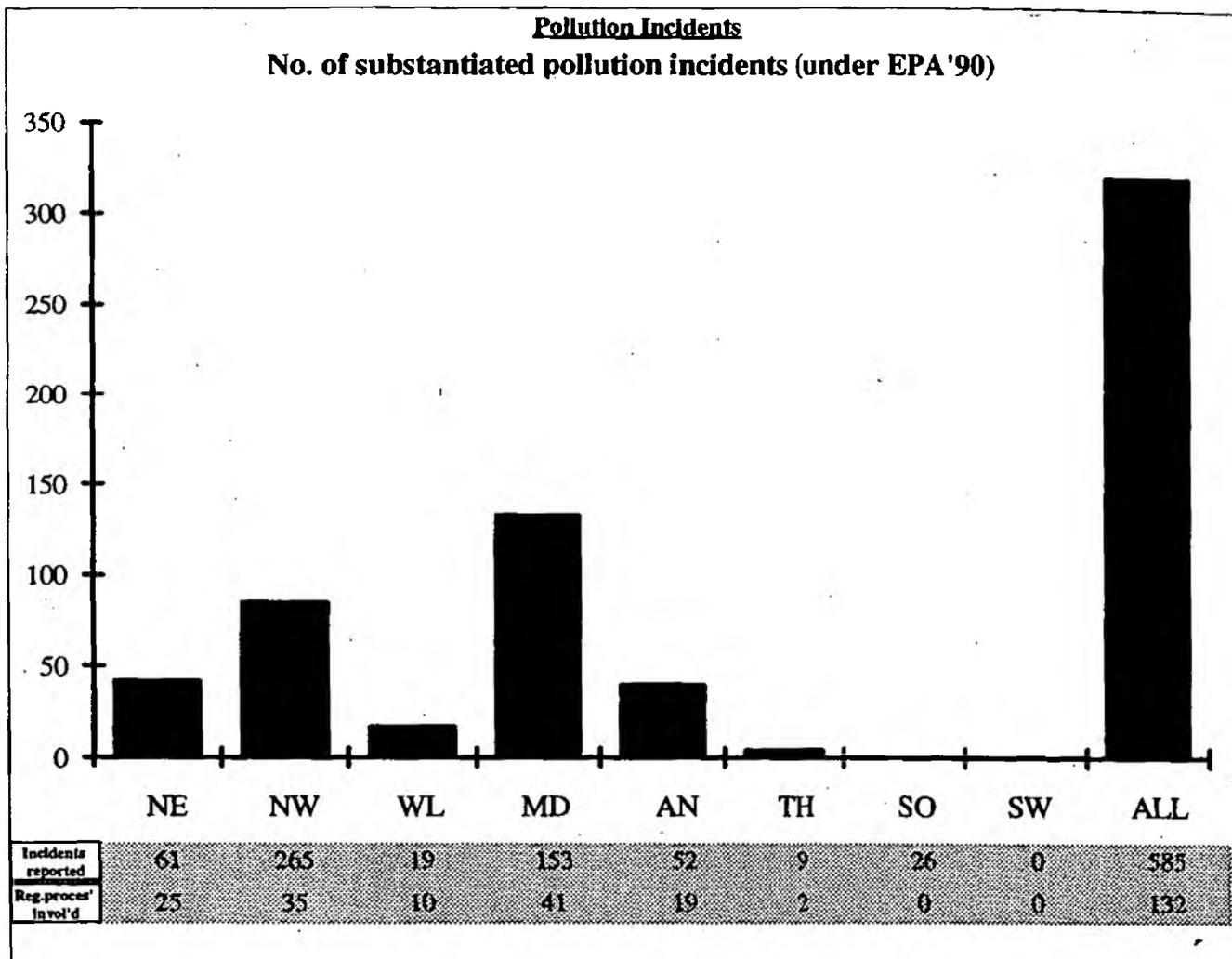
Whilst it is Agency policy to take legal action against polluters who blatantly and persistently offend, the Agency's first aim is to prevent pollution from occurring in the first instance. It aims to achieve this by targeted education campaigns and pollution prevention site visits and by using new powers to serve enforcement notices when the likelihood of pollution is uncovered.

Comment: Nationally, 21 prosecutions were concluded in the quarter. This gives a 100% prosecution success rate and resulted in total fines of £146,450 with costs of £41,626 being awarded.

In addition, 2 Actions taken under EPA'90 s.24 to secure compliance, 8 Enforcement notices and 1 Prohibition notice were issued.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above chart shows, the number of (EPA'90) pollution incidents reported in quarter 2, which on investigation by the Agency were substantiated.

The table below the graph looks at the total number of incidents reported in the quarter, and the number of regulated processes which were found to be responsible for the pollution incidents.

Comment: 585, IPC incidents were reported in the second quarter. On investigation by the Agency, 281 of these were substantiated. 132 regulated processes were identified as giving rise to the substantiated pollution occurrences.

By comparison, the number of reported incidents for the same quarter of the previous year; 514 IPC incidents were reported and 311 of these reports were substantiated. 113 regulated processes were identified as giving rise to pollution occurrences.

Regionally, the number of substantiated pollution incidents varied from 133 in the Midlands to zero in Anglian, Southern and South West regions.

Action:

SECTION 1

POLLUTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

(c) Radioactive Substances (RAS)

AUTHORISATION

	page
Number of Applications for Registration Determined in Selected Time Bands	1.19
Number of Applications for Authorisation Determined in Selected Time Bands	1.20

INSPECTION & MONITORING

Number of inspections of authorised processes	1.21
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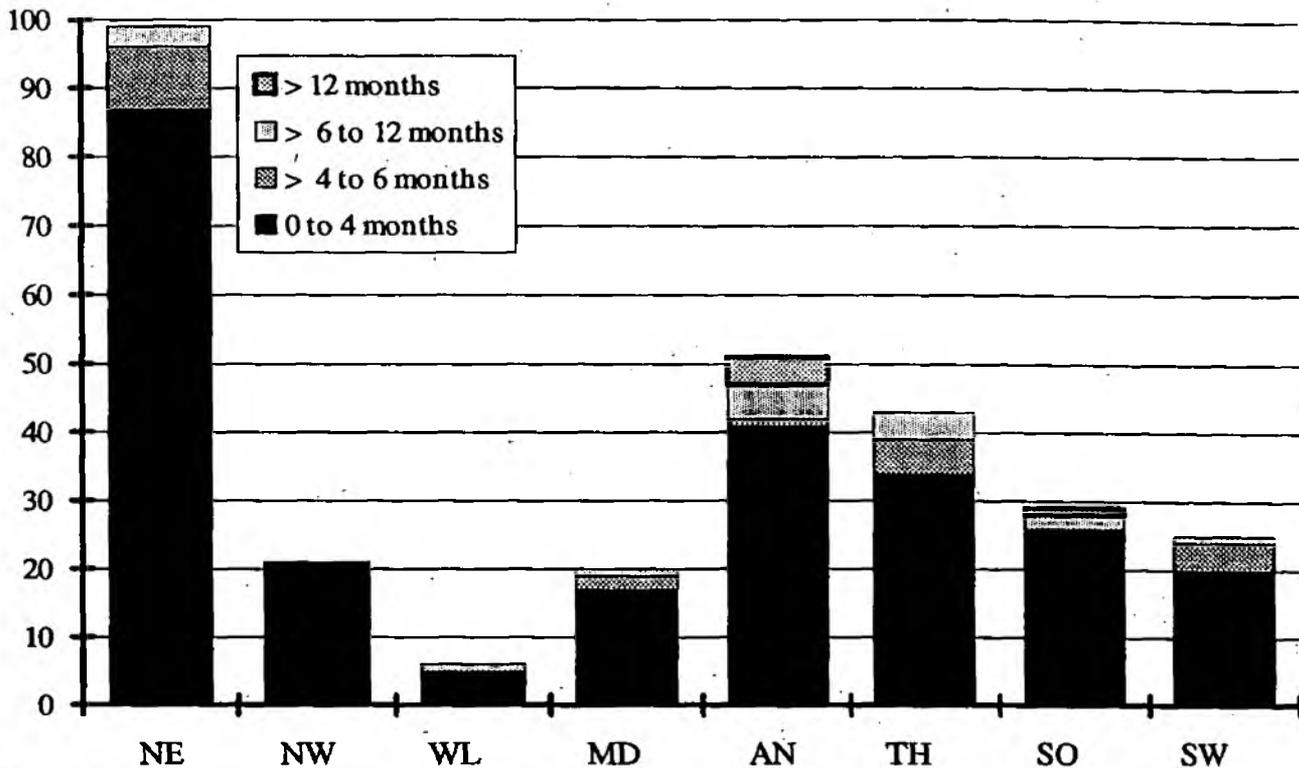
ENFORCEMENT

Number of Enforcement Actions (under RSA'93)	1.22
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Pollution Prevention & Control

Authorisation

Number of RSA '93 applications for registration determined



No determined	90	21	6	20	51	43	29	25
% det. in 4 mth's	88	100	83	85	80	79	90	80
No outstanding	71	9	6	13	43	64	29	13
No. rec'd in Qtr	90	26	8	25	47	60	43	16

RSA '93 Applications for Registration

Introduction: The graph and the table show, by region, the number of RSA '93 certificates of registration issued in the quarter, with details of the time taken to issue them. The Agency target for issue is 4 months. The table also shows the number of applications outstanding at the end of the quarter, and how many were received during the quarter.

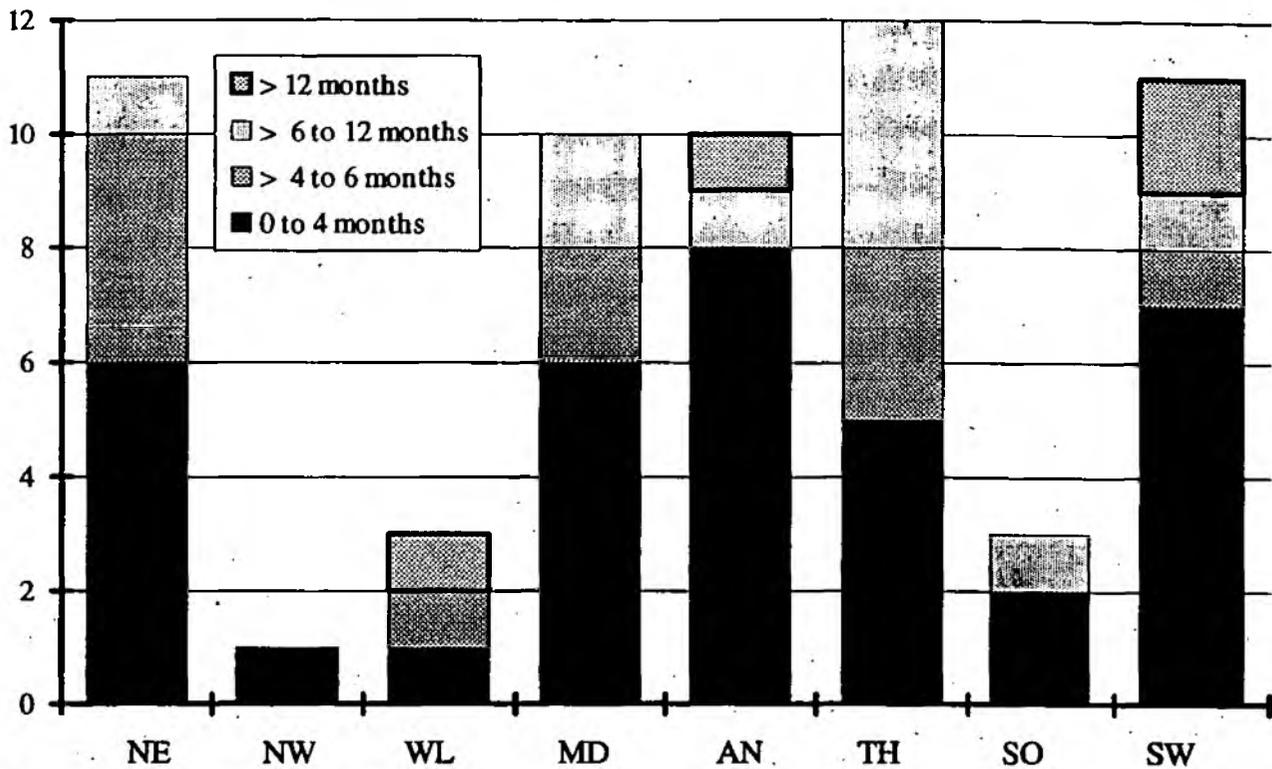
Comment: 294 applications were determined during this quarter and some 86% of these were handled within the target time of 4 months. The number of cases in hand at the end of the period shows an increase over last quarter, mainly due to the large number of applications received. With the exception of North East, Anglian and South West regions, the number of applications determined was less than the number received.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control

Authorisation

Number of RSA '93 applications for authorisation determined in selected time bands



No determined	11	1	3	10	10	12	3	11
% det in 4 mth's	55	100	33	60	80	42	67	64
No outstanding	29	1	0	0	13	35	10	20
No rec'd in QTY	9	1	4	28	5	15	3	8

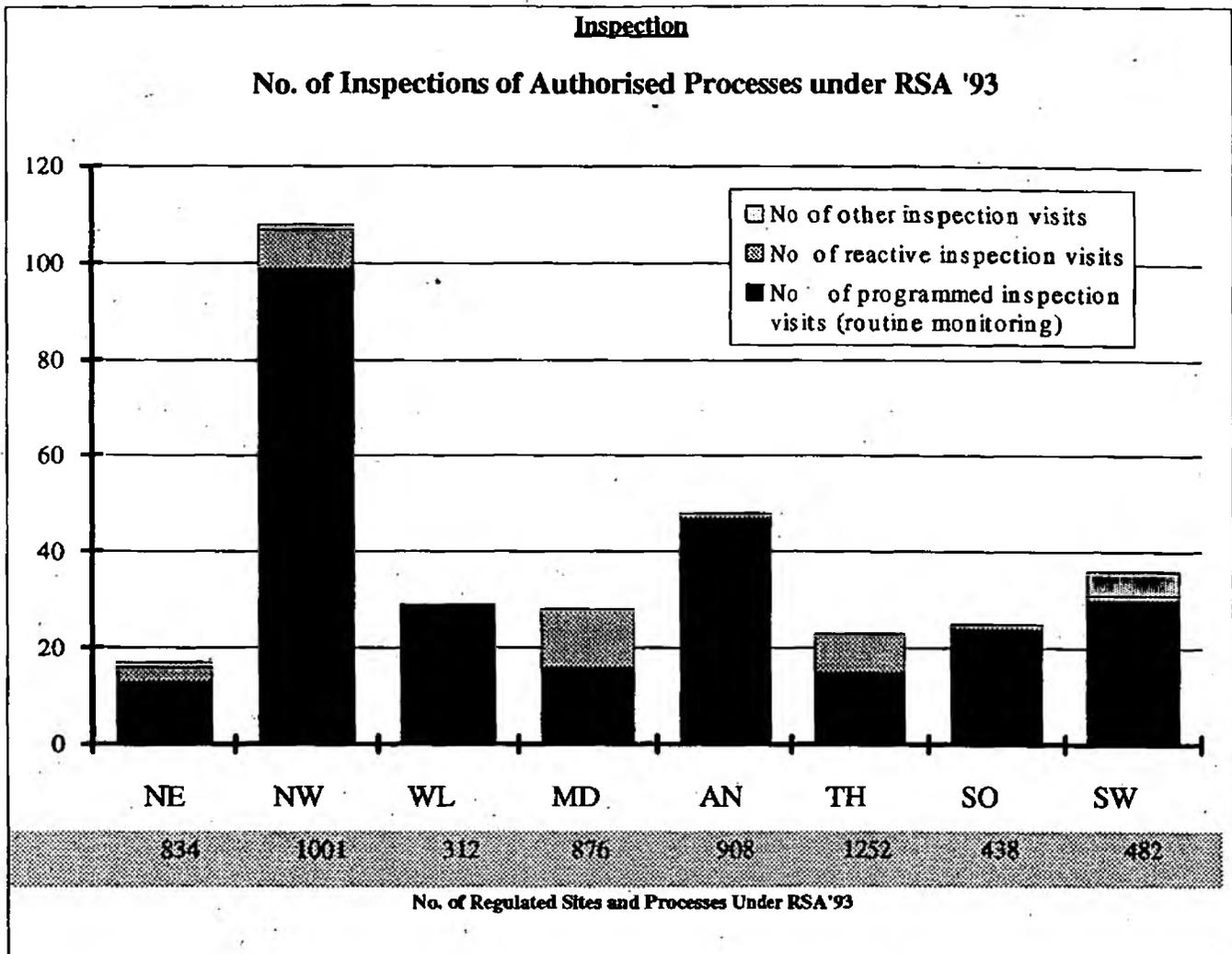
RSA '93 Applications for Authorisation

Introduction: The graph and table show, by region, the number of RSA'93 authorisations issued in the quarter with details of the time taken to issue them. The Agency's target is to issue authorisations within 4 months. The table also shows the number of applications outstanding at the end of the quarter.

Comment: 73 applications were received this quarter and 61 were determined in total. Of those applications determined, approximately 59% were within the the 4 month target and 77% were issued within the 6 months. These figures are slightly lower than those figures from the previous quarter.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph looks at the number of inspections of RSA authorised processes which were carried out in the quarter. These are differentiated according to whether the inspection was routine (pre-programmed), reactive, or other.

The shaded block below the graph gives details of the number of regulated processes in existence.

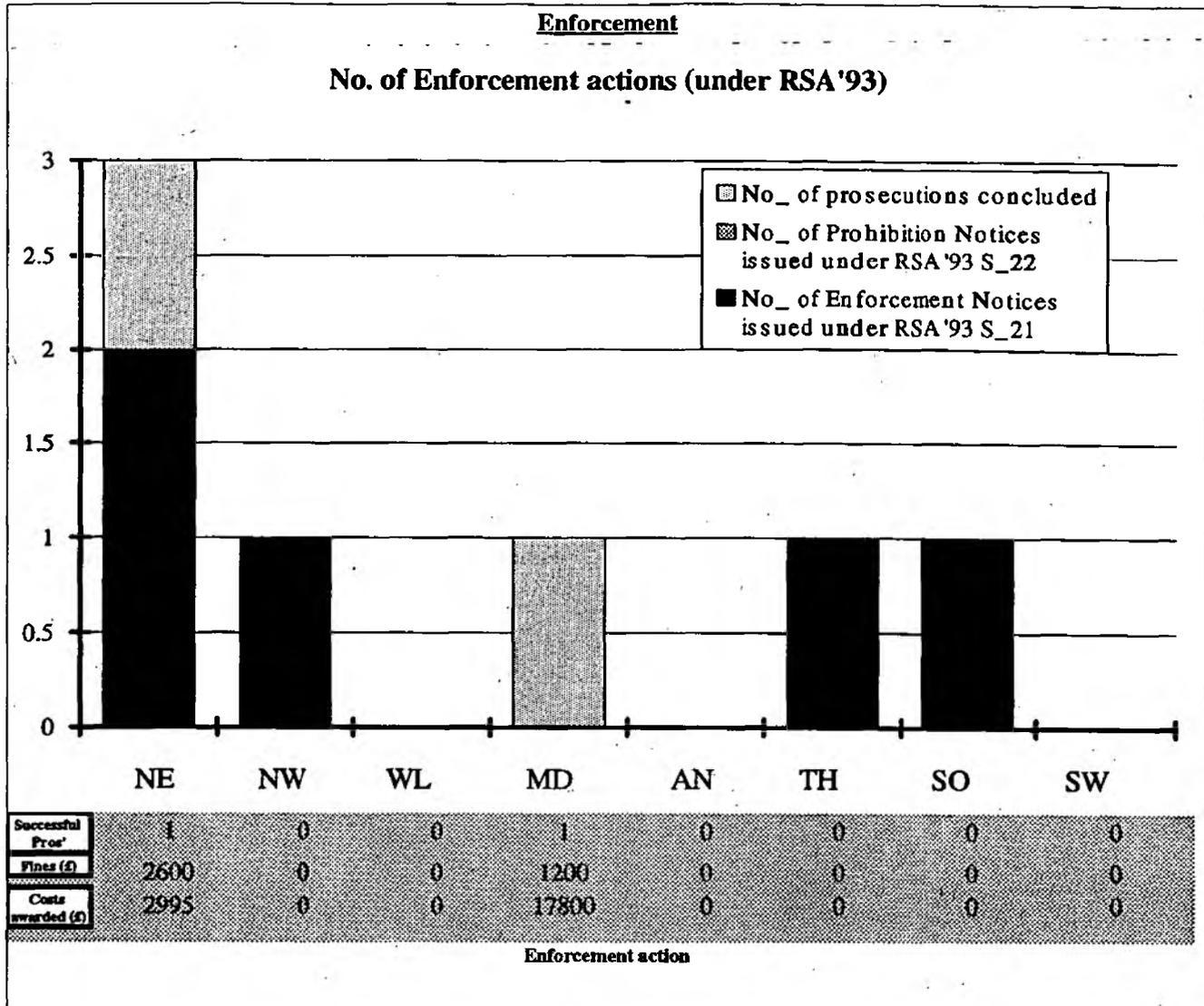
Comment: 314 non-application related inspections were carried out in this period, slightly higher than the figure in the previous quarter (290). This does not include application related inspections of which there were 58. Of these approximately 40% were to nuclear sites.

