North Pole Government

Department of Christmas Affairs

Annual Naughty & Nice Report

2025



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Executive summary

The Department of Christmas Affairs is delighted to present the Annual Naughty & Nice Report 2025, which provides a data-driven overview of Global Festive Behaviour Compliance Metrics (GFBCM) ahead of the peak holiday operational period.

This edition draws on year-to-date data, historical modelling, and insights from the global Christmas Spirit Act 1982 compliance framework. It also incorporates early complaints lodged through the DCA portal, emerging behavioural trends, and projections for the final, critical quarter of the festive season.

Despite challenging conditions incuding cost-of-living pressures, unforeseen surges in gingerbread futures, volatile supply chains and several experimental AI wish list generators producing “interpretive” results, festive performance indicators have remained statistically stable.

The Department continues to collaborate closely with Santa and his operational teams, though communication this year has been complicated by the North Pole's mandated migration to a new, mandatory, cloud-based 'Wish-List-as-a-Service' (WLaaS) platform. In one standout mishap, the Minister requested an update on “Project Whiteout,” which the system interpreted as a request for actual white-out. Santa’s team responded by shipping 10,000 bottles of correction fluid to the Department which was proudly labelled by the elves as “Premium North Pole Snow Paint.”

This report provides governments, organisations and communities with insight into the state of global merriness, allowing coordinated planning in advance of the 2026 season.



The Hon. Nick Claus
Minister for the Department of Christmas Affairs.



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The state of festive compliance 2025

Festive compliance remains strong heading into the final month of the season. **Year-to-date compliance** with the Christmas Spirit Act 1982 stands at **87.4 percent**, closely aligned with 2024 levels.

These figures represent the period from **1 January to 30 November 2025**, with forecasts for December based on previous patterns, recorded early-season behaviour, and projections from the Behavioural Algorithmic Database (BAD).

Key findings (year to date)

- **Average fairy light usage** is down 3 percent, attributed to cautious seasonal spending, supply chain variability and high tariffs placed on Neverland.
- **Seasonal belief positivity metrics** remain stable, with sentiment rising predictably as December approaches.
- **Eggnog-related goodwill uplift** has softened slightly, despite higher uptake, in part due to widespread but dubious viral recipes circulating online.
- **Gift labelling errors have increased** by 12 percent compared to the same period last year. There may be some correlation between this and increased Eggnog consumption (see above), but this is yet to be validated.





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Emerging compliance issues

All issues below reflect developments observed from January–November, with trends expected to escalate in December.

1. Tinsel rationing

Households appear to be stretching last year's tinsel further, leading to creative but sometimes structurally questionable solutions.

2. Tree-topper incidents

Reports of angels, stars and novelty toppers losing stability continue to rise. The increase of reported Unstable Topper Incidents (UCIs) is cause for some concern, but appears to be driven largely from the novelty topper sub-sector (incidents involving angels and stars have remained relatively stable). Perhaps more alarming is the average velocity recorded at the point of impact, which reveals that 67% of novelty toppers experienced a significant and sudden structural failure, rather than a gradual list.



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3. Regifting risks

Regifting indicators typically spike after 25 December, but early showings suggest this may be an above-average year. With the most common regifted items from 2024 (gift-vouchers, “chatter-max-style” toys, and karaoke machines) once again topping the list of items at highest risk of regifting. Elf analysts are yet to confirm if this trend is the result of a widespread “double-regifting” incident.

4. Minister–Santa communication challenges

Due to hearing issues, Santa misheard “prepare streamlined guidance for December” as “prepare stream-themed guidance for December.” A short-lived “Under the Sea Christmas” directive briefly circulated before correction.





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Gift satisfaction and complaints review

Gift-related complaints recorded between January and late November 2025 total 42,000 — consistent with typical pre-Christmas patterns, as many individuals lodge concerns about past gifts, early celebrations, Secret Santa events, and pre-December family traditions.

The complaints.csv data reveals several trends already taking shape for the 2025 season.

