

Charity Commission responds to PAC criticism

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CATEGORY:

ARTICLE

Following a report by the NAO in 2013, the Charity Commission has acknowledged that its approach to tackling problems in charities in the past was at times too cautious, and that an improvement in the way it identifies and addresses deliberate abuse in charities is needed. The Commission has also accepted the need to make better use of its own data.

Since then, the regulator has instituted a number of changes, including launching more statutory inquiries and making greater use of its enforcement powers, with 48 inquiries being launched since 1 April 2013, as opposed to 15 the previous year and its legal enforcement powers being exercised 657 times in statutory inquiries and operational compliance cases since 1 April 2013, up from 216 the previous financial year.

While the Commission is using its powers, it has been clear to point out that its enforcement powers are not sufficient and has welcomed a Cabinet Office consultation that may lead to an extension and strengthening of its legal powers if approved by Parliament, for example by giving the Commission a discretionary power of disqualification to prevent trustees from resigning to avoid removal.