By way of comparison, a total of 1,472 non application related inspections (an average of 368 per quarter) were carried out in 1995/96.

Visits to non-nuclear sites premises at this mid-year point represent 6% of the sites registered or authorised under the act.

Action:

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph looks at the number of enforcement actions under RSA'93 taken by the Agency during the second quarter of 1996/97.

Whilst it is Agency policy to take legal action against polluters who blatantly or persistently offend, the Agency's first aim is to prevent pollution from occurring in the first instance. It aims to achieve this through targeted education campaigns and pollution prevention site visits and by using new powers to serve enforcement notices when the likelihood of pollution is uncovered.

Comment: Nationally, 2 prosecutions were concluded in this quarter. Both of these had successful outcomes and resulted in fines of £3,800 with costs totalling £20,795.

In addition 5 enforcement notices were issued under RSA'93 s.21.

Action:

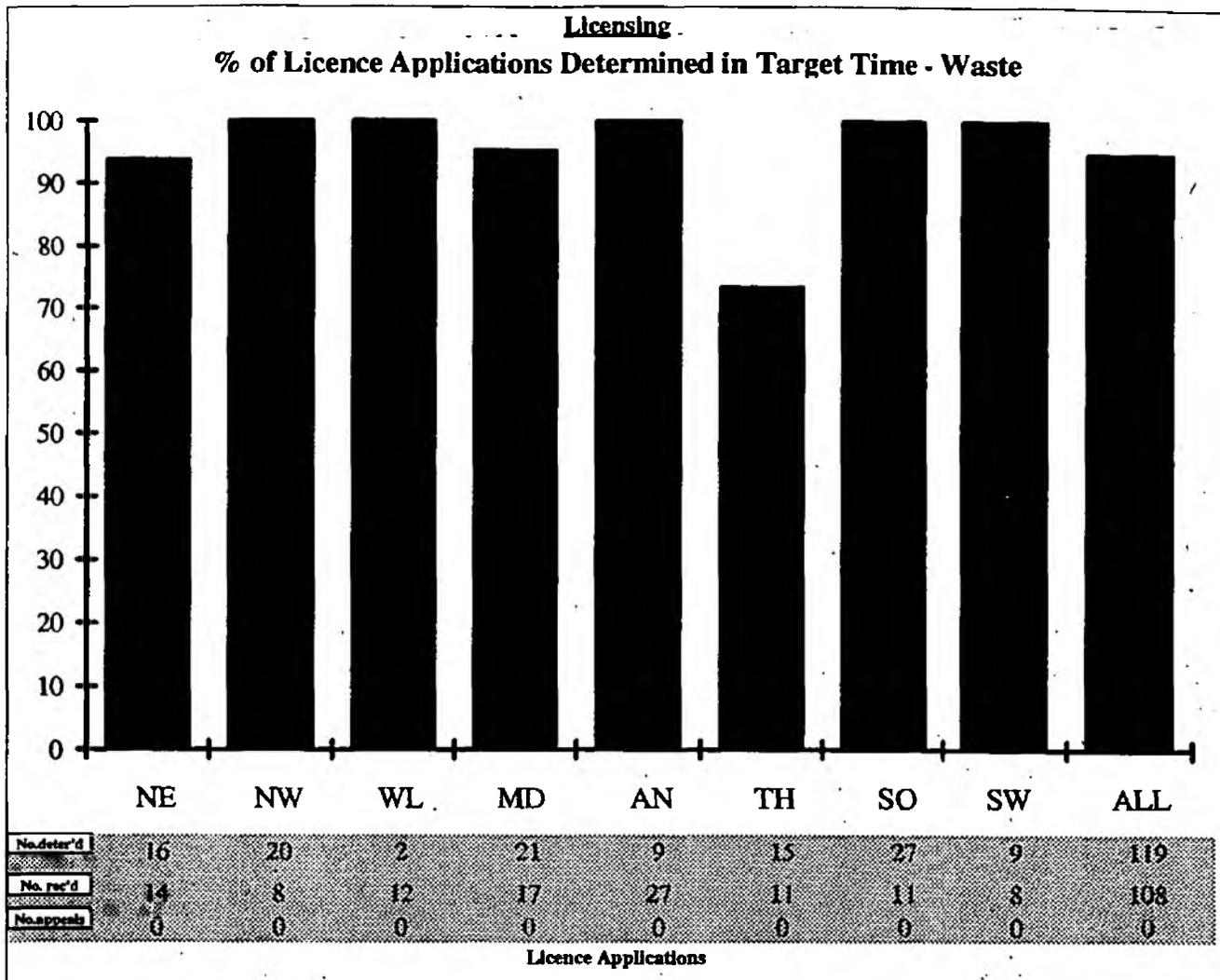
SECTION 1

POLLUTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

(d) Waste Regulation

	page
<u>AUTHORISATION</u>	
% of Licence Applications Determined within Target Time	1.23
% of Licence Modifications Determined within Target Time	1.24
% of Licence Surrenders Determined within Target Time	1.25
% of Licence Transfers Determined within Target Time	1.26
<u>INSPECTION & MONITORING</u>	
No. of inspections of licensed sites	1.27
Percentage achievement of waste policy requirement for inspections of licensed sites	1.28
No. of registered carrier checks	1.29
No. of registered broker checks	1.30
<u>ENFORCEMENT</u>	
No. of incidents resulting in charges being brought	1.31
No. of Notices issued	1.32

Pollution Prevention & Control



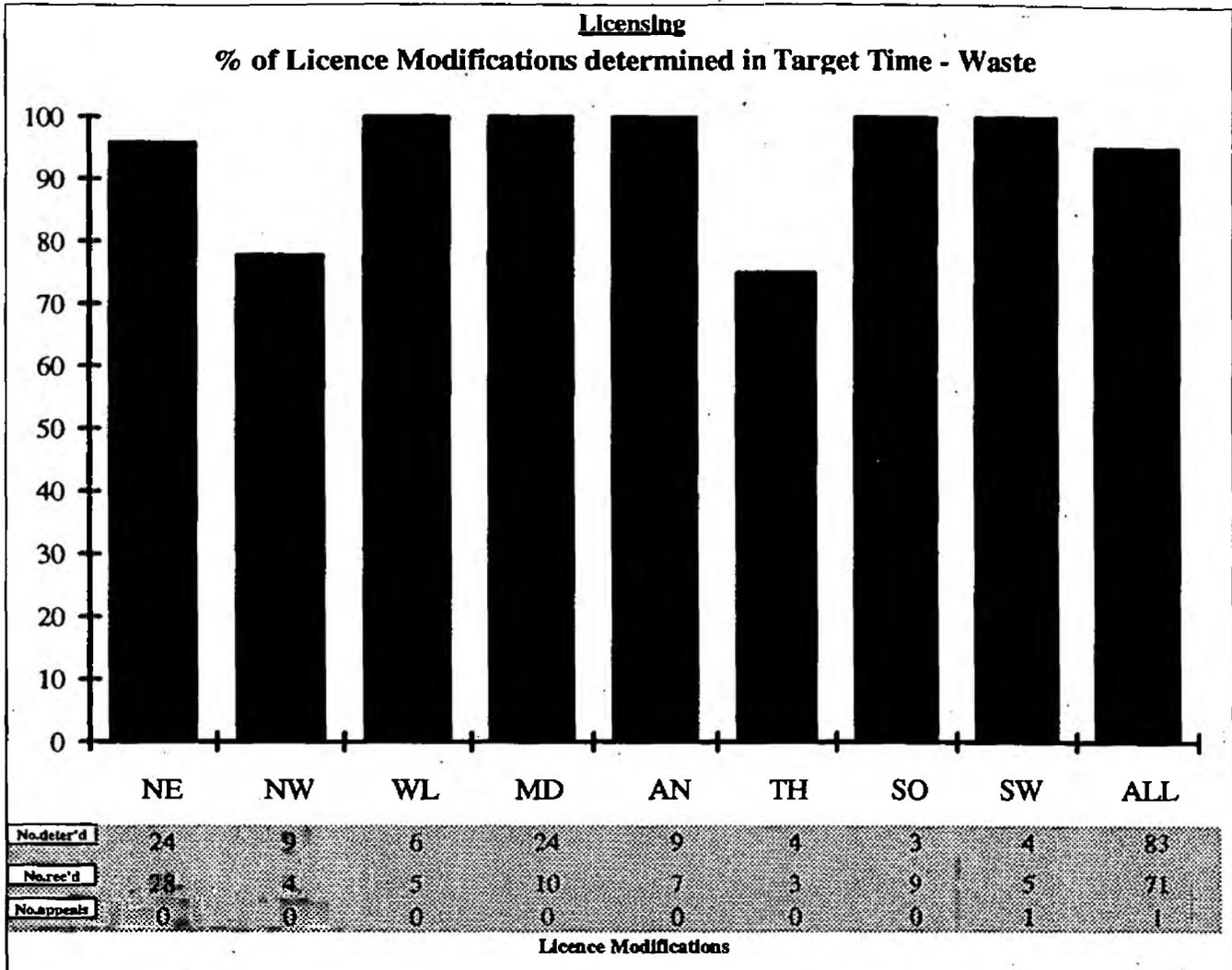
Introduction: The graph/table shows the number of licence applications received and those determined within the statutory period of four months, or a longer period as agreed with the applicant.

Comment: Nationally, 95% of licence applications were determined within the 4 month target or an agreed extension time. All regions, with the exception of North East (94%), Midlands (95%) and Thames (73%), have achieved 100% licence determination this quarter, which is a substantial improvement on quarter 1 performance.

The number of licence applications determined in quarter 2 also includes carry over from the previous quarter. With this in mind, a high level of performance has been attained.

Action: A more meaningful measure of performance may include the number of licence applications determined within selected time bands.

Pollution Prevention & Control



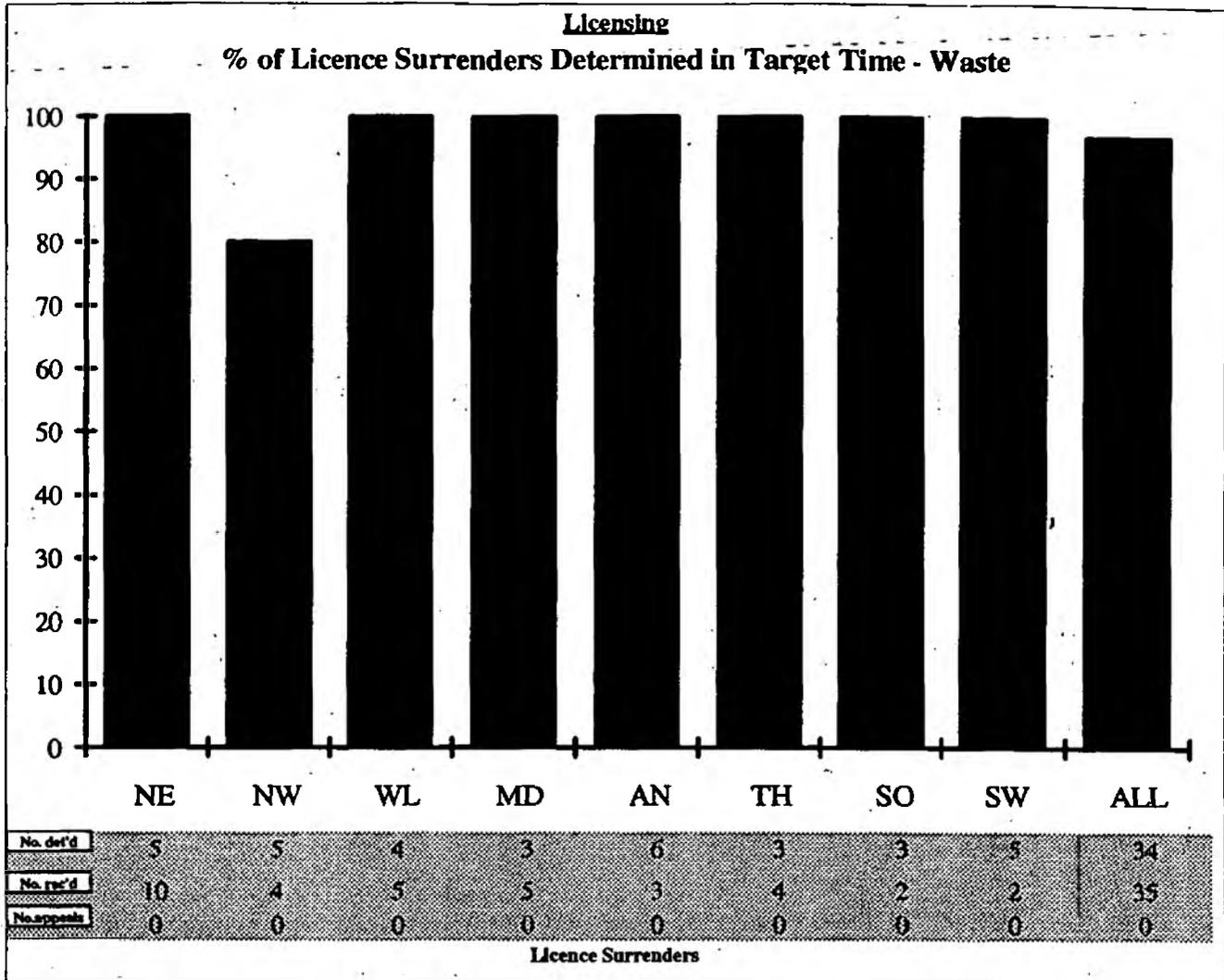
Introduction: The graph/table shows the number of applications for licence modifications received and those determined within the statutory period of two months or a longer period as agreed with the applicant. Licence conditions may be modified to reflect changing operational circumstances provided that environmental standards are maintained.

Comment: Nationally, 95% of licence modifications were determined within the 4 month target or an agreed extension time. All regions with the exception of North East (96%), North West (78%) and Thames (75%), achieved 100% modification determination this quarter, which is a significant improvement on Q1 performance.

The number of licence applications determined in quarter 2 also includes carry over from the previous quarter. With this in mind, a high level of performance has been achieved.

Action: A more meaningful measure of performance may include the number of licence modifications determined within selected time bands.

Pollution Prevention & Control



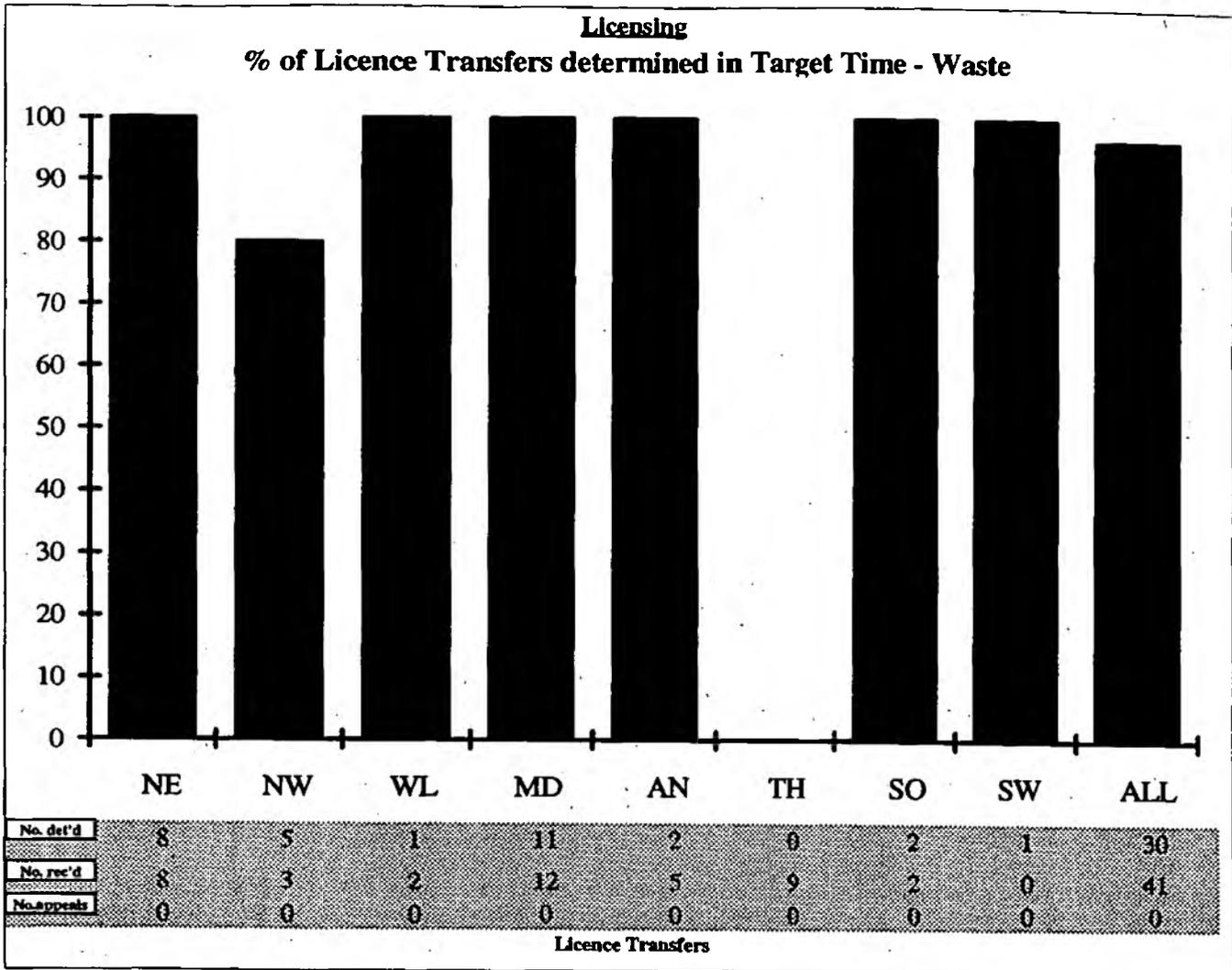
Introduction: The table/graph shows the number of applications for surrender of waste management licences and the percentage of those determined within the three month statutory period or such longer period as agreed with the applicant.

Comment: At the National level, 97% of licence surrenders were determined within the 4 month target or an agreed extension time. All regions with the exception of North West (80%), achieved 100% surrender determination this quarter, which is an improvement on the reported figures for the quarter 1.

The number of licence surrenders determined in quarter 2 also includes carry over from the previous quarter. With this in mind, a high level of performance has been achieved.

Action: A more meaningful measure of performance may include the number of licence surrenders determined within selected time bands.