Complaint themes (January–November)

1. “Not what I asked for”

Still the most common category, accounting for 52 percent of year-to-date submissions. Examples include:

- A 32-year-old receiving broccoli from a colleague named Dylan.
- A 7-year-old expecting a flying unicorn plushie but receiving a grounded model.
- Recipients of multiple novelty sock sets despite “clear verbal indications” to the contrary.

2. Inappropriate gifting

Observed predominantly in early workplace Kris Kringles and family gatherings.

3. Faulty or broken gifts

Generally linked to early-season purchases and storage damage.

4. Obvious regifting

Regifting complaints are trending upwards. Interestingly, data suggests that a complaint is almost always lodged when a recipient is ‘re-gifted’ the same gift that they gave last year.

Based on current modelling, we are anticipating the strong correlation between individuals who raise a Category 1 “Not what I asked for complaint”, having a subsequent “Obvious regifting” complaint raised against them the following year to continue.

5. Wishlist data insights

The SantaList.csv dataset, reflecting early global wish list patterns, shows:

- High demand for electronics
- Persistent fascination with slime kits amongst younger demographics
- Growth in vague “experiential” requests (“an unforgettable moment”, “a magical feeling”)

These insights will inform December operations.

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Naughty and nice trends: behavioural insights

This section draws on year-to-date global behavioural tracking data, with December projected based on well-established seasonal patterns.

Overall, “nice” behaviours increased by 2.4 percent from January–November 2025. “Naughty” behaviours remain stable, though a noticeable uptick usually occurs around mid-December when excitement peaks.

Observed naughty trends (January–November)

- Video call etiquette breaches continue to rise, especially during end-of-year planning meetings.
- Reply-All misuse remains a consistent risk factor.
- Incidents of reheating fish-based lunches in the staff microwave has increased in line with general increases in bringing lunch from home.
- Sibling competitiveness escalates as December nears.
- Cookie substitution attempts (“healthy alternatives”) have increased in early-season family gatherings.

Observed nice trends

- Community support behaviours have increased.
- Shared decorations and neighbourly assistance are up in urban areas
- Baseline understanding and tolerance of parents being fooled by AI slop online has risen steadily alongside recognition that AI generated content is getting harder to distinguish in many cases.
- Authenticity concerns on social media have not slowed the rise of online acts of kindness, though the Department continues to monitor trust levels.

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Behavioural Integrity: Validation of the Formal Review Process

In 2019, the Department launched the Naughty List Formal Review Process to address rare instances where individuals were inaccurately assigned to the Naughty List due to 'Data Access and Lag Metrics' (DALM) issues within the Global Behaviour Tracking Network.

The success of this initiative validates the Minister's commitment to establishing equitable, process-driven outcomes.

During the peak 2024 review cycle, the DCA processed 1,482 formal applications.

7 applications were found to have ‘Zero Variance’ from the original Naughty Status, while a total of 1475 applications resulted in a status reversal, overturning the original Naughty Status. This confirmed the ‘teething issues’ had a much broader systemic impact than initially projected.

These rectified cases represent the successful defense of the fundamental principle of procedural fairness, ensuring that even the most innovative behavioural tracking technology remains accountable to the human and elven element.

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The Global Joy Index: annual movement analysis

As of November 2025, the Global Joy Index (GJI) has risen by 3.2 points. Historical data shows that final December figures typically lift the index by a further 1–1.8 points, suggesting a strong close to the year.

Joy drivers (year-to-date)

- Increased local traditions
- Higher-than-expected mince pie output in cooler climates
- Strong elven labour markets
- Broader adoption of AI-assisted gift matching (still under monitored rollout)

Joy risks (projected December concerns)

- Potential heatwave-related chocolate melt events
- Reindeer workforce pressures, especially after a miscommunication where Santa misheard “strengthen reindeer resilience” as “introduce reindeer resistance”
- Ongoing cost-of-living constraints
- A 2 point increase in Krampus sightings in October and November is raising concerns of an increase in birch switch vigilantism against Naughty Listers.