Pollution Prevention & Control



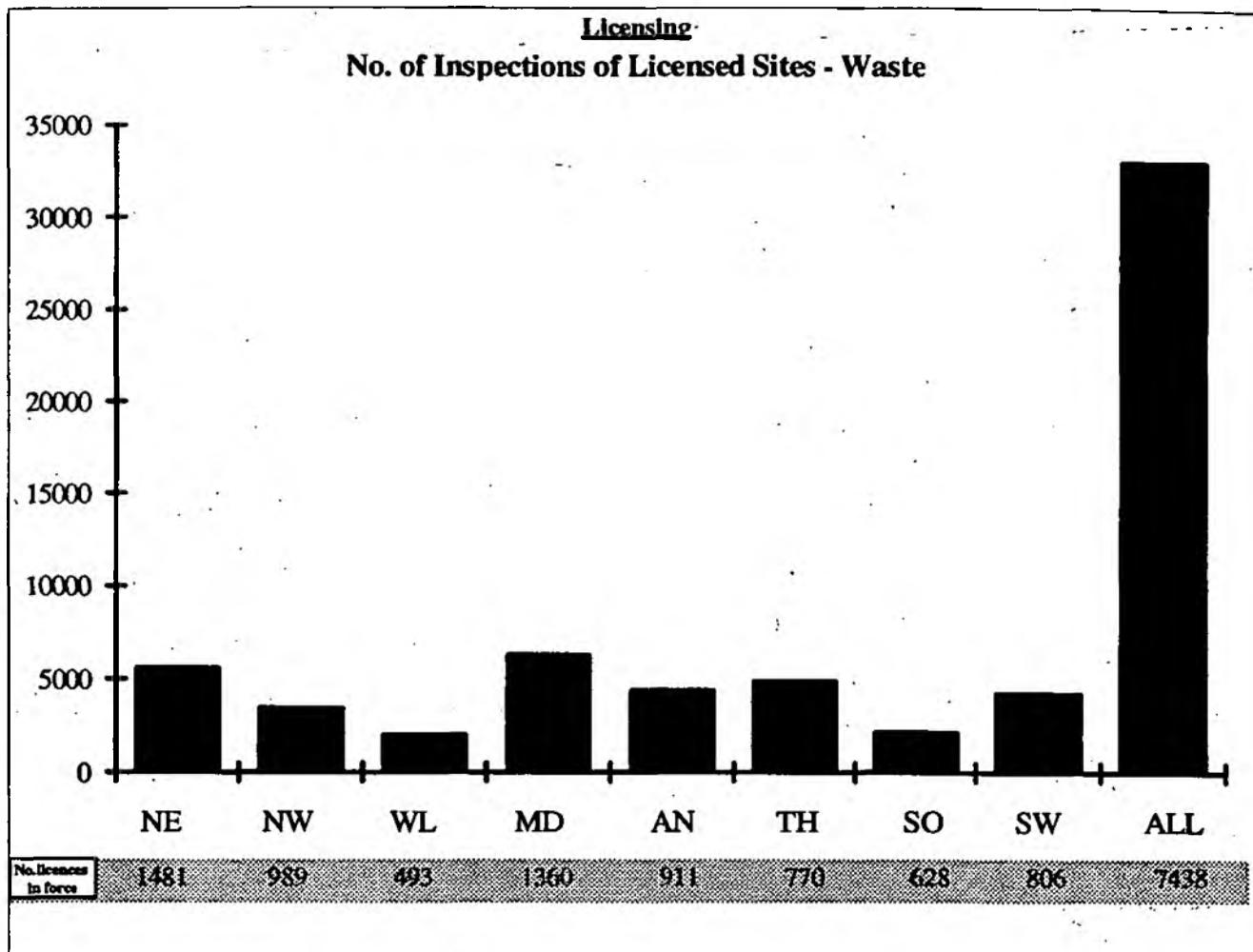
Introduction: The table/graph shows the number of licence transfers received and the percentage of those determined within the two month statutory period or such longer period as may be agreed with the applicant. Determination includes approval refusal and deemed refusal.

Comment: In this quarter, 97% of licence transfers have been determined within the 4 month target or agreed extension time. All regions attained 100% transfer determination with the exception of North West (80%), and Thames which was unable to determine any within the target period. This, in part, is due to licence transfer carry over from the previous quarter.

Action: Thames should aim to bring their performance in line with other regions.

A more meaningful measure of performance may include the number of licence transfers determined within selected time bands.

Pollution Prevention & Control



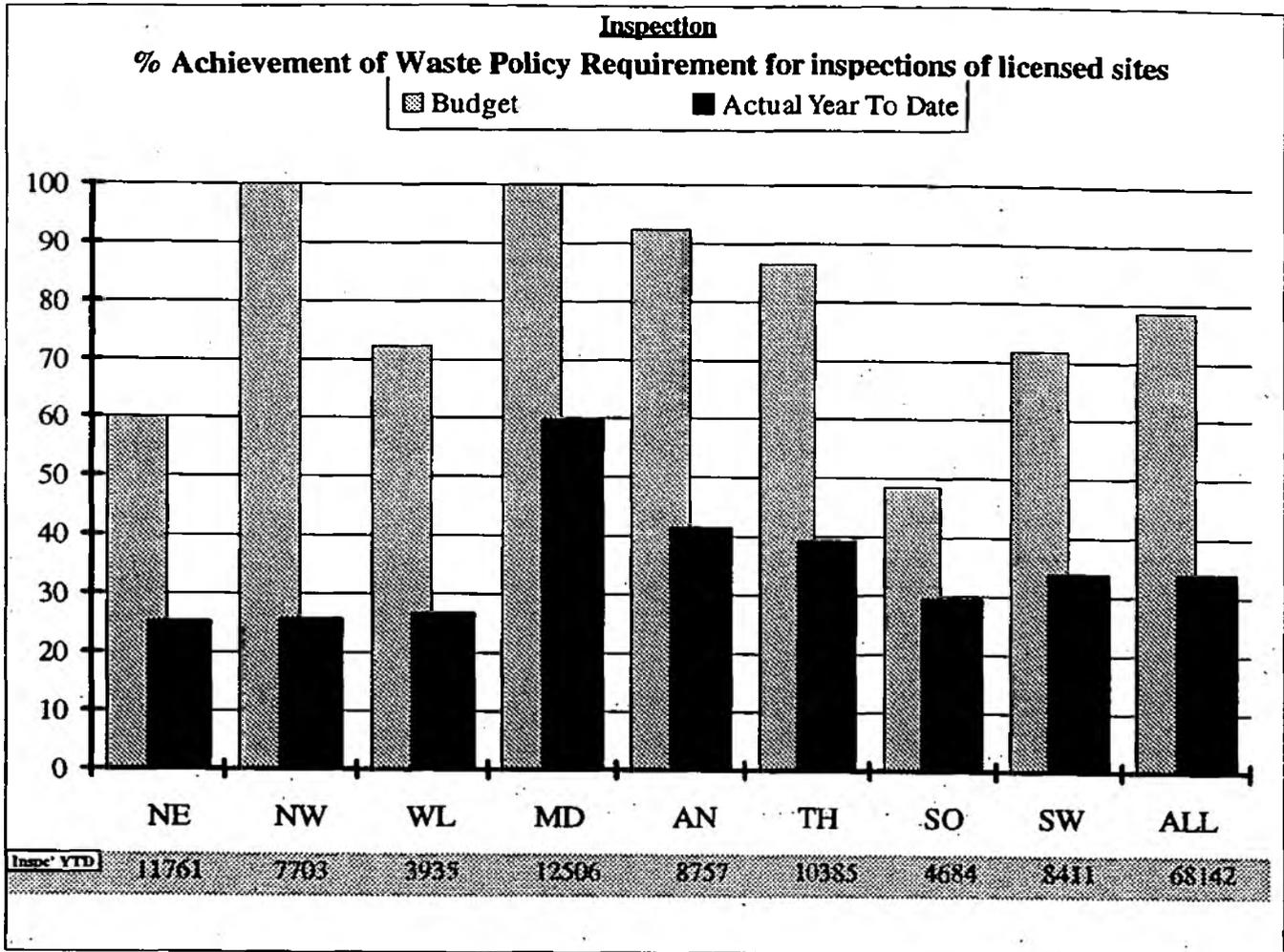
Introduction: The table/graph shows the number of waste management licenses in force and the number of inspections carried out at those sites. Inspection of sites for compliance with the licence conditions is essential for the improvement of waste management operational standards.

Comment: Generally, there has been a reduction in the level of inspections due to deployment of staff on other key activities including special waste regulations and development or regulatory consistency. The number of sites registered as exempt from licensing is increasing - there are twice as many such sites as there are licensed sites, and these also require inspection.

This is an activity measure and is not related to the statutory standards for inspection.

Action: All regions should aim to increase the number of inspections of licenced and, or registered sites. The level of resources required for this purpose is under review as part of the corporate planning process.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The above graph shows by region, the year to date and annual budget figures, as a percentage of the annual policy requirement for inspections of licensed waste sites.

The shaded block below the graph shows the actual number of inspection visits made in the first half of the year.

With the exception of North West and Midlands, all regions have budget figures which are below that of the annual policy requirement.

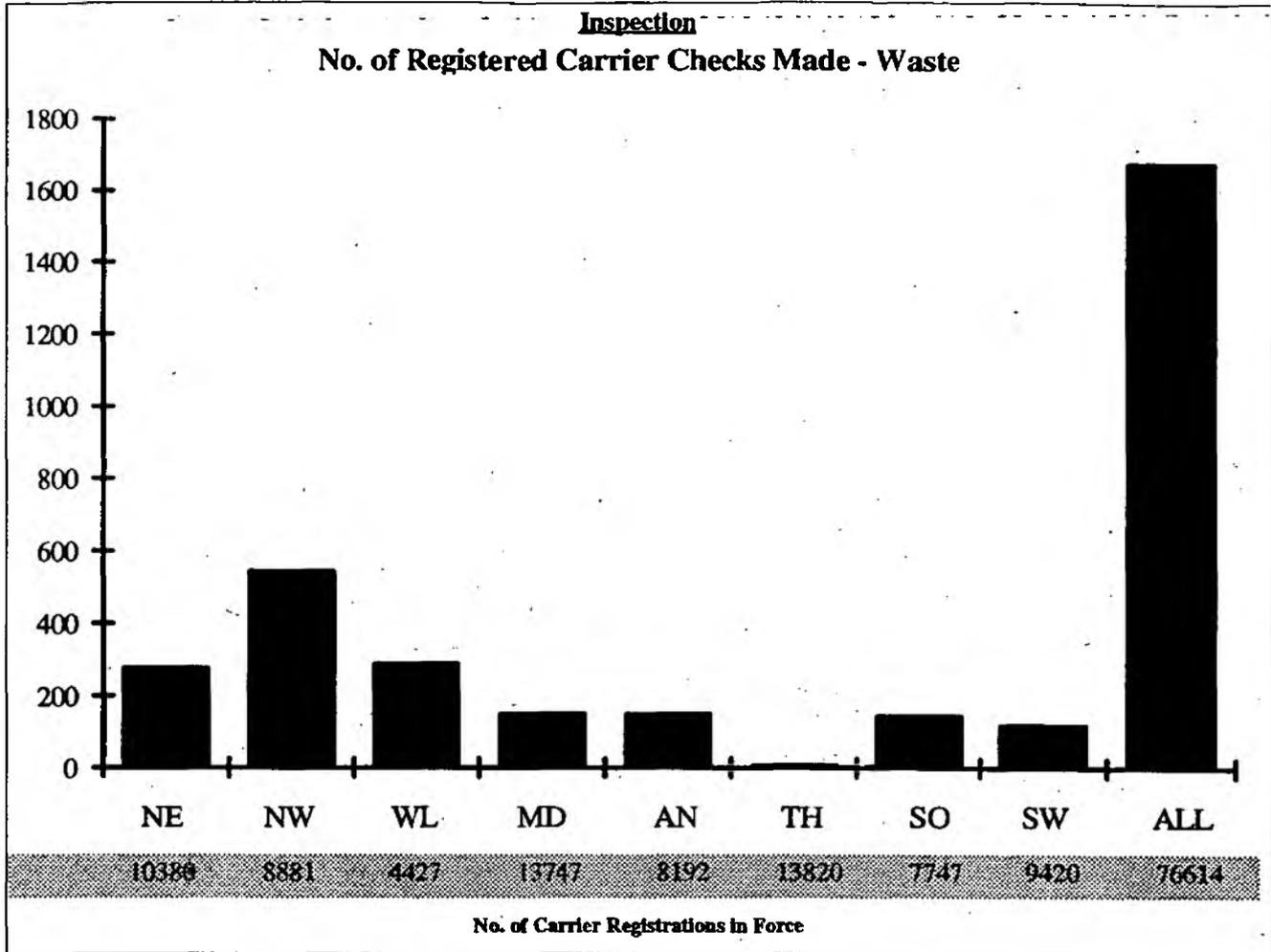
Comment: Nationally, the Agency has carried out 68,142 inspections of licensed waste sites year to date. This accounts for 34% of the annual policy requirement, which is significantly less than the 50% which might be expected at this stage, assuming an even distribution of inspection visits throughout the year.

With the exception of Midlands (60%), all regions, but particularly North East (25%), North West (26%), Welsh (27%) and Southern (29%) are behind in their achievement of the annual policy requirement.

Resource availability and allocation, may be partially responsible for the low budget figures across regions, and will limit the actual number of inspection visits carried out.

Action: Regions need to step up inspections in subsequent quarters with a view to achieving their policy requirement.

Pollution Prevention & Control

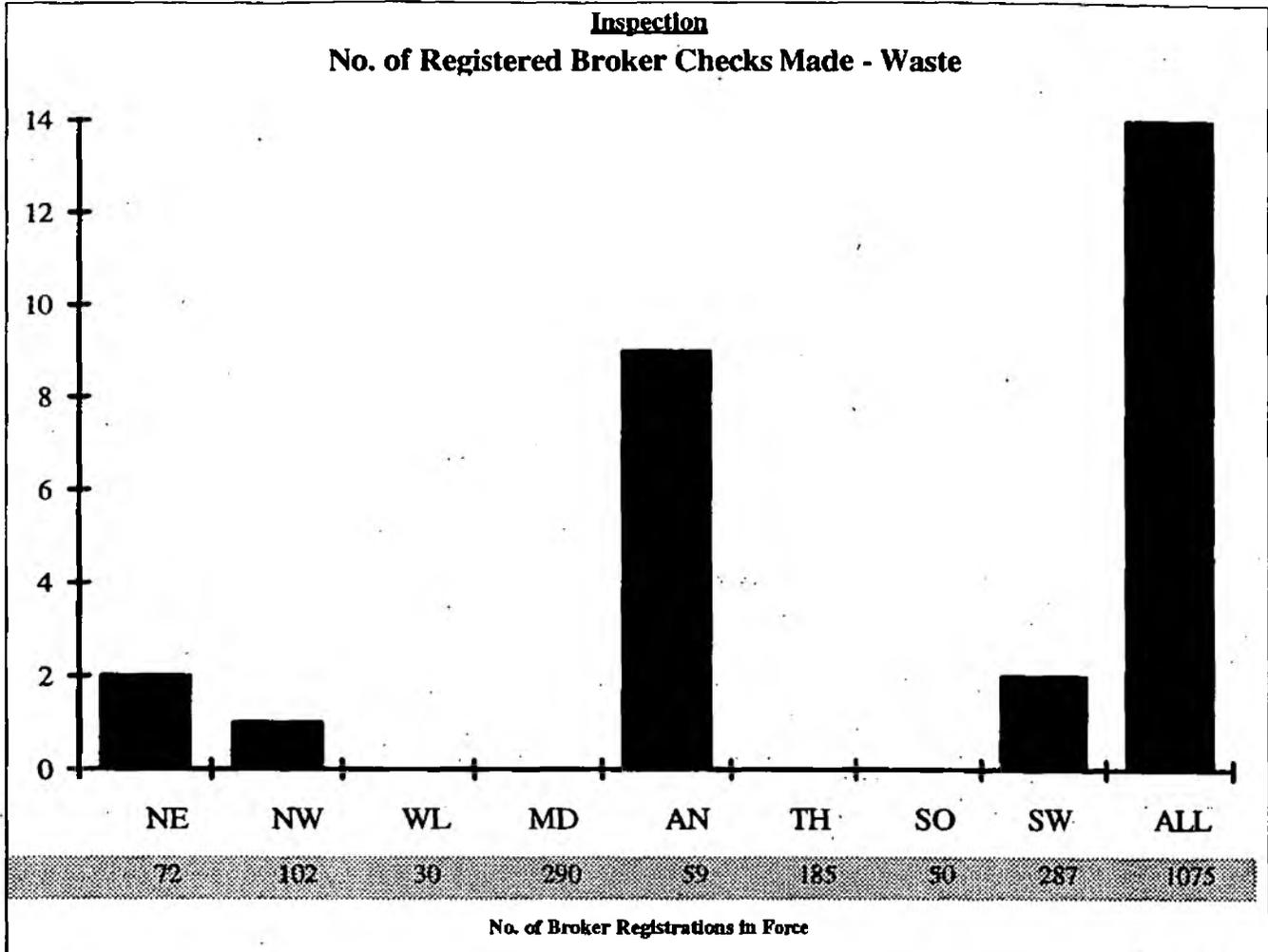


Introduction: The table/graph shows the extent to which vehicles are checked for compliance with the waste carrier regulations. The checks may be applied at licensed waste management facilities or at the roadside in association with other regulatory agencies.

Comment: The variation in the level of inspection reflects regional priorities and the limitation of staff resources due to the deployment on other key activities including special waste regulations and development of regulatory consistency.

Action: A consistent approach is needed across all regions.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The table/graph shows the number of brokers registered and the number of brokers checked.

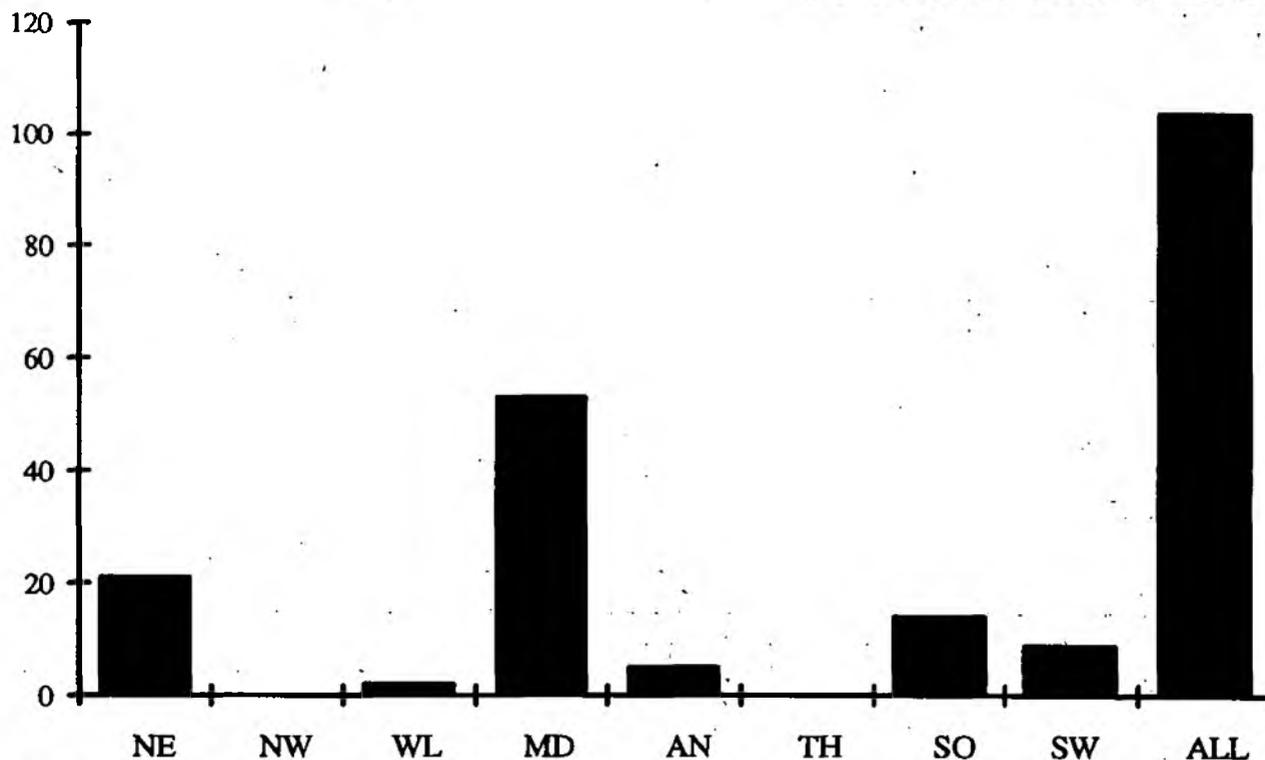
Comment: This is not generally a priority activity. The variation in level of inspection reflects regional priorities and the limitation of staff resources due to deployment on other key activities including special waste regulations and development of regulatory consistency.

Action: Regions will review their level of inspections and will harmonise as far as may be consistent with local circumstances.

Pollution Prevention & Control

Enforcement

No. of Incidents Resulting in Charges being Brought - Waste



	NE	NW	WL	MD	AN	TH	SO	SW	ALL
Unlic'd sites & flytp	10	0	2	34	1	0	9	7	63
Lic'd sites	4	0	0	7	1	0	1	1	14
Reg. carrier & broker	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Exempt sites	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Exempt scrap'd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Duty of care	5	0	0	7	2	0	3	1	18

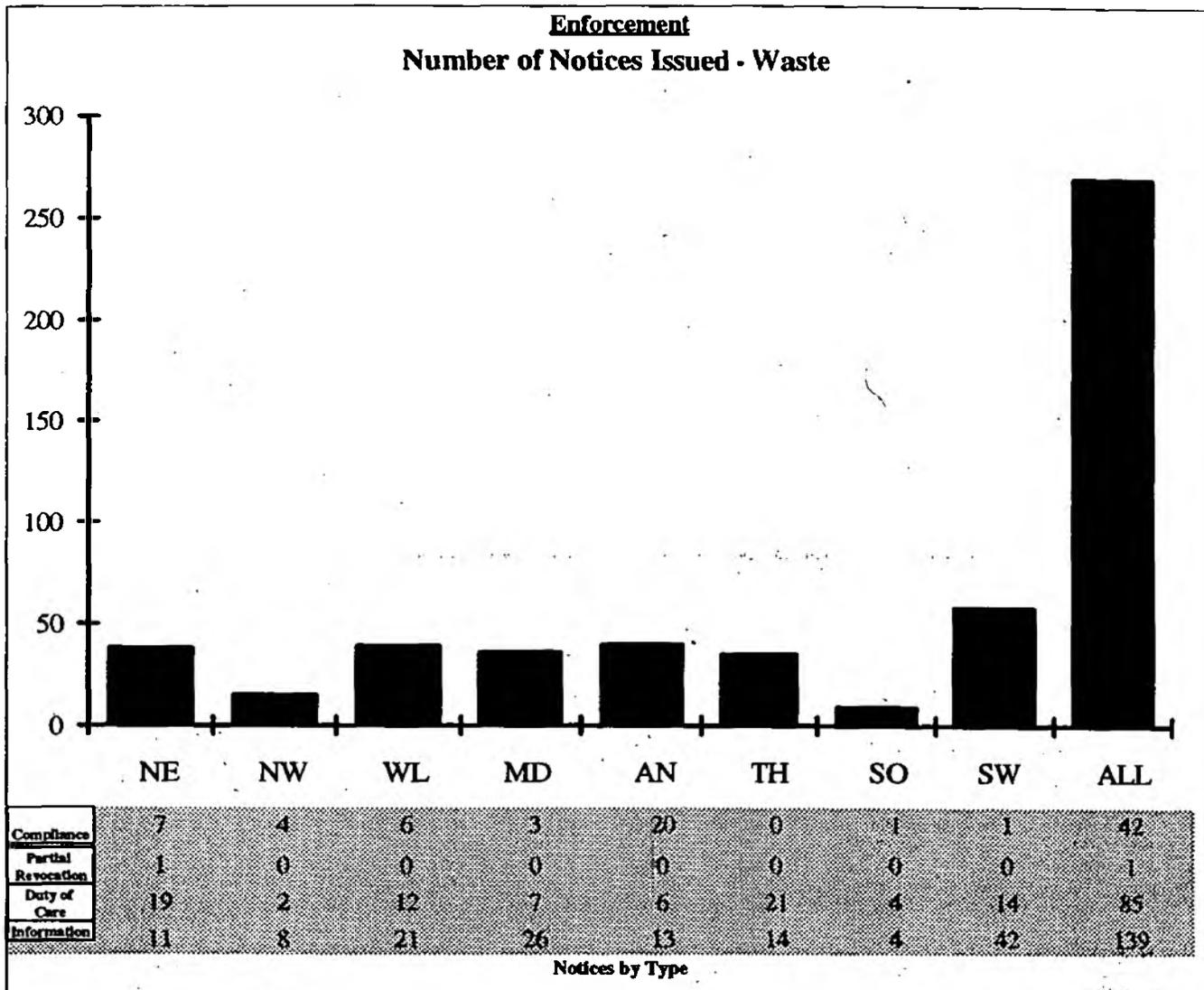
Incidents by Source

Introduction: The table/graph shows the extent of the application of prosecution as a legal sanction for waste regulation. The graph summarises the figures for the six main areas of enforcement represented in the table. The primary areas of activity are directed at control of illegal unlicensed disposals and ensuring compliance with licence conditions.

Comment: Regional variation reflects local priorities and local circumstances. In some cases a single incident may give rise to multiple charges and there is a need to establish consistent definitions for reporting.

Action: The National Waste Specification will introduce a new standard for enforcement action which will encourage consistency of approach between regions.

Pollution Prevention & Control



Introduction: The graph shows the number of notices issued by region during the quarter. The table below the graph provides a breakdown by type of notice.

Comment: The majority of notices are to obtain information rather than concerned with illegal activities. The variation reflects regional priorities and local circumstances.

Action: The national waste specification will introduce a new standard for enforcement action which will encourage consistency of approach between regions.

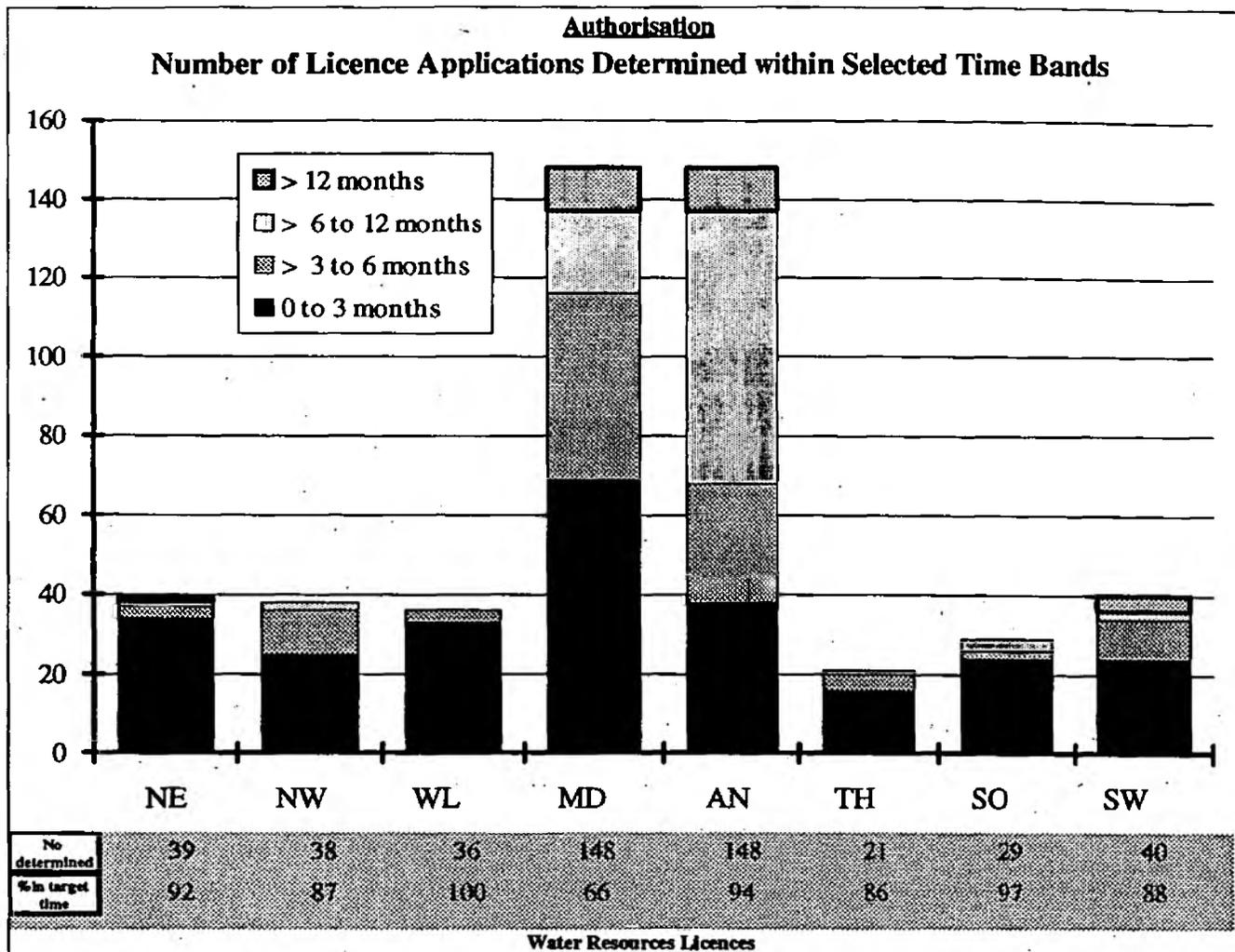
SECTION 2

WATER MANAGEMENT

(a) Water Resources

	Page
<u>AUTHORISATION</u>	
No. of licence applications determined in selected timebands	2.1
age profile of licences awaiting determination	2.2
<u>INSPECTION & MONITORING</u>	
% achievement of inspection programme :	
highly critical licences	2.3
critical licences	2.4
less/non-critical licences	2.5
<u>HYDROMETRY</u>	
% data requests responded to within 10 working days	2.6

Water Resources



Introduction: The above graph looks at the number of water resource licences determined in the quarter and provides a breakdown, within selected time bands, of the time taken to determine them.

In the table below the graph, the top row shows the total number of licences determined in the quarter in each region. The second row shows the percentage of these that were determined within target time i.e within the 3 month statutory period, or for more complex applications, within an extended period agreed with the applicant at the time of application. This measure forms one of the Agency's Customer Charter suite of measures.

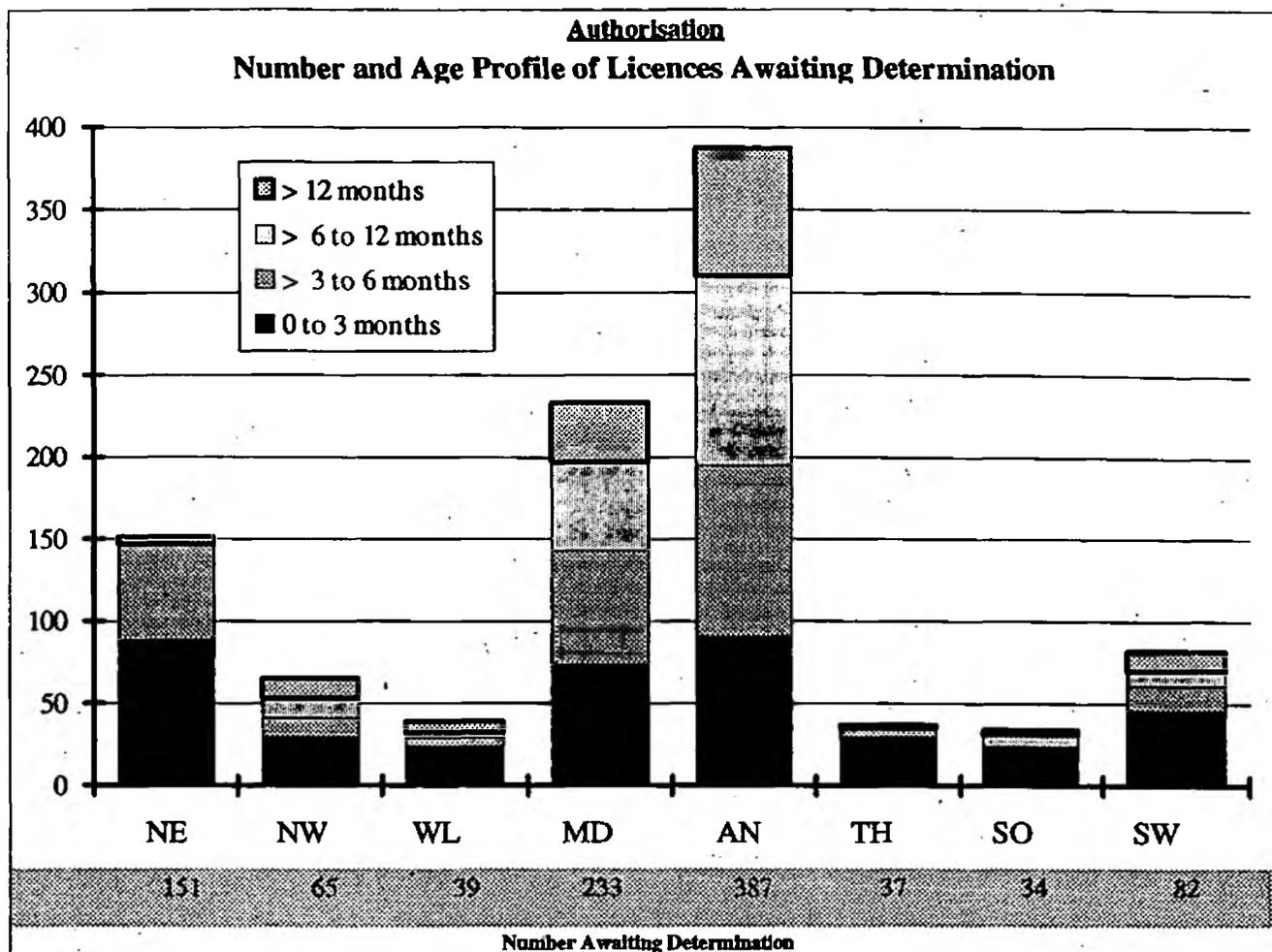
Comment: A national total of 499 applications were determined in quarter 2. 89% of these were determined within within the target time. This is slightly lower than the level of performance achieved, on average, in the full year of 1994/95.

53% of all licences were determined within 3 months, 22% within 3-6 months, 20% within 6-12 months and the remaining 5% took in excess of 12 months to determine.

All regions determined at least 80% of licences within target time except Midlands (66%). Quantitatively, Anglian and Midlands had the largest workload to deal with (148 licences each, equivalent to 59% of the national total).

Action: There are justifiable reasons why some licences take longer to determine than the 3 month statutory period. In most cases an extension period has been agreed with the applicant and consequently, a relatively high proportion of licences are determined within the target time. Whilst the Agency's performance in relation to its Customer Charter commitment is not compromised by these "extended" determinations, in the pursuit of good customer relations, all regions should aim to minimise delays in determining licences.

Water Resources



Introduction: The above chart examines the number and age profile of water resource licence applications that were awaiting determination at the end of the quarter. The shaded block below the graph shows the absolute number of applications awaiting determination in each region.

Lengthy determinations are often due to the technically complex nature of proposed schemes and/or the need to seek additional information from applicants, often at several stages. In this respect, the backlog does not necessarily compromise the Agency's Customer Charter commitment in relation to licence determination. Many complex applications will usually have an extended time period for determination agreed with the applicant; and the countdown time for determining an application does not begin until applicants have provided all the requisite information.

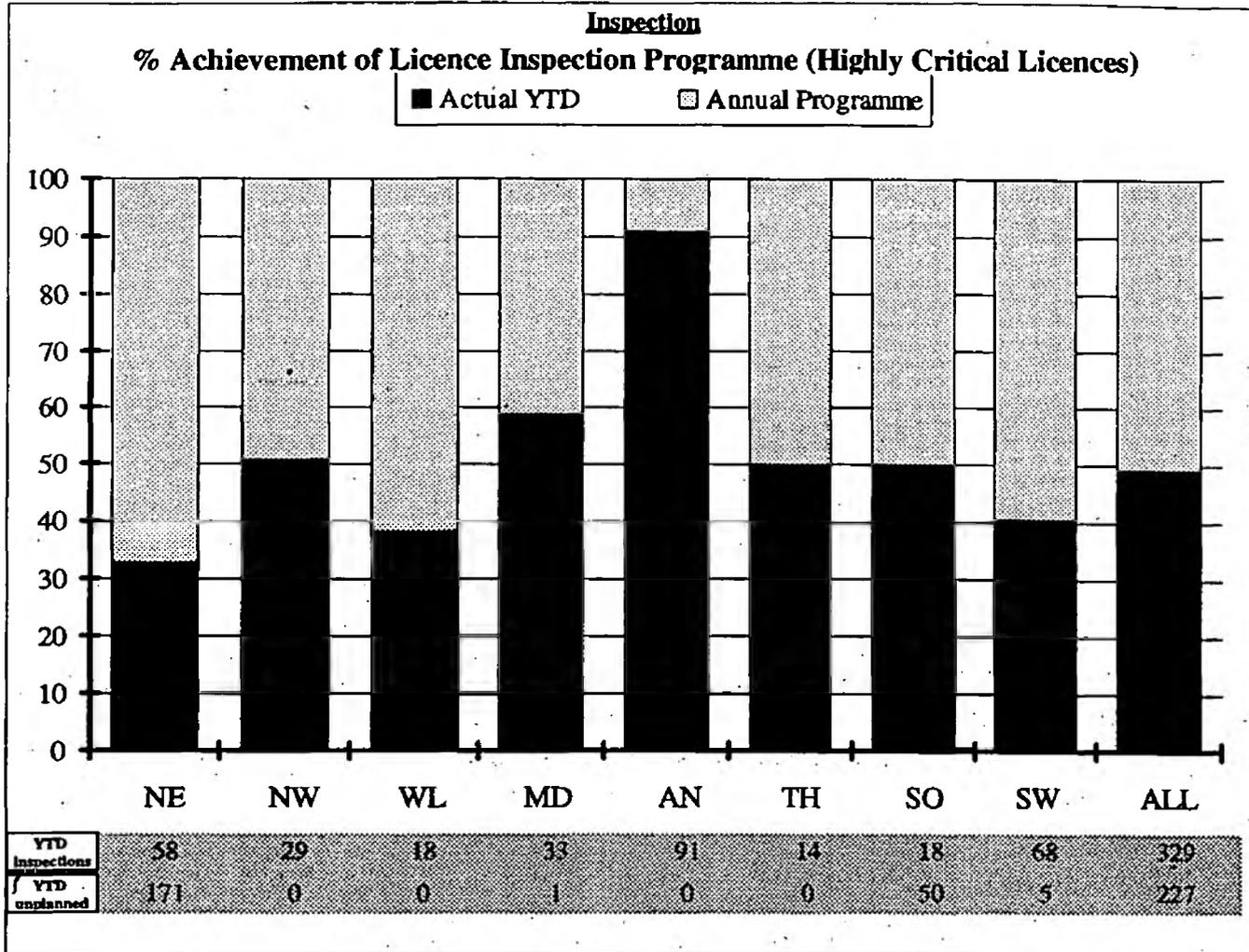
Comment: A total of 1028 applications were outstanding at quarter end, 407(40%) of these were 0 to 3 months old, 266 (26%) were between 3 and 6 months old, 202 (19%) were between 6 and 12 months old, and 153 (15%) were older than 12 months.