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Compliance and Assurance: Adherence to the Christmas Service Standard

The Department maintains its commitment to upholding the core values outlined in the Christmas Service Standard (CSS), which ensures festive services are delivered efficiently and uphold the required standards of kindness, generosity, and cheerfulness.

Compliance assessment for the current reporting period indicates areas of strength, alongside critical vulnerabilities requiring strategic intervention.

"Monitor Your Christmas" Criterion Performance

Compliance rates under the "Monitor Your Christmas" criterion remain an area of significant operational challenge. Data integrity analysis reveals that while the volume of raw data collected on 'Joy Per Capita' (JPC) and 'Adult Sobriety Compliance (ASC)' has increased by 12% year-on-year, the reliability of this data remains classified as Grade 3 (Unreliable Subjective Baseline).

Current manual logging methods, which rely heavily on the visual and contextual interpretation by Elvish Monitoring Teams, introduce a systemic bias, leading to inconsistent JPC scores across different geographical regions.

The correlation between high ASC metrics and subsequent low JPC scores in post-event reviews remains a critical, unresolved finding.

Challenges in "Do No Harm" Enforcement

The "Do No Harm" standard continues to face persistent operational threats from high-frequency, low-severity incidents. The 2024 compliance data documents a concerning trend in Non-Premeditated Christmas Cracker Injury (NPCI) events, which saw a year-on-year increase of 7.1%.

Furthermore, incidents involving Unauthorised Pudding-Ignition Velocity (UPIV)—often exceeding the maximum safe limit of 0.8 meters per second—have necessitated a review of the 1988 Festive Pyrotechnics Protocol.

These events are not attributed to malice but to a systemic lack of awareness regarding the precarious nature of traditional festive materials, confirming that the regulatory framework struggles against the ingrained cultural elements of the season.

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Strategic Planning and "Clear Intent" Alignment

Strategic planning alignment with the "Clear Intent" criterion shows mixed results. While 98% of scheduled festive services were formally mapped to the CSS core values in pre-event documentation, subsequent assurance reviews revealed a significant deviation in execution.

Specifically, events designated as 'Generosity-Focused' frequently drifted into 'Excessive Consumerism' territory, while 'Cheerfulness' events often resulted in documented cases of 'Mandatory Fun Fatigue' (MFF) amongst staff participants.

This indicates a gap between the theoretical intent articulated in planning documents and the practical ability of service managers to maintain fidelity to the Standard during high-stress operational delivery.

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Communications Policy Compliance: The Festive Communications Guidebook (FCG)

The 2023 introduction of the Festive Communications Guidebook (FCG) was intended to elevate seasonal engagement across permitted departmental outputs.

However, the post-implementation review indicates significant operational and technical challenges that hampered universal compliance, particularly regarding the decommissioning timeline.

Non-Standard Punctuation and Symbol Deviation

Compliance with the FCG's directive to replace standard sentence-ending punctuation with approved festive symbols (❄, ❋, 🎄, etc.) yielded mixed results. Data shows that 58% of sanctioned communication documents exhibited instances of 'Triple Punctuation Clustering' (TPC), where the festive symbol was used in addition to—rather than in replacement of—the standard period or exclamation mark.

Further analysis indicates a high incidence of Symbol Reversal Error (SRE), where the Alt Codes for the Mistletoe (☘) and the Gift (▨) were frequently confused, leading to policy documents being inappropriately terminated with a cider symbol. This confusion necessitated the creation of an entirely new FCG-specific triage process in January.

Formatting and Attribution Integrity

The FCG's innovative requirement for alternating red and green text in lieu of standard bolding posed an unexpected challenge for internal desktop software and printing peripherals. 42% of physical publications showed evidence of 'Single-Colour Defaulting' (SCD), where the alternation failed, resulting in large blocks of exclusively red or green text which contravened accessibility standards.