A large proportion of the total outstanding applications were concentrated in Anglian (38% of the national total) and Midland region (23% of the national total) where the sheer volume of licences together with the effects of the drought are causing a high backlog. However, Anglian have reduced the number of licences awaiting determination from 431 in the previous quarter, to 387 in quarter 2.

Action: Notwithstanding the above comment about Customer Charter obligations, in the interests of providing a high quality service to customers, continuing efforts are required to deal with outstanding applications in all regions, especially Midland and Anglian.

Anglian region are aware of the ongoing licence backlog problem, and are taking positive steps to remedy the situation.

Water Resources



Introduction: The above graph looks at the year-to-date attainment of the annual routine (pre-scheduled) inspection programme for highly critical water resource licences and also shows, in aggregate, the number of unplanned inspections. Highly critical licences have the potential to cause a significant impact either on the environment or on other people's abstractions if conditions are breached. National policy guidelines require these licences to be inspected at least once a year and more frequently when environmental conditions dictate - eg during dry periods.

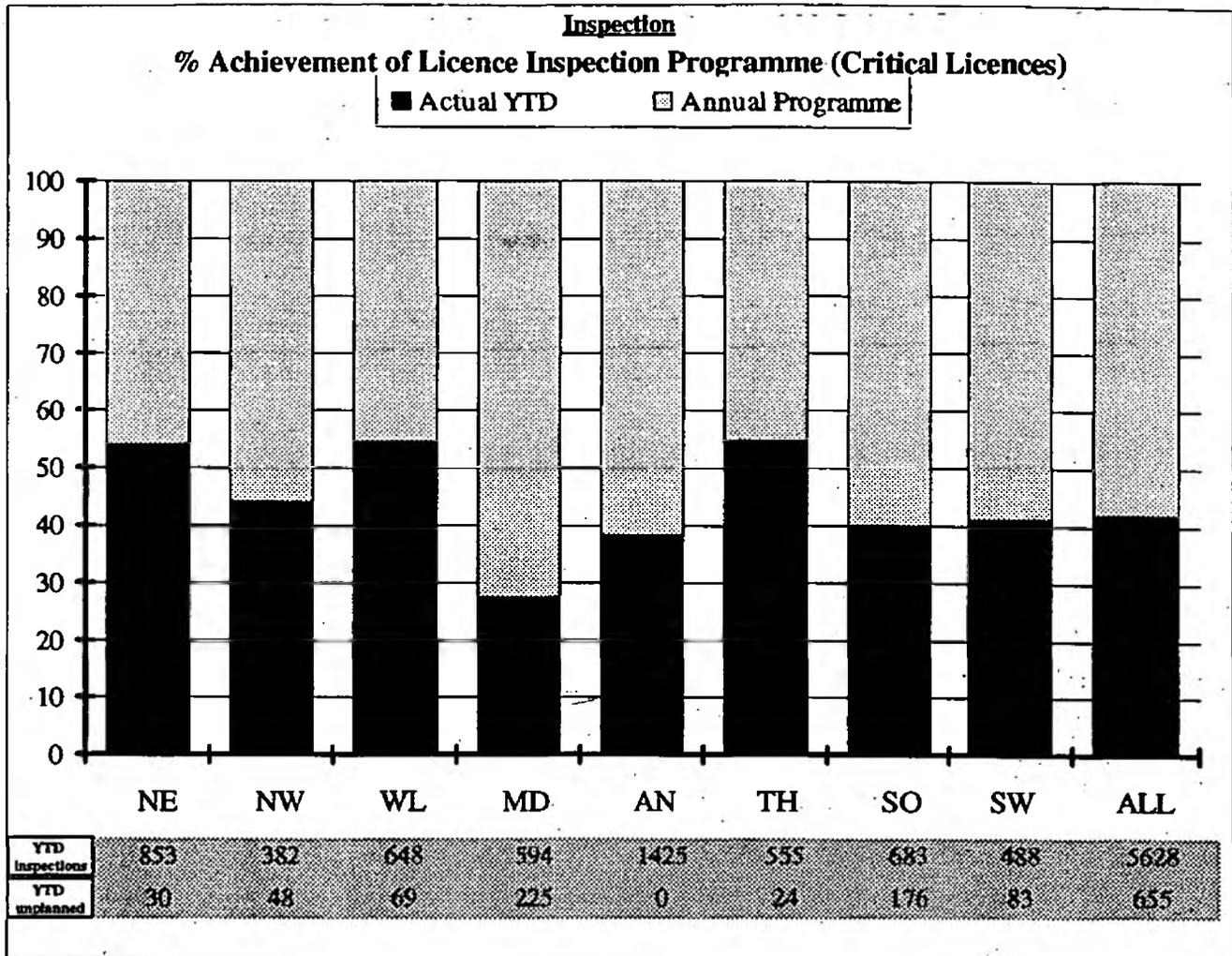
In the graph, the light coloured bar represents the annual policy requirement as contained in national guidelines and interpreted by each region according to local need. The dark coloured bar represents the year-to-date achievement of the policy requirement.

Comment: Nationally, there were 398 highly critical licences in force during the first half of the year. 666 licence inspections are required in the year. 179 inspections were actually carried out in this quarter - ie in aggregate 329 licence inspections were carried out by the end of the half year stage and 49.4% of the annual programme has been achieved.

All regions, with the exception of North East, Welsh and South West achieved 50% or more of the annual routine (pre-scheduled) inspection programme. Anglian at the half year stage has completed 90% of the annual (pre-scheduled) programme.

Action: All regions below programme should note their positions at this half year stage and increase the relative level of inspection in future quarters. Anglian should note their elevated position.

Water Resources



Introduction: The above graph looks at the year-to-date attainment of the annual routine (pre-scheduled) inspection programme for critical water resource licences, and also the number of unplanned inspections carried out.

National policy guidelines require that critical licences are inspected once a year.

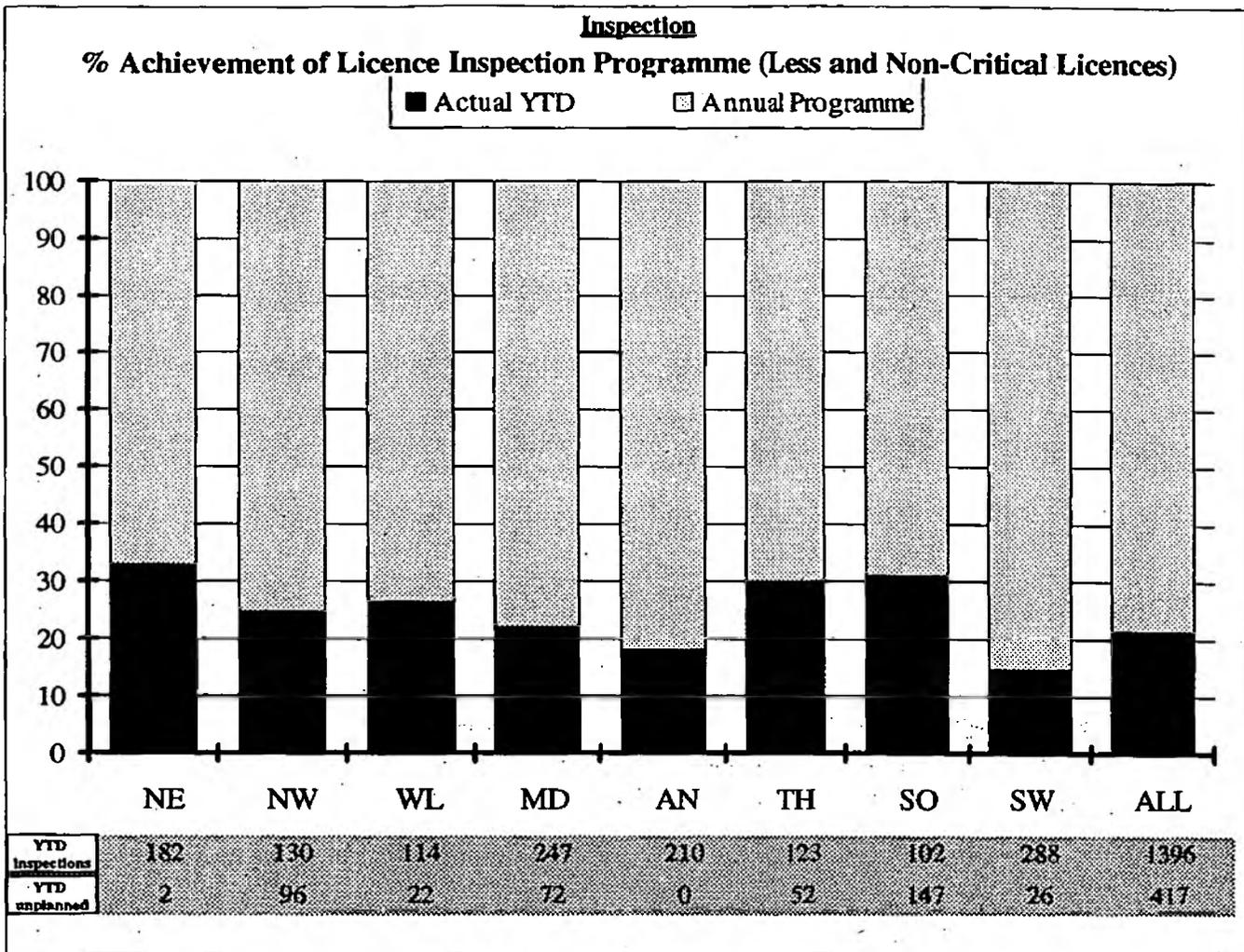
In the graph, the light coloured bar represents the annual policy requirement as contained in national guidelines. The dark coloured bar represents the year-to-date achievement of the policy requirement.

Comment: Nationally there were 13,087 critical licences in force during the the first half of the year, each requiring by policy, one inspection in the year. 3,047 were actually inspected in the quarter - ie in aggregate 5,628 inspections were carried out by the end of the half year stage, and in total, 43% of the annual pre-scheduled programme had been completed. This is less than 50% which might be expected at the half year stage, given an even quarterly distribution of the inspection programme throughout the year.

All regions with the exception of North East, Welsh and Thames failed to reach the 50% point. Midlands region are still very low (have completed only 27% of the annual pre-scheduled programme)

Action: All regions below programme (50%), particularly Midlands and to a lesser extent Anglian should note their positions at the half year stage and increase their level of inspections in future quarters.

Water Resources



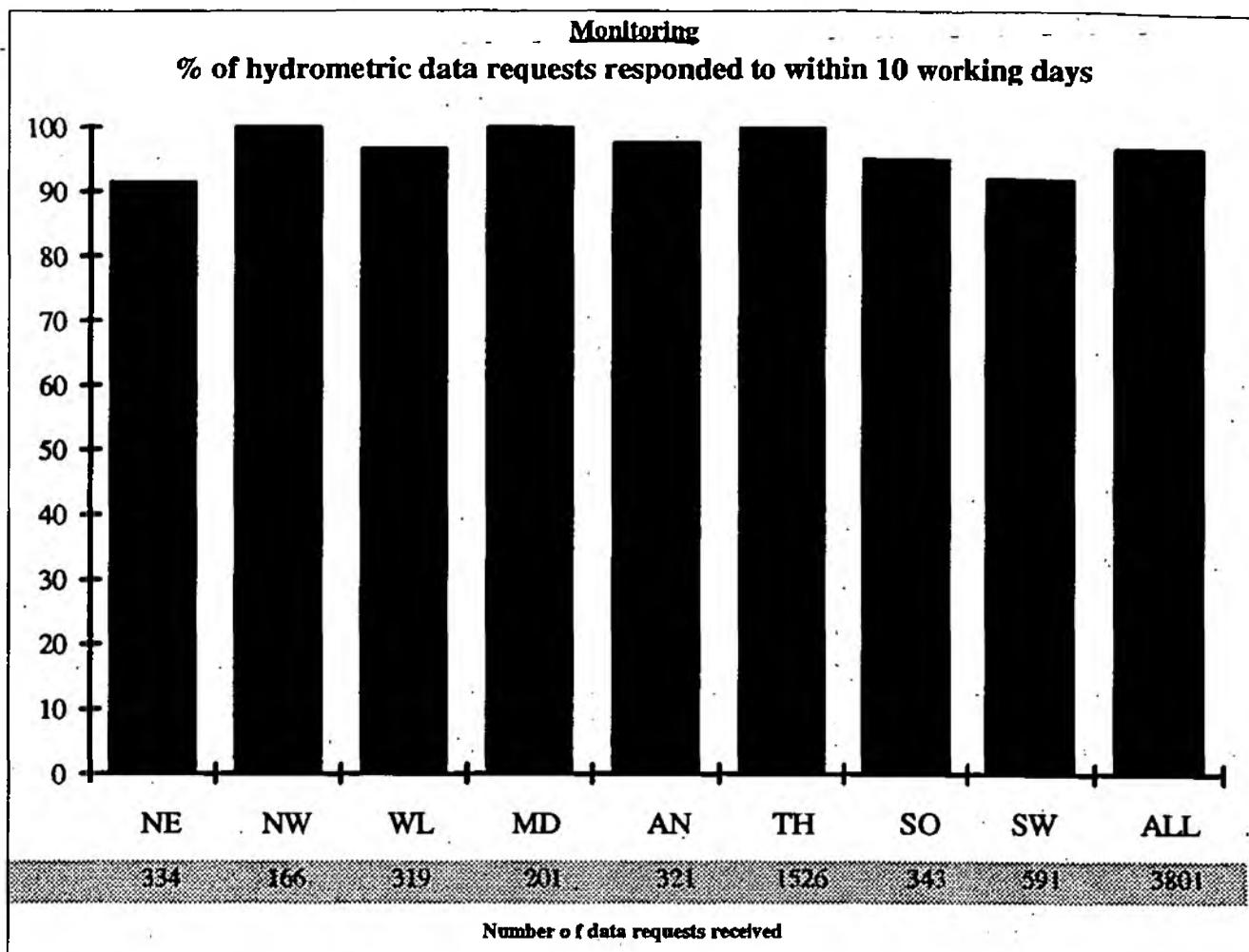
Introduction: The above graph looks at the year-to-date attainment of the annual routine (pre-scheduled) inspection programme and also the number of unplanned inspections, for less/non-critical water resource licences during 1996/97. National policy guidelines require these licences to be inspected once every 5 years.

In the graph, the light coloured bar represents the annual policy requirement. The dark coloured bar represents year-to-date achievement of the policy requirement.

Comment: Nationally there were 32,384 less and non-critical licences in force. Policy required that 6,477 of these should be inspected in the year. 1396 were actually inspected at the end of the half year stage - ie in aggregate 22% of the policy pre-scheduled programme was achieved.

Action: Achievement of the inspection programme for less critical licences is more difficult to analyse due to the 5 year cycle. Assuming that the programme is scheduled evenly over all quarters, all regions appear to be well under programme and need to step up inspections to meet policy requirement.

Water Resources



Introduction: The above graph shows the number of water resource data requests responded to within target time. The table below the graph gives the total number of requests for hydrometric data received in the quarter.

A data request is defined as being any request either written or verbal, that requires the provision of hydrometric data or advice to an internal or external individual, department or organisation.

Comment: Nationally, there were 3,801 water resource data requests, received in the second quarter, this is slightly higher than the number of requests received in the previous quarter of the same year (2,958). 97% of all requests were responded to, within 10 working days.

North West and Midlands region dealt with 100% of the data requests received within target time.

Action:

SECTION 2

WATER MANAGEMENT

(b) Flood Defence

Page

AUTHORISATION

% of land drainage consents determined within statutory period

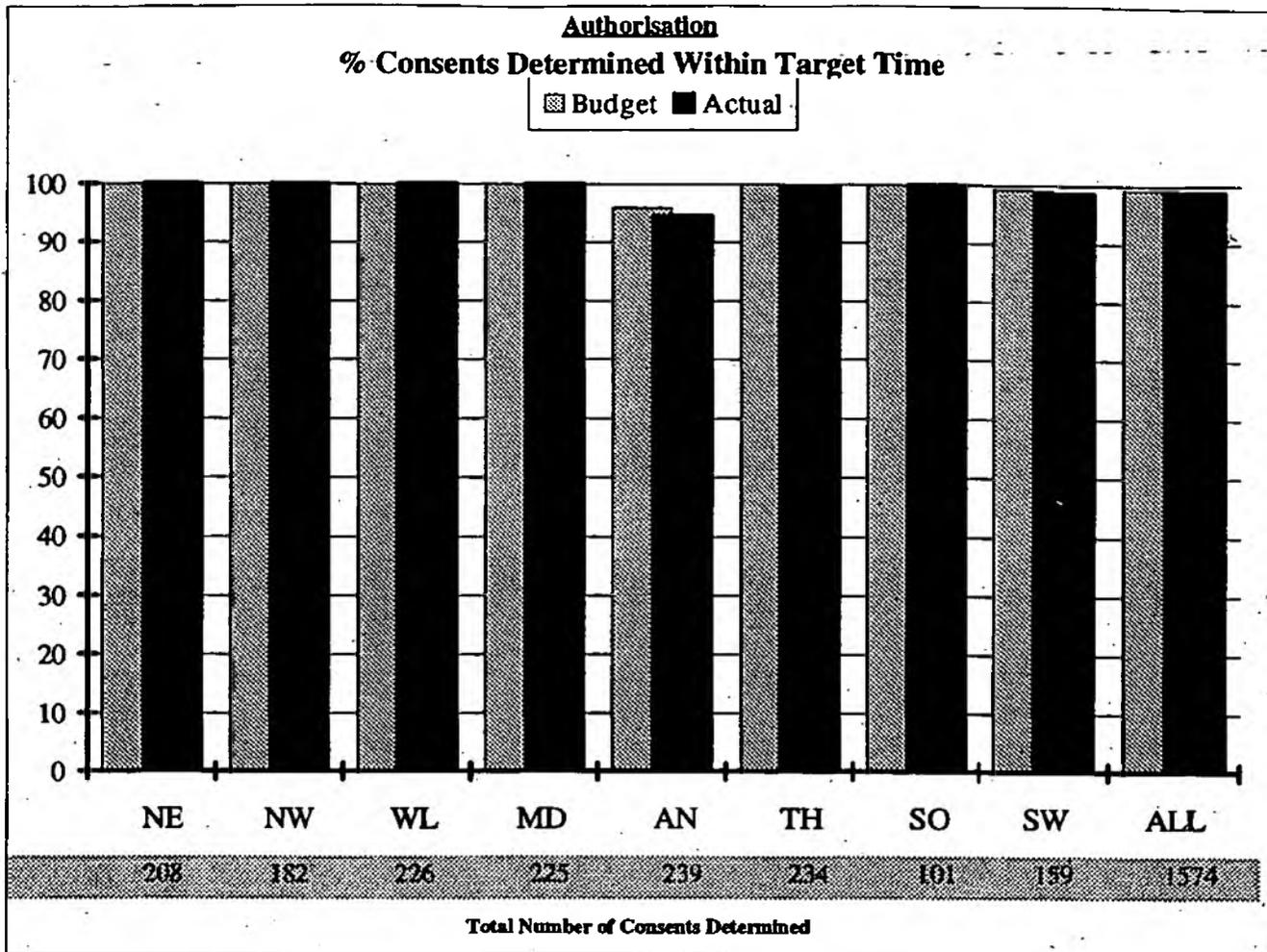
3.1

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

actual expenditure as % of planned expenditure

3.2

Flood Defence



Introduction: This above graph looks at the percentage of flood defence consents which were actively determined (i.e consented or refused) by the Agency within the 2 month statutory target time.

This measure has been adopted as part of the Agency's Customer Charter.

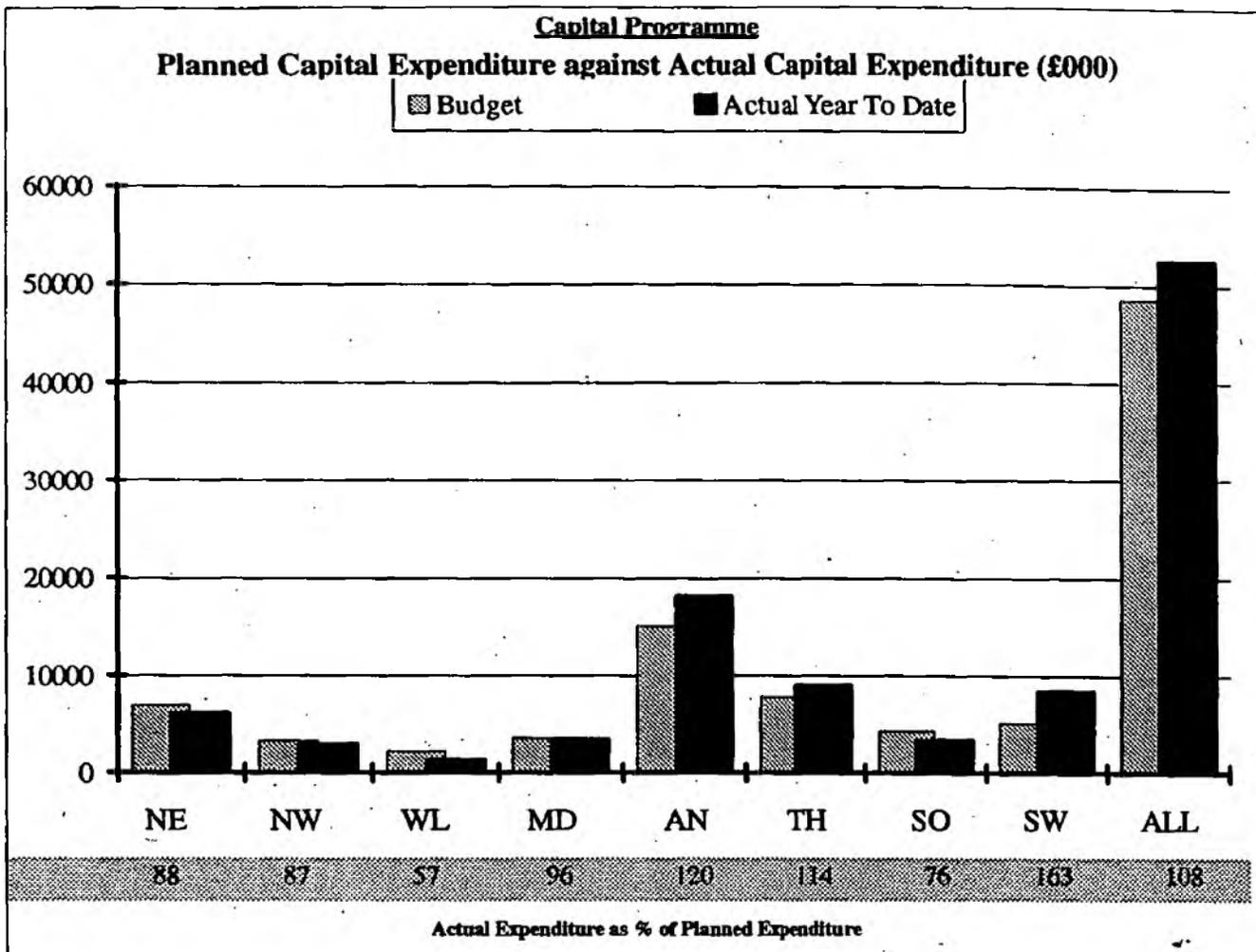
The graph compares actual performance in quarter 2 against the 1996/97 Corporate Plan target.

Comment: Nationally, 99% of consents were actively determined within target time. This was the same as the target in the 1996/97 Corporate Plan and in line with performance levels achieved in previous periods.

All regions determined between 95% and 100% of consents within target time.

Action:

Flood Defence



Introduction: The above graph looks at actual flood defence capital expenditure in the second quarter of 1996/97 compared with the planned capital programme for the quarter.

Major variations from the Flood Defence capital budget can cause undesirable fluctuations in Local Authority charge-setting and undermine future funding. It is important therefore, that the programme is both well planned and well managed.

Comment: At the half year stage £52.5 million was spent on flood defence capital schemes compared with a planned expenditure of £48.6 million, ie the programme was over spent by about 7.5%.

Only Midlands region achieved its budget. Capital over spends in Anglian, Thames and South West were in contrast to to underspends which occurred in all other regions.

Action: Whilst it is possible that overspends may be reversed by the end of the financial year, regions must take note of their positions in relation to the budget and endeavour to bring spending levels down to the planned programme figure.

SECTION 2

WATER MANAGEMENT

(c) Fisheries, Recreation, Conservation & Navigation

FISHERIES

Page

INSPECTION & ENFORCEMENT

% compliance of rod licences checked	4.1
% of reports of illegal fishing actioned in target time	4.2
% of reports of handling of salmon in suspicious circumstances handled in target time	4.3
% of prosecution/formal caution recommendations actioned within target time	4.4

FISH KILLS

% of fish kills attended within target time	4.5
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NAVIGATION

INSPECTION

% compliance of navigation licences checked	4.6
---	-----

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

% of major emergency navigation incidents attended within target time	4.7
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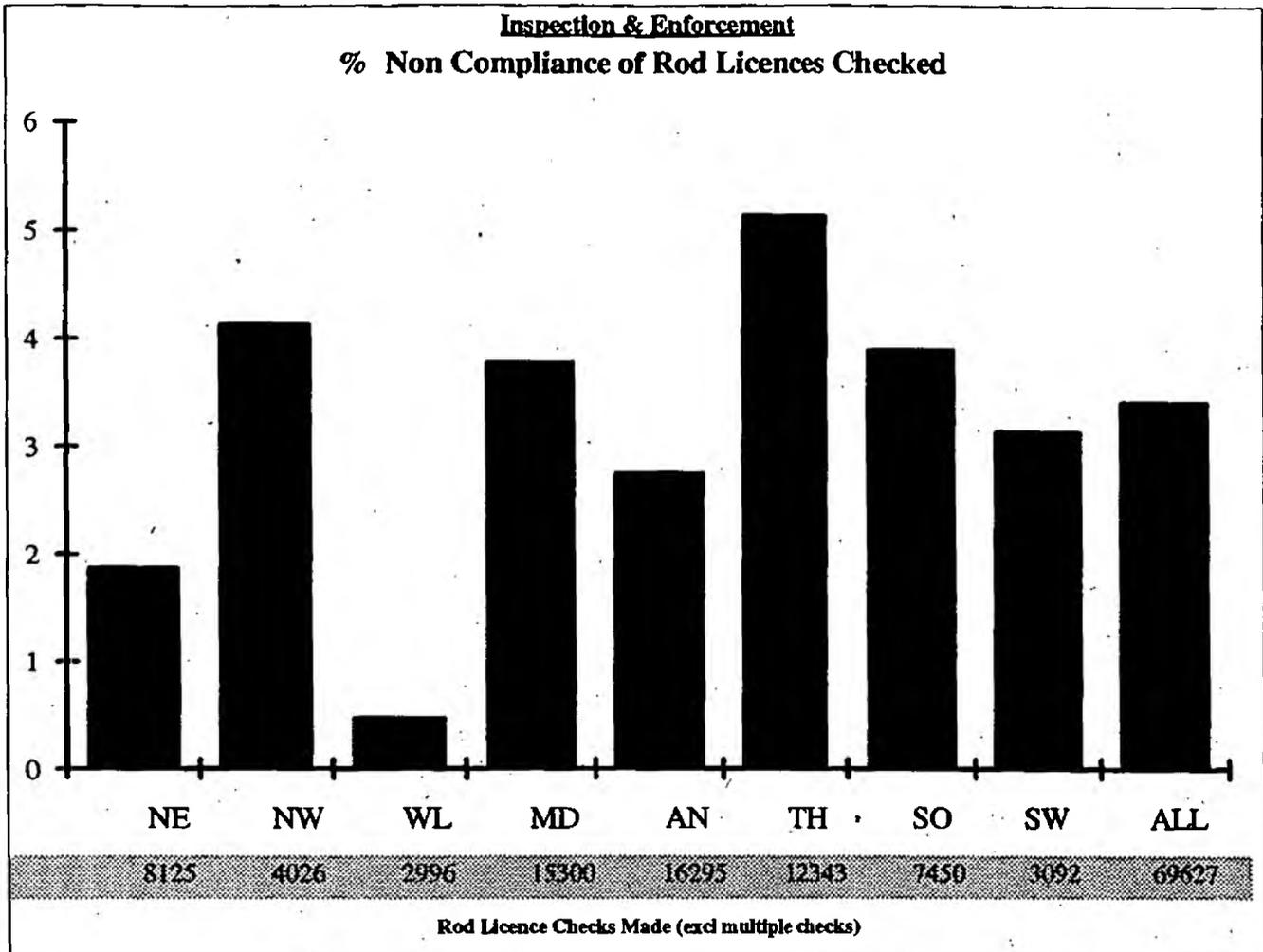
FRCN PROMOTION & ADVICE

% of requests for FRCN advice actioned within target time	4.8
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FRCN PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

% of referrals to FRCN responded to by deadline requested	4.9
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Fisheries



Introduction: The above graph looks at non-compliance of rod licences checked in the quarter.

Enforcing compliance is important both as a means of regulating fisheries and in terms of its contribution towards maximising income - increasingly vital in the context of reductions in GIA.

Comment: Nationally, almost 70,000 rod licence checks were carried out in quarter 2. This figure excludes multiple checks (ie where the same licence is checked more than once in the reporting period).

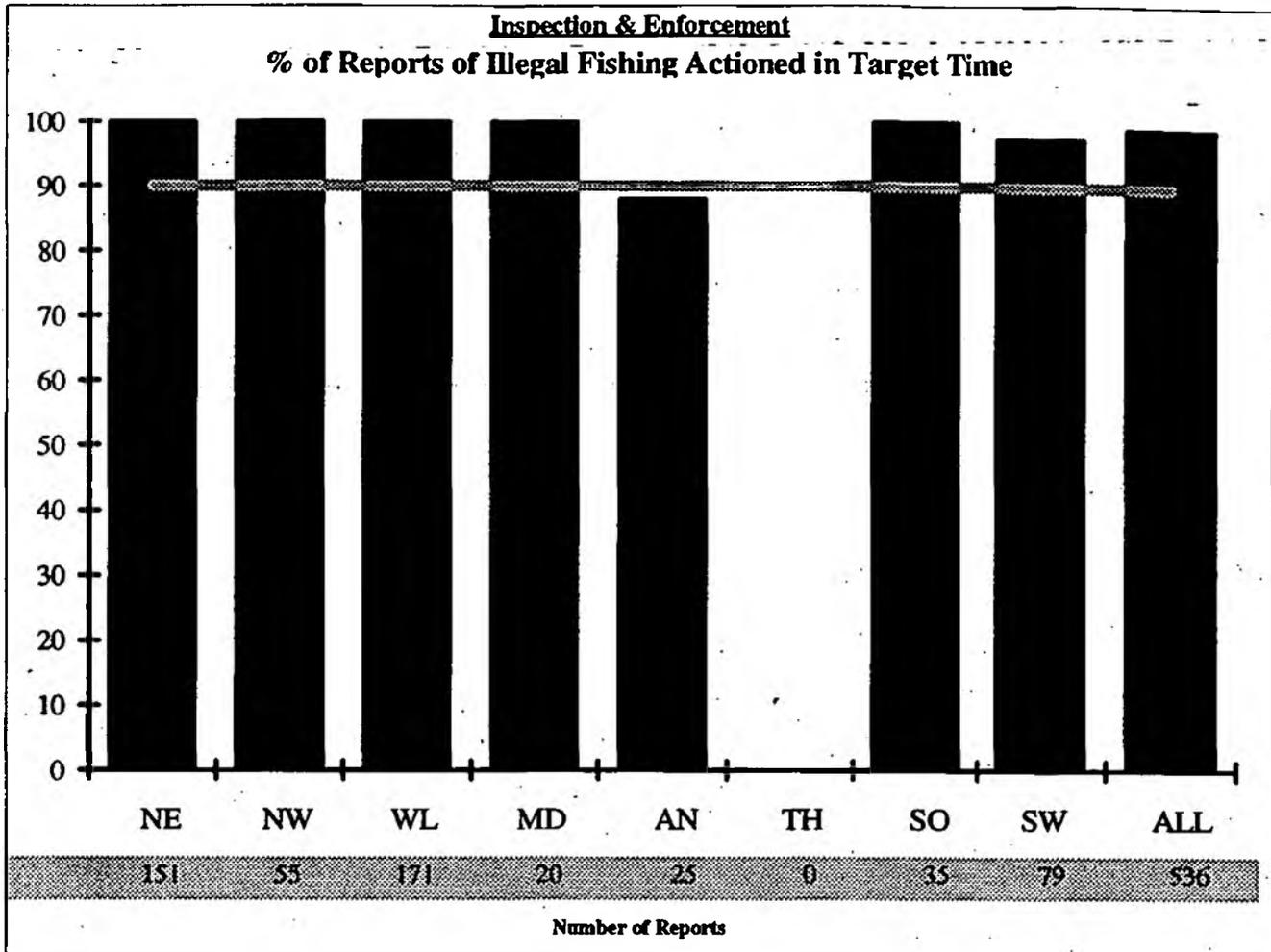
Nationally, of the checks made, there were 2,377 failures to produce a valid rod licence, ie a non-compliance rate of 3.4%.

This is a significant reduction in the non-compliance rate from the previous quarter (7.2%).

All regions have improved on last quarters compliance rate.

Action:

Fisheries



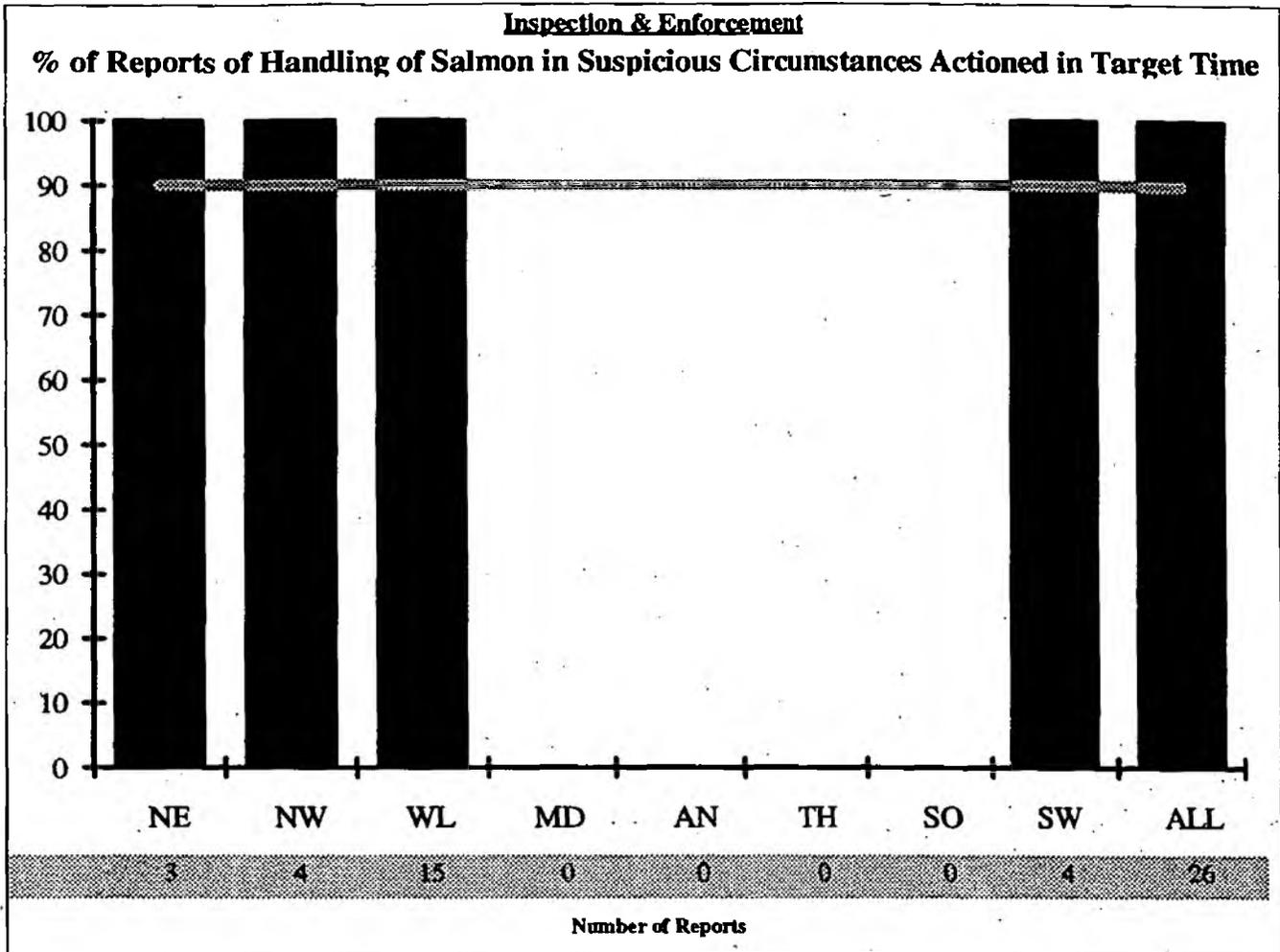
Introduction: The above graph looks at the attainment of a standard of service in Fisheries regulation. The standard requires that 90% of all reports of illegal fishing are assessed and appropriate action initiated within 2 hours of notification during normal working hours and within 4 hours at all other times.

Comment: A national total of 536 reports of illegal fishing were recorded in the quarter, this is an increase of 142 reports from quarter 1. Regionally the number of reports ranged from 0 in the Thames region to 171 in the Welsh region. In general, it is expected that reports will be concentrated in salmonid fisheries prone to poaching activities, but some illegal netting of coarse fish also occurs and will be reflected in the figures.

99.1% of all reports were actioned within target time, and all regions exceeded the 90% target standard with the exception of the Anglian region, which was only slightly below the national target.

Action:

Fisheries



Introduction: In addition to "sharp-end" anti-poaching activities, enforcement efforts to reduce illegal fishing are also directed towards countering the black market in sales of illegally taken salmon. Under the Salmon Act 1986 it is an offence to handle salmon in suspicious circumstances. The offence is committed if someone handles, or receives, a salmon that he/she should have reasonably suspected was taken illegally.