Furthermore, the use of the Father Christmas emoji (🎅) for attribution frequently failed to render correctly across legacy internal systems, leading to numerous instances where quotes were officially attributed to an unreadable, small square symbol, thereby violating the Christmas Integrity and Authorship Standard (CIAS).

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The compound sentence construction using the Christmas tree separator (🎄) was frequently flagged by recipients as potential flowchart material, leading to operational confusion.

Critical Decommissioning Failure

The most significant compliance failure related to the FCG was the mandatory removal deadline of 7 January 2024. Assurance monitoring confirms that FCG elements were present in 31% of live, public-facing government content past this date.

This systemic failure resulted in instances of official work instructions and legal disclaimers retaining the valediction 'Ho Ho Ho!' and documents being signed off with a snowflake.

This prolonged non-compliance required immediate, mandatory intervention by the Chief Information Officer, confirming the high 'Persistence of Festive Novelty' (PFN) risk when policy elements rely on voluntary, manual removal by communication officers.

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Strategic priorities for 2026

These priorities are informed by 2025 performance to date, anticipated December outcomes, and planning requirements for the next global festive cycle.

1. Decarbonising chimney operations

We will begin transitioning traditional chimney-based delivery to a new low-emission model, ensuring festive distribution remains environmentally responsible.

This includes testing alternative entry pathways and lightweight sleigh components to reduce reliance on carbon-intensive flight patterns. Other essential goods associated with chimney operations, such as robo-sweepers, fire-dowsers and auto-sootprintvacs will be sourced through the new Guarantee of Origin and Seasonal Spirit (GOSS) framework.

Early pilots indicate strong potential, although Santa's recent mishearing of "pilot program" as "pilot pyjamas" created a brief procurement detour.

2. Enhanced global behaviour tracking

The next upgrade to the Global Behaviour Tracking system will improve data accuracy and reduce false Naughty detections caused by benign household noise, sibling disagreements or spirited Uno play.

GBT 4.0 will strengthen data-sharing channels between the North Pole, regional Festive Compliance Units and partner governments to ensure Santa receives timely, verified behaviour insights.

This upcoming release also prioritises clearer communication protocols to prevent repeated misunderstandings of ministerial directions.

3. Strengthening communication channels

Following several instances of misinterpretation by Santa due to hearing issues, the Department will roll out the Holiday Hearing Health and Communication Program (HoHoHoCP) to standardise briefing formats, introduce assisted-listening technologies and provide additional pre-Christmas calibration sessions.

The initiative aims to reduce operational delays and ensure all communications — verbal or magical — are received accurately. The program will also include a joint Santa–Minister debrief after the 2025 season to prevent further "creative reinterpretations."

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4. Ribbon Resilience uplift

To address rising concerns about ribbon tear rates in humid and extreme climates, the Department will expand its materials testing capability in collaboration with the North Pole Materials Science Unit. New global benchmarks for ribbon durability will be drafted, ensuring consistent wrapping quality regardless of weather conditions. A focus will also be placed on increasing supply chain resilience after last year's misunderstanding where Santa interpreted “high-tensile ribbon” as “high-tinsel ribbon.”

5. Global Gift Appropriateness Reform

The Department will introduce updated guidance to help reduce incidents of mismatched gifts, inappropriate items and ambiguous labelling. Insights from 2025 complaints — particularly those involving vegetables, vague gift cards and household cleaning products — will inform new classification and suitability standards. This reform aims to create a more consistent global gifting experience, ensuring all recipients feel seen, understood and pleasantly surprised.

6. Renewal of the International Joy Partnership (IJP)

The Department will work with partner governments, regional festive bodies and Santa’s administrative teams to refresh and expand the International Joy Partnership, focusing on long-term stability in global joy distribution. This renewal will prioritise sharing best practice, supporting low-joy regions and streamlining coordination during peak periods. With joy increasingly influenced by real-world pressures, the refreshed IJP framework will help ensure that no community experiences a seasonal shortfall.

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