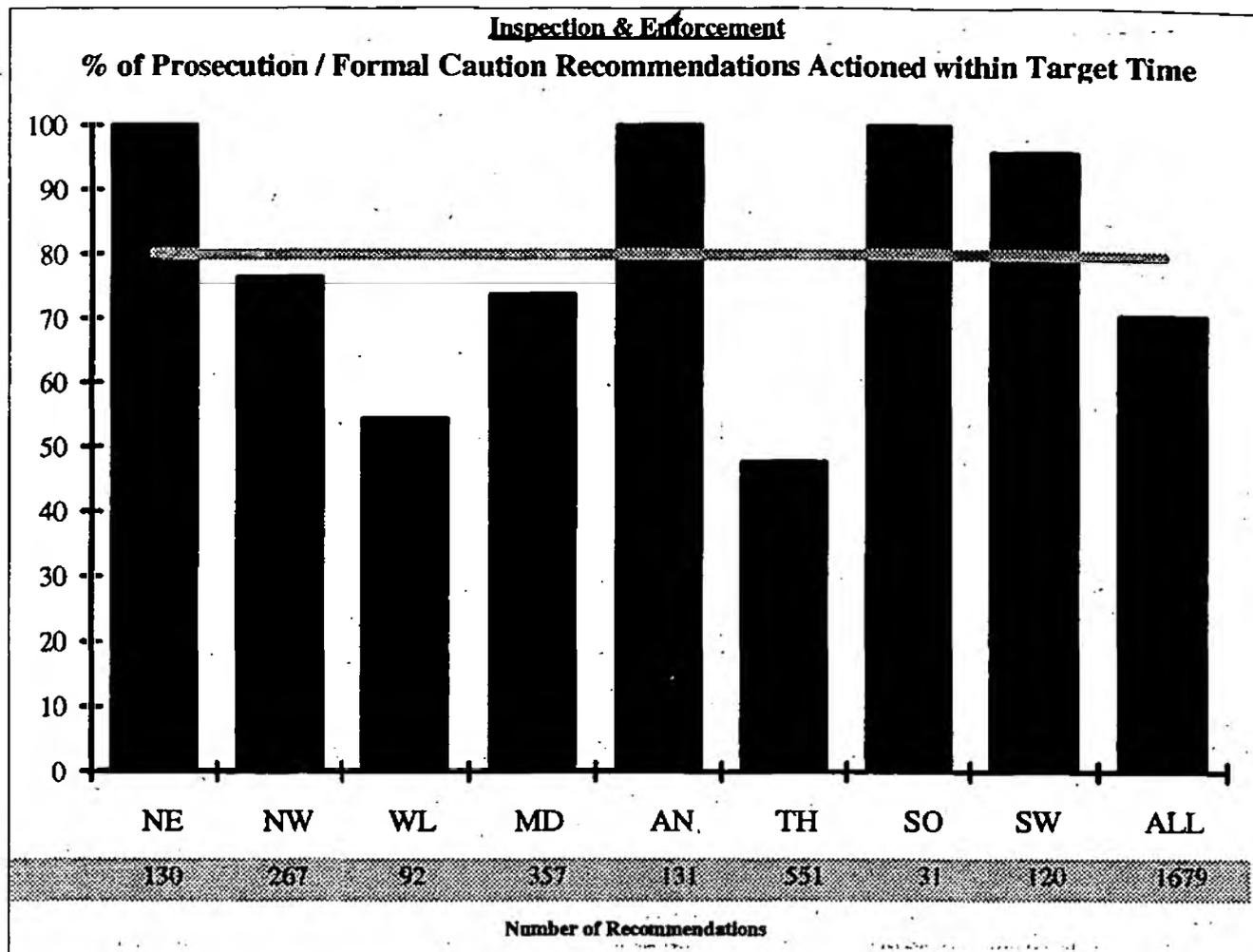
The above graph looks at the attainment of an Agency Fisheries standard of service which requires any report of handling of salmon in suspicious circumstances to be appropriately actioned within 2 hours of notification during normal working hours and within 4 hours at all other times.

Comment: 4 regions received reports of suspected illegal handling during the quarter, with 26 received in total. Over half of these were in the Welsh region.

In aggregate, the standard of service was achieved for 100% of all incidents reported, this is an improvement on the figure for the previous quarter.

Action:

Fisheries



Introduction: The above graph looks at the percentage of enforcement recommendations for which the required paperwork/documentation was completed and forwarded to the legal department for subsequent action within 35 calendar days of the date of the offence. The standard of service requires that 80% of all recommendations are made within the 35 day target.

Comment: A total of 1679 offences were recommended by fisheries for legal action during the second quarter. These include licence, byelaw and other offences. Of these, a national average of 71% were made within the standard of service target time.

Regionally, North East, Anglian, Southern and South West regions exceeded the standard of service. North West, Welsh, Midlands and Thames were below.

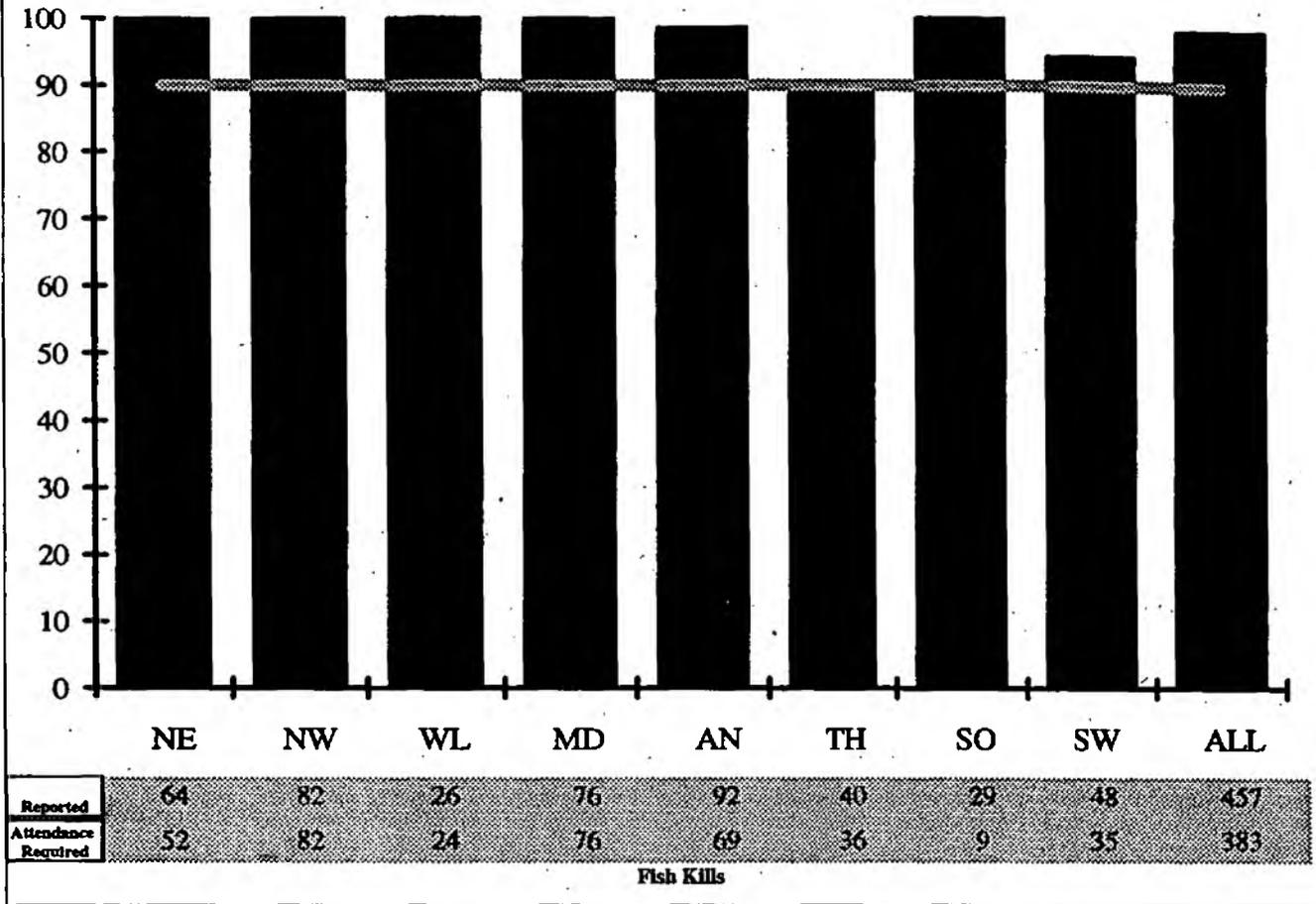
Thames have previously stated that they do not agree with the 35 day target, but it appears in the second quarter that they are endeavouring to deliver the requisite standard.

Action: Regions below the standards of service should aim at delivering the prescribed target.

Fisheries

Fish Kills

% Fish Kills Attended in Target Time



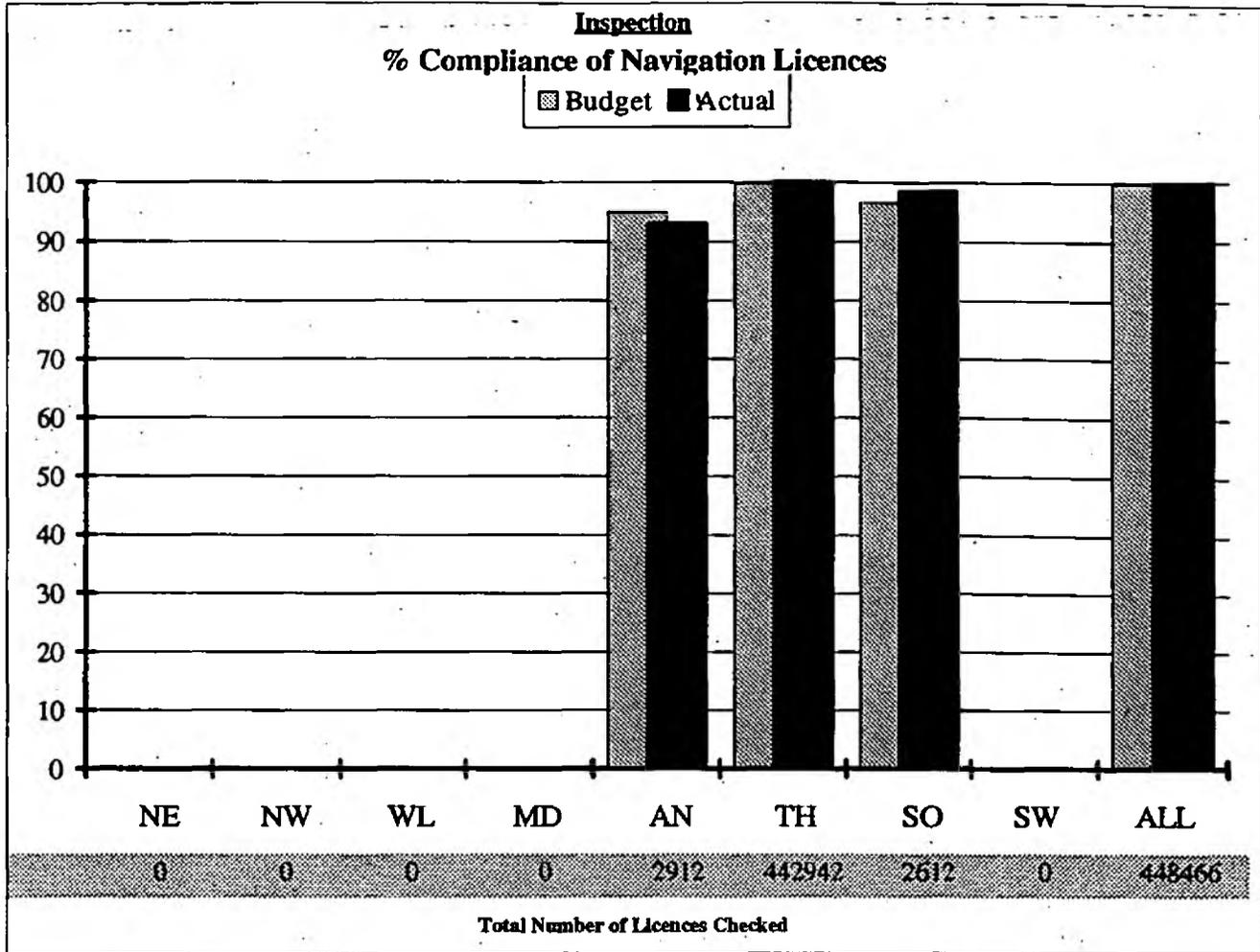
Introduction: The above chart looks at the percentage of fish kills which were attended within a standard of service target time. The standard requires 90 percent of fish kills to be attended within 2 hours of notification during normal working hours and within 4 hours at all other times. This measure has been adopted as part of the Agency's Customer Charter.

Comment: A total of 457 fish kills were reported in the quarter. Of these it was decided that 382 incidents merited attendance by Agency staff and of the incidents attended, 98.2% were attended within target time.

All regions exceeded the 90% standard of service target, with the exception of Thames region (89%).

Action:

Navigation



Introduction: The Agency is empowered to raise income and regulate navigations on inland waters for which it is the navigation authority through a system of licensing or boat registration. It is an offence in most cases to use any vessel on these navigations without a valid licence certificate. To enforce these powers the Agency carries out a system of licence inspection. Registered vessels must display a crest, mark or similar device which is visible from a distance, thus facilitating inspection.

The above chart measures the percentage compliance of navigation licences checked during the quarter.

The number of checks made (see shaded row below graph for details) include multiple checks (ie same licence is checked more than once). This is likely to overstate true compliance.

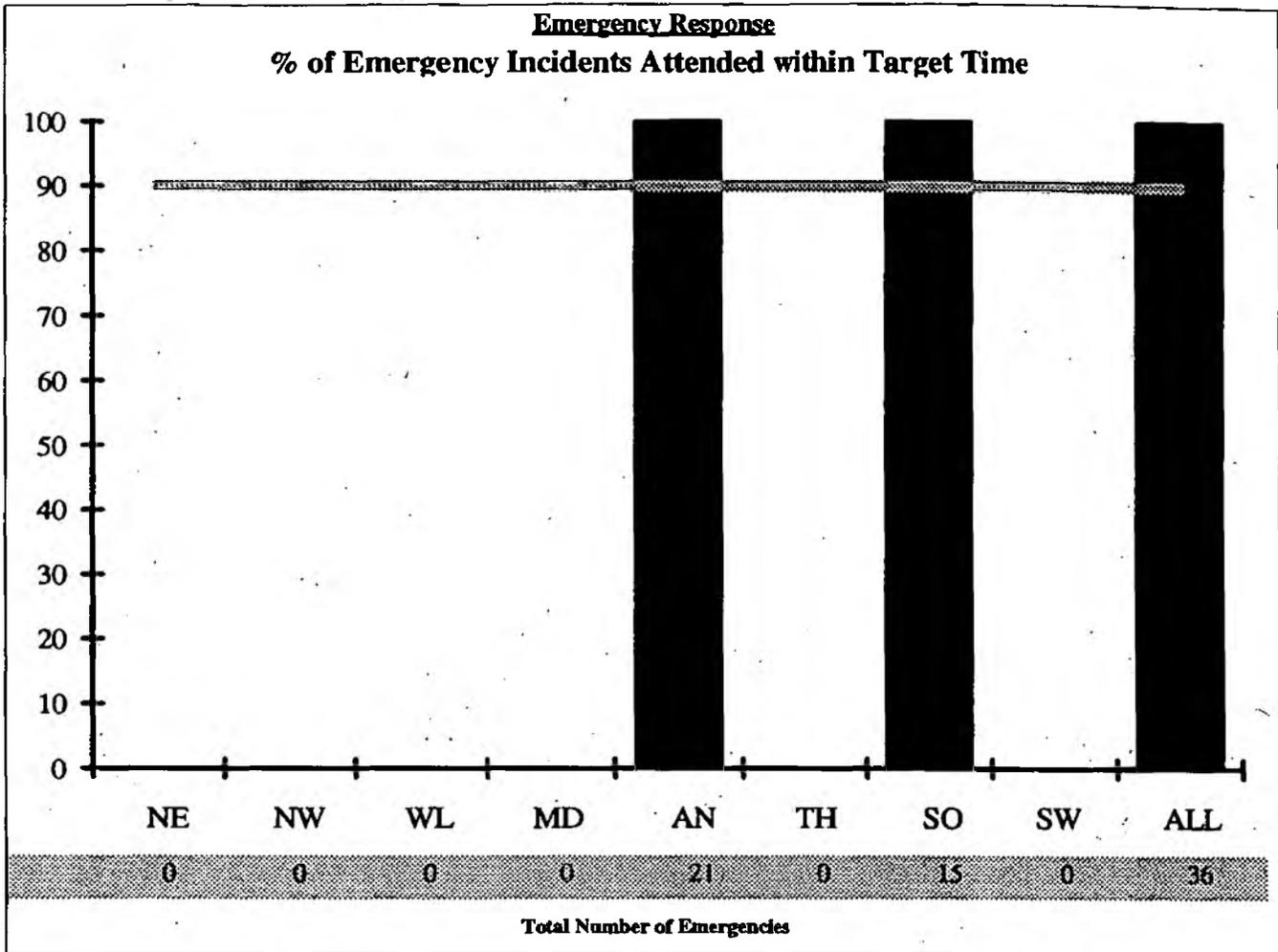
Comment: Almost 450,000 licence checks were carried out by the close of the second quarter. 99.9% were compliant. This is consistent with that reported in previous periods and in line with budget expectations. The overall rate of compliance is, however, heavily biased by the high rate of compliance in Thames (100%), which in turn is skewed by the multiple checking system.

99% of all checks carried out nationally were in the Thames region, where typically an inspection is carried out as a matter of routine each time a boat passes through the extensive lock network. Compliance in Anglian was 93% compared with a budget of 95%; and in the Southern region the compliance rate was 98.5% compared with a 96.6%.

In absolute terms the largest number of licence offences detected was in Anglian (203), followed by Southern (40), no licence offences were detected in the Thames region.

Action:

Navigation



Introduction: This measure looks at emergency response and the level of achievement of a standard of service to attend 90 percent of all incidents within 4 hours of notification. Typical emergencies would include failure of lock structures or sunken craft likely to impede or risk other vessels.

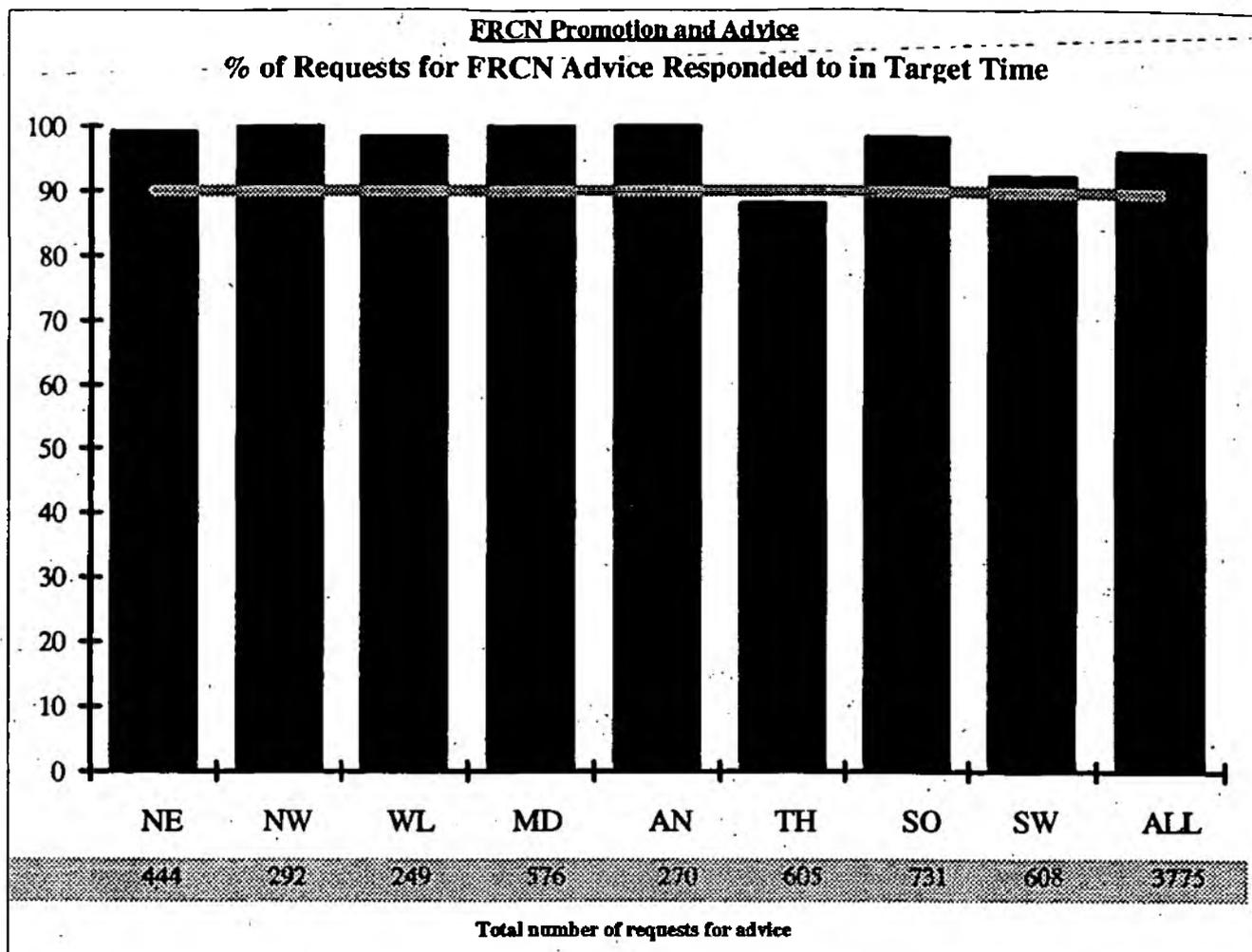
This standard has been adopted as part of the Agency's Customer Charter.

Comment: 36 emergency incidents were reported in the quarter. 21 were in Anglian and 15 were in Southern.

As in previous periods, all incidents (100%) were attended in target time thereby exceeding the standard of service.

Action:

Fisheries



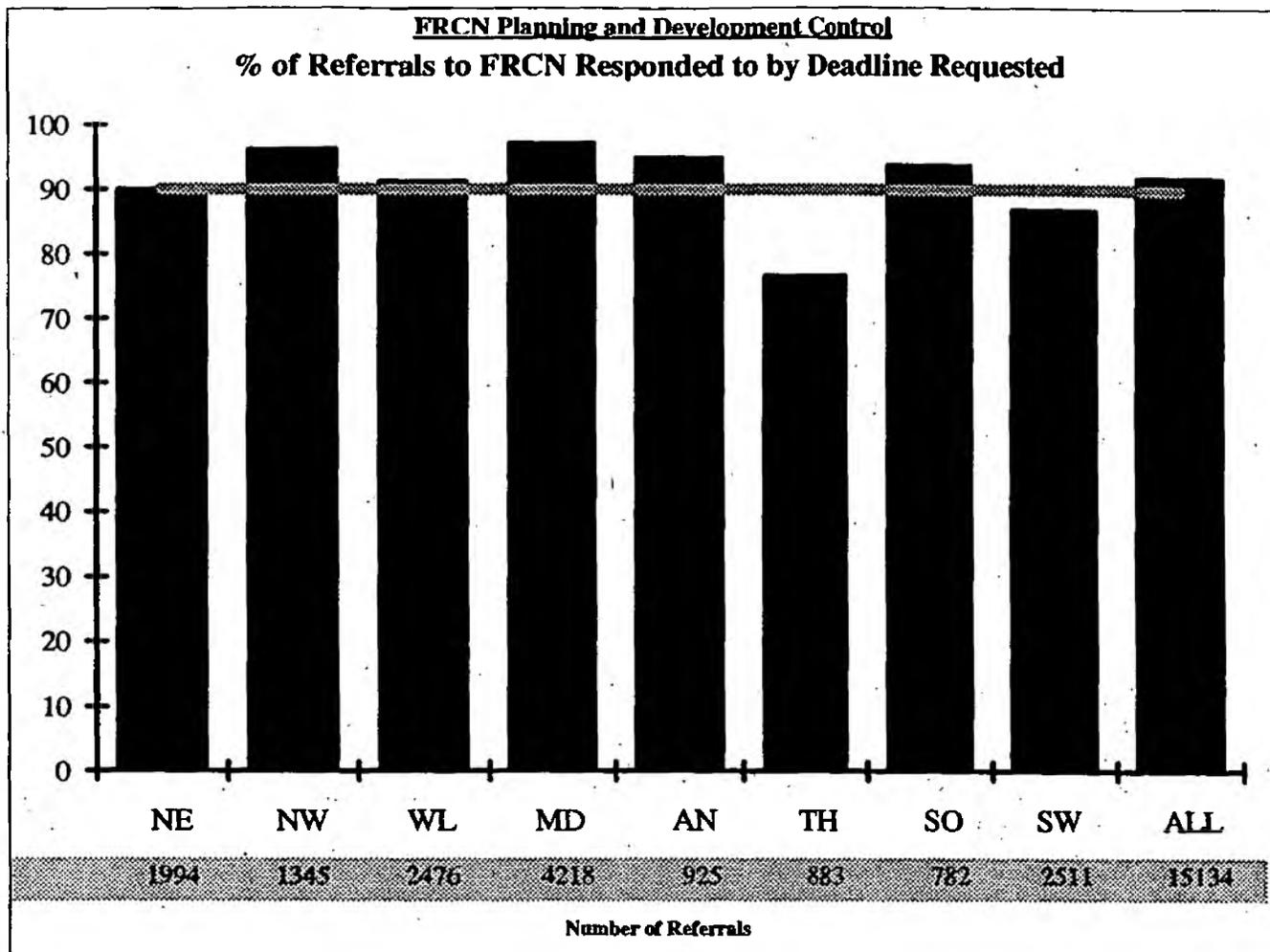
Introduction: The above chart measures actual performance against a Standard of Service target in FRCN functions to provide either a considered response or make a site visit to 90% of requests for advice within 20 working days of a request being made. This measure is obviously focused on customer service and has been adopted as part of the Agency's Customer Charter.

Comment: A national total of almost 3,800 requests for advice were received in the quarter. 96% of these were answered within 20 days, thereby exceeding the standard of service target.

All regions with the exception of Thames (88%) exceeded the standard of service.

Action: Small improvements in the Thames region are required to meet the prescribed target.

Fisheries



Introduction: The above chart looks at the attainment of a standard of service in FRCN functions in relation to providing a response to planning & development control referrals within a specified deadline. These referrals include Local Authority consultations, Agency consent applications and Agency proposed work schemes. The standard requires that 90% of all referrals are responded to by the deadline requested.

Comment: In total, FRCN functions provided input to 15134 referrals in the second quarter, which is an improvement on the Q1 figure (14854). (Note, in most cases the same referral will be reviewed independently by each function, hence there is an element of "double counting").

92% of these referrals were responded to within the deadline requested, thus, in aggregate, the 90% standard of service target was exceeded. By comparison, in the previous quarter (Q1) 90% of referrals were responded to in target time.

5 out of 8 regions met or exceeded the standard of service. Thames (77%) and to a lesser extent, South West (87%) were below.

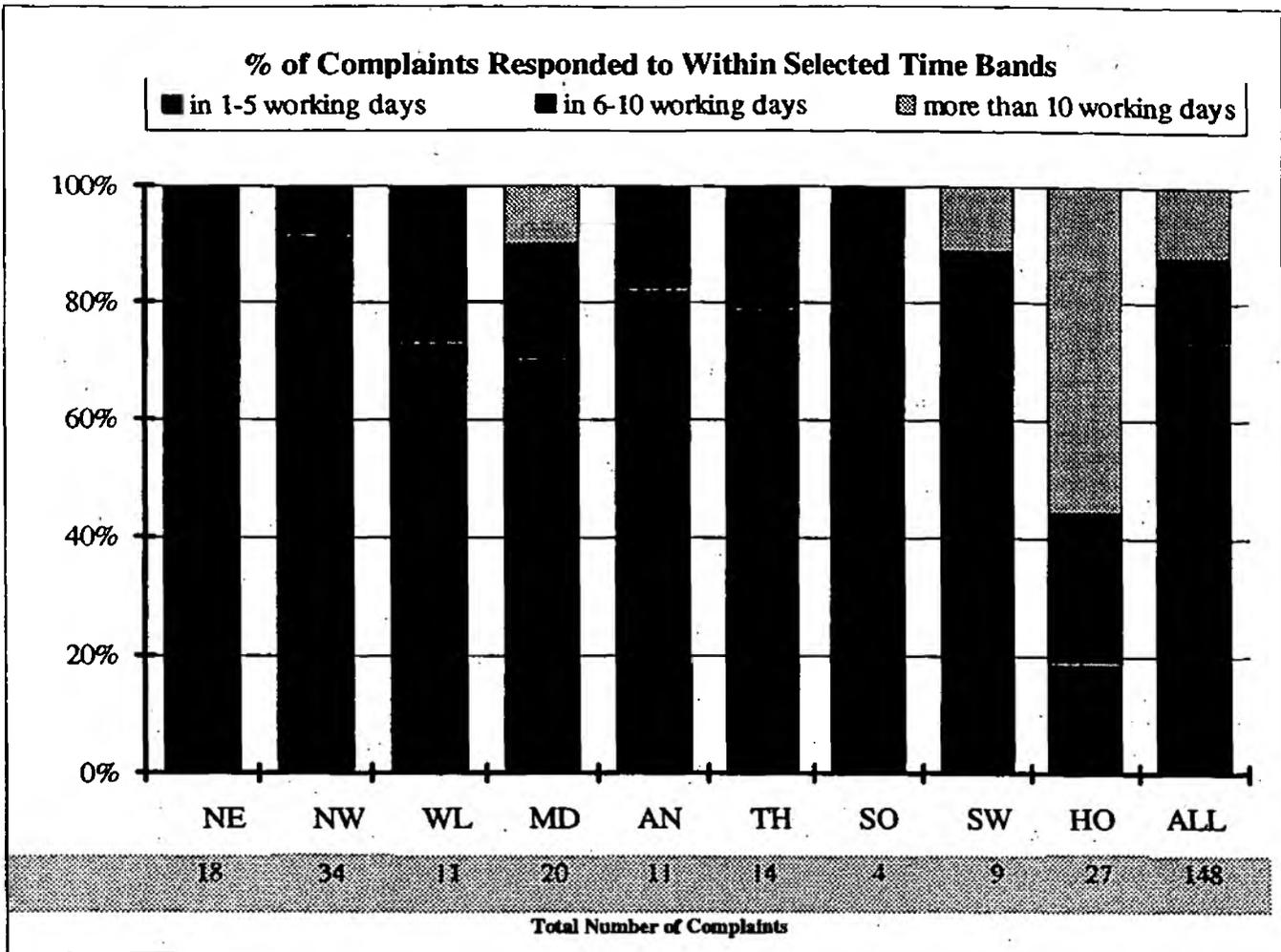
Action: Improvements required in the Thames and South West regions to bring their performance up to the level attained by other regions.

SECTION 3

MULTI FUNCTIONAL

	page
% of complaints responded to within selected time bands	5.1
% of MPs' letters responded to within selected time bands	5.2
% of planning applications responded to within selective time bands	5.3

Multi-Functional



Introduction: This measure has been developed as part of the Agency's work on the Customer Charter and looks at the timeliness with which we respond to complaints from our customers. The Charter makes an undertaking by the Agency to provide a full formal response within 5 working days from the time a complaint is received.

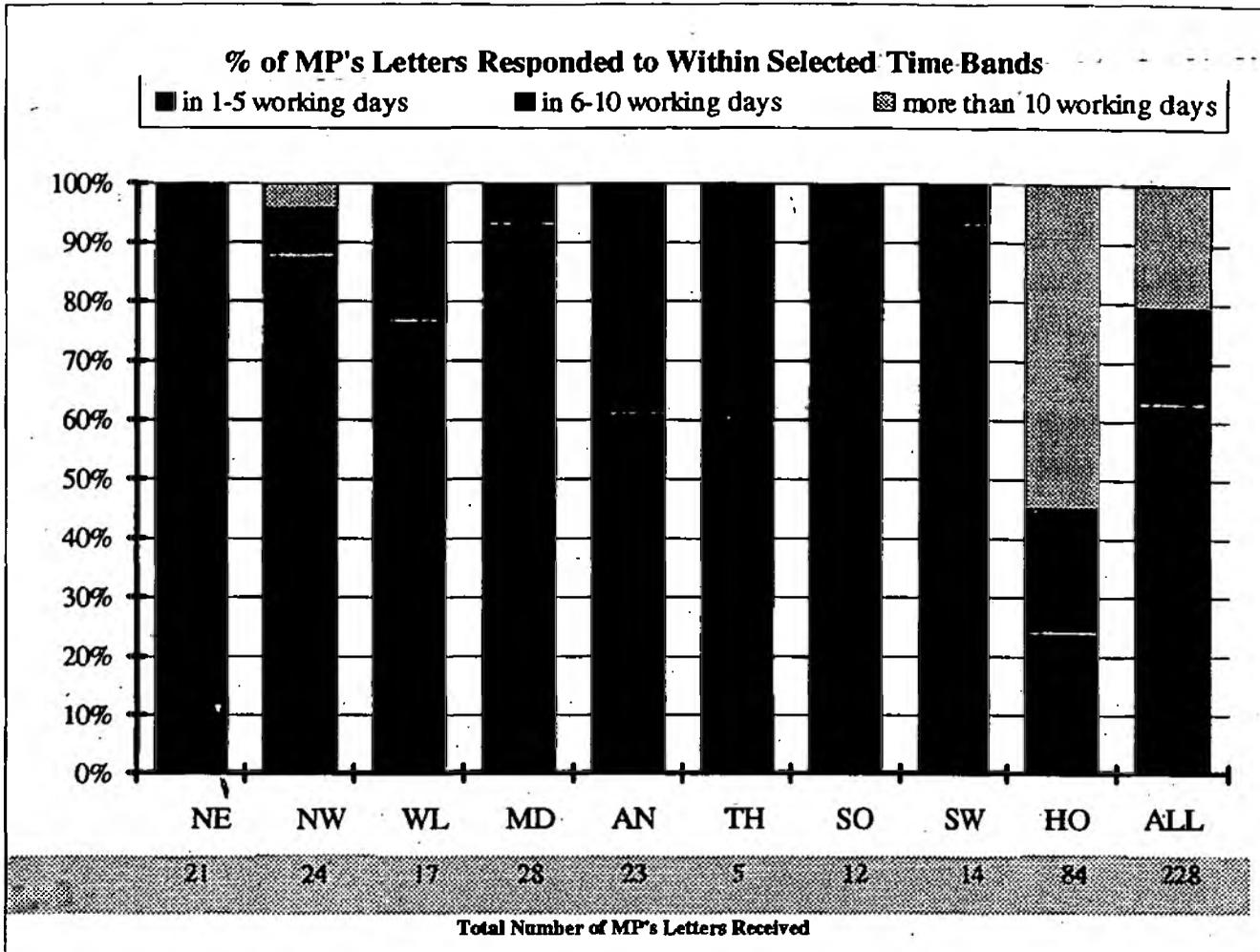
Comment: A total of 148 complaints were formally recorded in the quarter. This equates to an average of about 12 a week - an increase on the previous quarter figure. Regionally, the distribution of complaints received varied from 4 in Southern to 34 in North West.

73% of all complaints received were answered within the 5 day standard of service time; 12% were answered within 6-10 days; and the remaining 15% were still awaiting a response after 10 days.

As with last quarter only 2 regions, North East and Southern, fully met the 5 days standard of service time.

Action: All regions should aim to meet the prescribed standard of service. Particular requirements are required at Head Office.

Multi-Functional



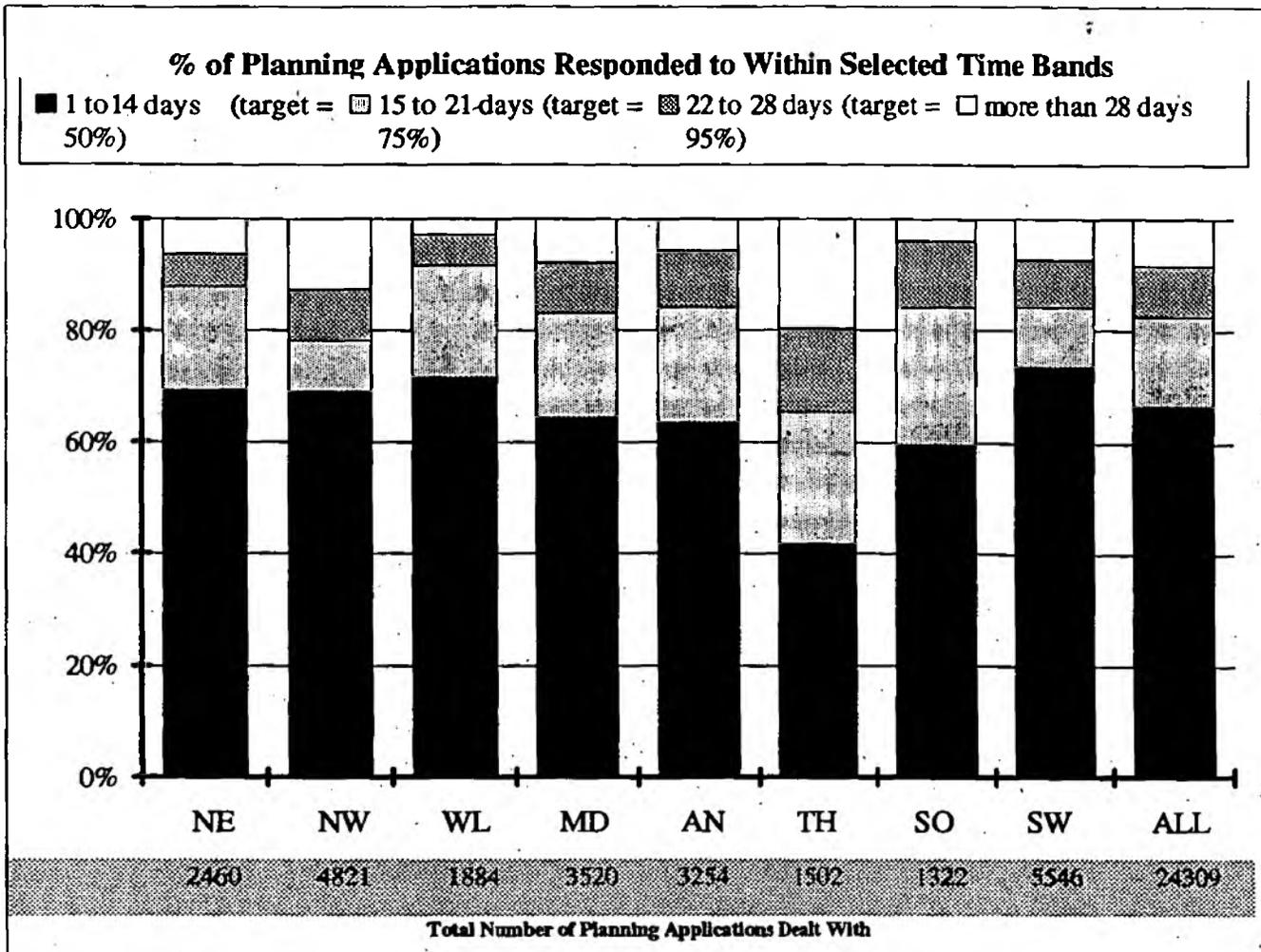
Introduction: This chart examines the timeliness with which the Agency responds to letters received from Members of Parliament. Since the Agency deals with many enquiries from MPs, a Standard of Service has been prescribed for responding to such enquiries. The Standard requires RGMs to respond to MPs' letters by return wherever possible and, in any event, within 5 working days.

Comment: 228 letters from MP's were received in the quarter, an increase of 64 from the previous quarter. 84 (almost a third) of these were directed to Head Office. 63% of the of the letters were answered within 5 working days and only 2 regions fully met the standards of service.

17% were answered within 6-10 days leaving 20% of the letters which were still awaiting a response after 10 days. Head Office were responsible for a large proportion of the latter.

Action: With the exception of North East and Southern regions, improvements are required across all regions, and especially at Head Office.

Multi-Functional



Introduction: The above chart looks at the percentage of planning applications processed by the Agency within a range of Standard of Service target times. These are to respond to 50% of applications within 14 days of receipt, 75% within 21 days and 95% within 28 days. These standards have been incorporated in the Agency's Customer Charter.

Comment: The Agency dealt with over 24,000 planning applications in the quarter. 67% of these were responded to within 14 days. Performance in all regions exceeded the 50% target with the exception of Thames (42%) which was slightly below target.

82.5% of applications were responded to within 21 days. Again all regions with exception of Thames (65%) met the 75% target.

92% of applications were responded to within 28 days, falling short of the overall standard of service target.

In Thames, efforts have been directed into training Local Authorities to deal with the bulk of simple applications, leaving fewer but relatively complex applications for onward referral to the Agency. By their very nature these take longer to deal with.

Action: