

# Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme – Experimental Statistics August 2013 – February 2016

Coverage: Great Britain

Frequency of release: Quarterly

Publication Date: 27 April 2016

## Introduction

This publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 statutory child maintenance scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS). The 2012 Scheme was introduced alongside the government's reform of the child maintenance system to support separated parents to work together and set up their own family-based arrangements. The 2012 Scheme was introduced to support families who are unable to make arrangements themselves. The 2012 Scheme will replace the 1993 and 2003 Schemes (administered by the Child Support Agency) over the next few years as 1993 and 2003 cases are closed. Comparisons should not be made to previous schemes because of the different objectives of the 2012 Scheme.

## Headlines



The number of cases managed by the Child Maintenance Service continues to increase following the introduction of application and collection charging. **The caseload stood at 227,000 as at the end of February 2016**, an increase of 21% when compared to November 2015.

In the quarter to February 2016, **87% of Case Groups were contributing towards their current liability**, with **88%** of cash due, paid.

**There has been a slight change to Service levels**; although the proportion of calls answered was at 98% , those answered within 30 seconds decreased from 94% in November 2015 to 86% in February 2016. Accuracy levels increased from 92% in November 2015 to 93% in February 2016.



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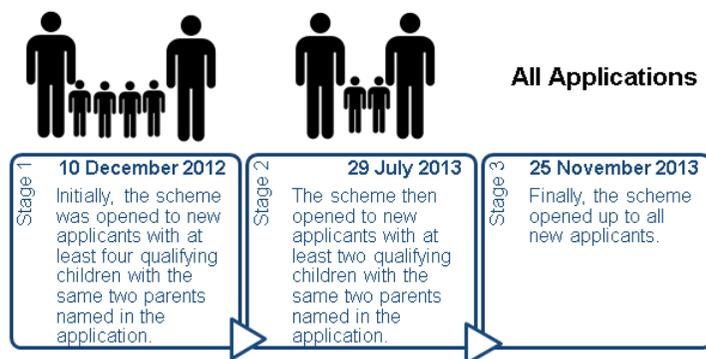
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## Background

This publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 statutory child maintenance scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service. The data covers the period of August 2013 to February 2016.

The 2012 child maintenance scheme was introduced using a staged implementation process, known as a pathfinder approach.



This release begins from the period where the pathfinder approach to the 2012 Scheme was open to new applicants with at least two qualifying children with the same two parents named in the application. Prior to August 2013 the caseload was restricted, with the low volumes of cases handled not being representative of the overall child maintenance caseload.

From 30 June 2014, application fees were introduced when applying to the 2012 scheme, along with charges for certain enforcement activities. Collection charges were introduced for using the Child Maintenance Service to collect and pay maintenance from August 2014.

These statistics are still in the early stages of development and assurance. Some of the statistics are currently collated manually by accessing core systems while the development of automated system based reports continues. These statistics have therefore been classified as experimental as we continue to assure and approve our methodology. They may be revised in future editions.

The [publication strategy for the 2012 Scheme](#) was published on 26 February 2014 and last updated on 30 December 2015.

## Changes to this Publication

There are no changes in this publication.

## Changes to Future Publications

Information on the 2012 Scheme continues to be developed and tested. Additional measures will be included in future publications when DWP statisticians are assured of the quality of the data, in line with the [publication strategy](#).

## Upcoming Releases

The next release of Experimental Statistics on the 2012 Scheme will contain data up to May 2016 and will be published in June/July 2016.

## Supplementary excel tables

All underlying data included in the charts and figures featured in this summary are included in accompanying excel tables.

This includes tables on those applying to the 2012 Scheme, total cases managed by the system, compliance and breakdowns of cases paying through the scheme or directly to the Receiving Parent. It also includes figures on service standards, including Telephony, Accuracy, Complaints, Change of Circumstances, Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals.

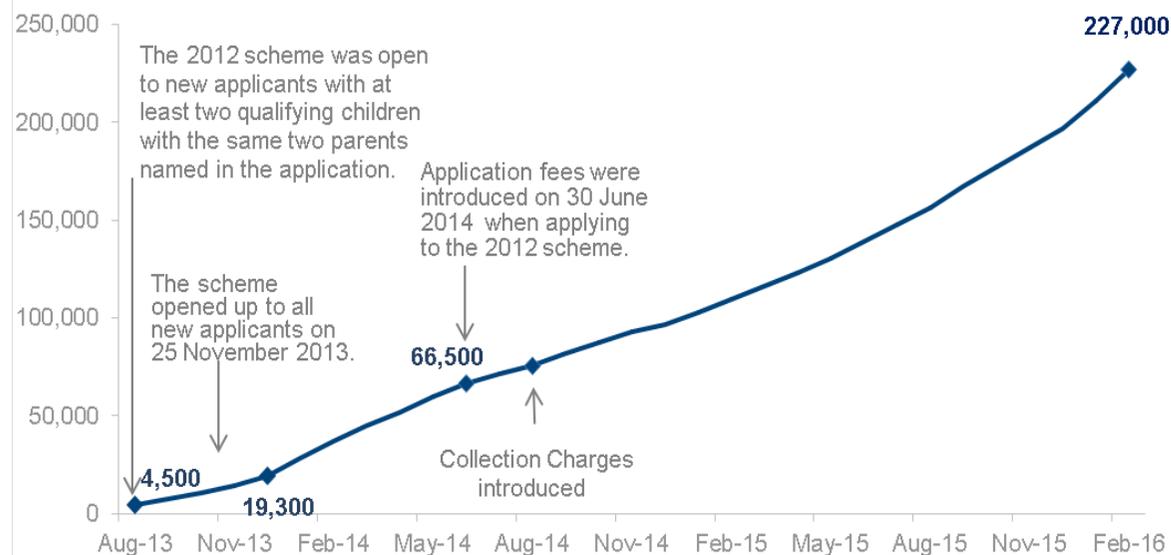
Methodology and Definitions are included on pages 10 to 13.

Page 14 provides an overview of the 2012 Child Maintenance Scheme.

# Intake and Caseload

## The number of cases managed by the Child Maintenance Service continues to increase

Total caseload each month from August 2013 to February 2016



Cases on the 2012 Scheme have the option to pay maintenance via the CMS Calculation and Collection Service or pay maintenance directly to the Receiving Parent (Direct Pay). Where there is evidence that suggests that the Paying Parent is unlikely to pay, Direct Pay will not be appropriate and the Calculation and Collection Service will be used.

From 30 June 2014, application fees were introduced when applying to the 2012 scheme, along with charges for certain enforcement activities. Collection charges were introduced for using the Child Maintenance Service to collect and pay maintenance from August 2014.

## Main Findings

The number of cases managed on the 2012 Scheme increased by 21% in February 2016 when compared to November 2015.

See [Table 1](#) for full data.

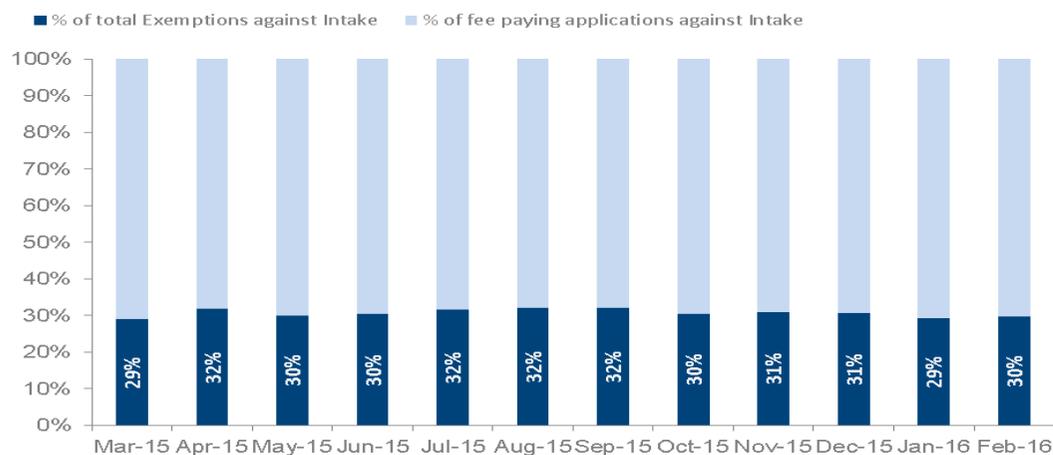
A system issue has been identified which impacts New Application Intake figures in Table 1. Investigations have been carried out which identified incorrect duplication of New Applications.

The identified duplicate cases created from the system issue have been removed from the New Application Intake figures in Table 1.

# Application Fee Exemptions

## The percentage of exemptions from Application Fees has remained steady

Intake split by percentage of fee paying applications and percentage of fee exemptions  
- March 2015 to February 2016



## Main Findings

The proportion of exemptions from Application Fees against intake has remained between 29% and 32% since March 2015.

As at the end of February 2016, there were 3,670 exemptions to Application Fees. Of these, 3,640 were for the reason of Domestic Violence.

Figures on the number of Application Fee Exemptions and Fee Exemptions due to reason of Domestic Violence are available in **Table 2**.

The Child Support Fees Regulations 2014 introduced an application fee for people who apply to use the Child Maintenance Service. Since 30 June 2014, there is a £20 fee to apply to the 2012 Scheme, payable by the applicant at the point of application. Arrears only applications are not subject to this fee.

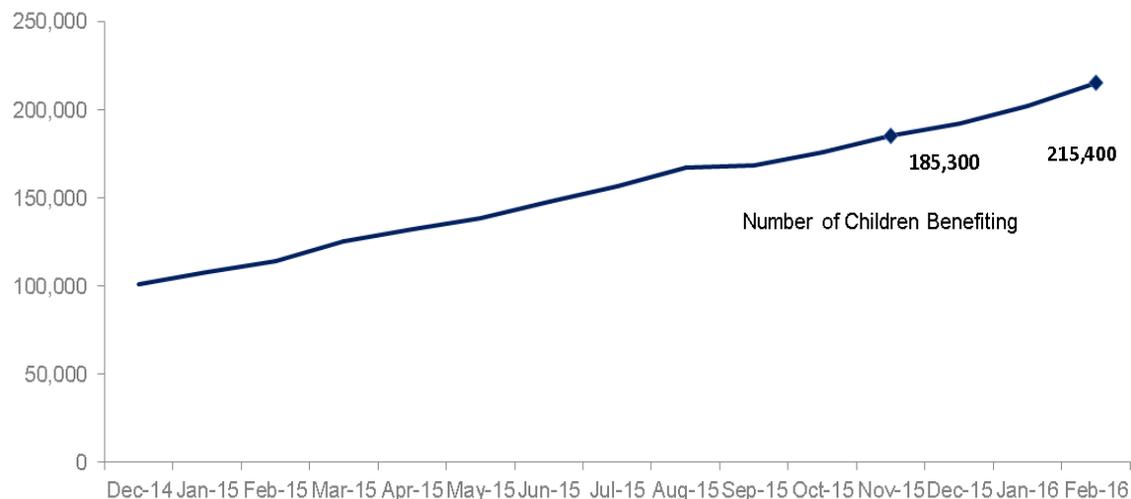
Those who declare that they have suffered domestic violence or abuse, and they have declared this to an approved body, as well as those who are under 19 years of age are exempt from the application fee. We have used the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse developed by the Home Office. This has been published, along with the list of approved organisations to which such an incident can be reported, alongside the Child Support Fees Regulations 2014.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/261882/child-support-fees-who-to-report-domestic-violence-to.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/261882/child-support-fees-who-to-report-domestic-violence-to.pdf)

# Children Benefiting from Maintenance

**The number of Children Benefiting has increased as more applications are made to the 2012 Scheme.**

Children Benefiting taken from a sample of compliant cases - December 2014 to February 2016



The graph above shows the number of Children Benefiting from maintenance, calculated from cases in which a payment was received or had a Direct Pay arrangement in place.

A statistically valid sample is taken from the cases that have a positive liability to calculate a figure for the average number of children per case. This figure is then multiplied by the number of cases paying in the quarter to give the number of Children Benefiting. The sampling is completed on a 6 monthly basis, with the average figure then used in the months between sampling. The most recent sample was taken in October 2015.

## Main Findings

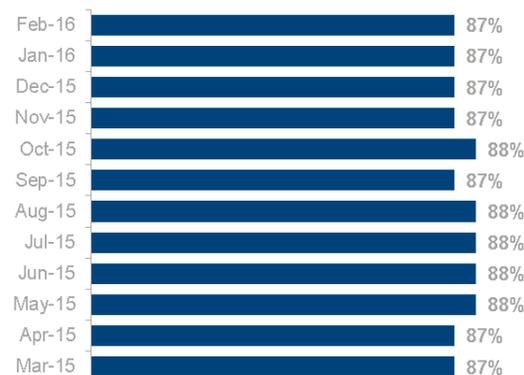
In October 2015, the average number of children per case was 1.51. At the end of October 2015, we were 95% confident that the number of children benefiting lies between 170,500 and 181,100.

The number of Children Benefiting has increased as more applications are made to the 2012 Scheme. **In the quarter to February 2016, 215,400 children benefited from maintenance.**

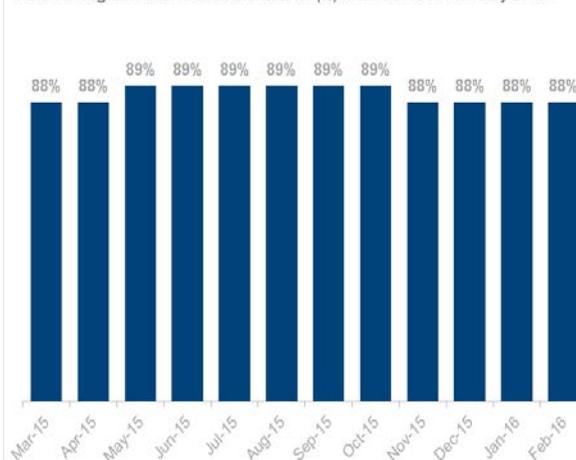
See **Table 3** for full data.

## Compliance, Service Type and Outstanding Maintenance Arrears

The percentage of Case Groups contributing towards current liability has remained steady. Case Groups Contributing towards Current Liability in the previous Quarter (%) March 2015 to February 2016.



The percentage of cash due paid in the quarter has remained steady. Case Paid against Cash Due in the Quarter (%) March 2015 to February 2016.



A Case Group is defined as all of the cases associated to a Paying Parent. For example, there may be two separate cases for children in relation to the same paying parent. For example a parent could have children with different partners, who are both claiming maintenance. Both of these cases will be linked by the Paying Parent and defined as a Case Group.

### Chosen method of payment of those who are due to pay maintenance as at February 2016

Collection Service, 30%

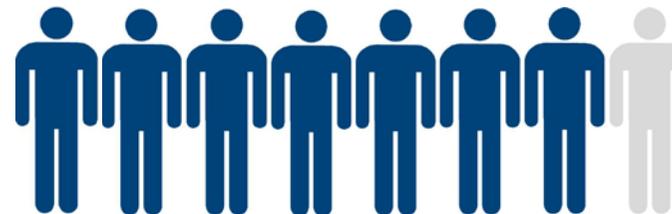
Direct Pay, 70%

Clients are encouraged wherever possible to use Direct Pay as their method of payment. Collection fees were introduced from August 2014 for clients who use the Calculation and Collection Service. Paying Parents will be charged a rate of 20% with Receiving Parents charged at 4%.

The amount of **Outstanding Maintenance Arrears** includes arrears accrued on the 2012 Scheme only; figures do not contain details of arrears transitioned from the 1993/2003 Schemes or Direct Pay.

## Main Findings

7 out of 8 are contributing towards their current liability



In the quarter to February 2016, **87% of Case Groups were contributing towards their current liability**, with **88%** of cash due, paid.

Figures on the number of Case Groups with a Current Liability and Case Groups contributing towards a Current Liability are included in **Table 4** and Cash Compliance data is available in **Table 5**.

As at the end of February 2016, **70% of cases that were due to pay their liability chose to pay maintenance directly to the Receiving Parent**. This is unchanged at November 2015.

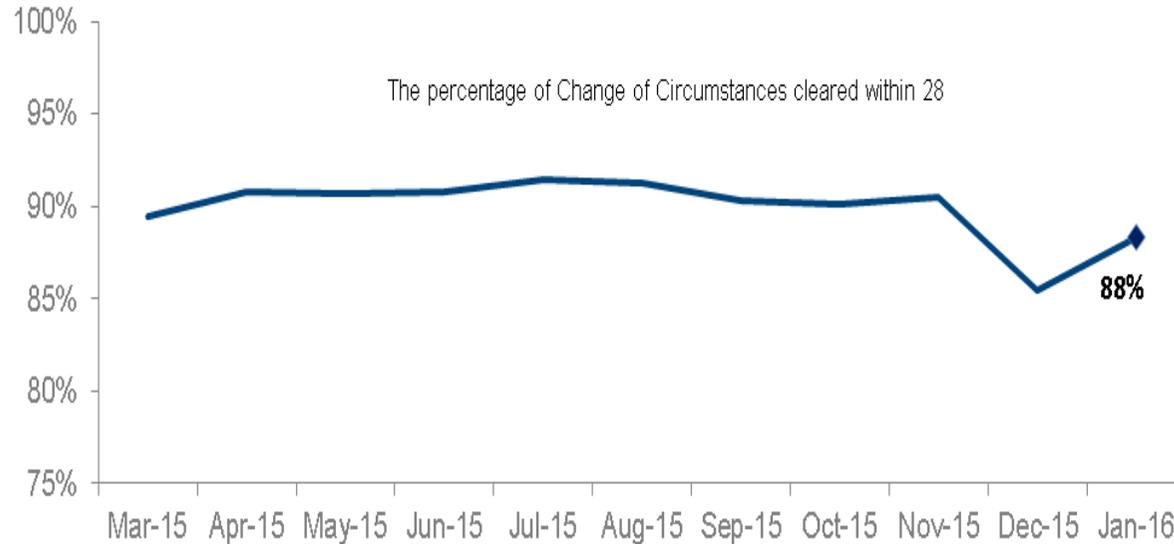
See **Table 6** for historical splits of Service Type.

The Outstanding Maintenance Arrears are increasing as the caseload grows. As at February 2016, the **amount stood at £52.5 million on 74,600 Case Groups**. Full data is now available in **Table 7**.

# Change of Circumstances

The proportion of Change of Circumstances cleared within 28 days has decreased from March 2015.

Change of Circumstances - March 2015 - January 2016



The graph above shows the percentage of Change of Circumstances cleared within 28 days. This is the number of Service Requests that have cleared within 28 days as a proportion of the total number of Service Requests received.

## Main Findings

Of the **131,900 Service Requests received** in January 2016, 88% of these were cleared with 28 days.

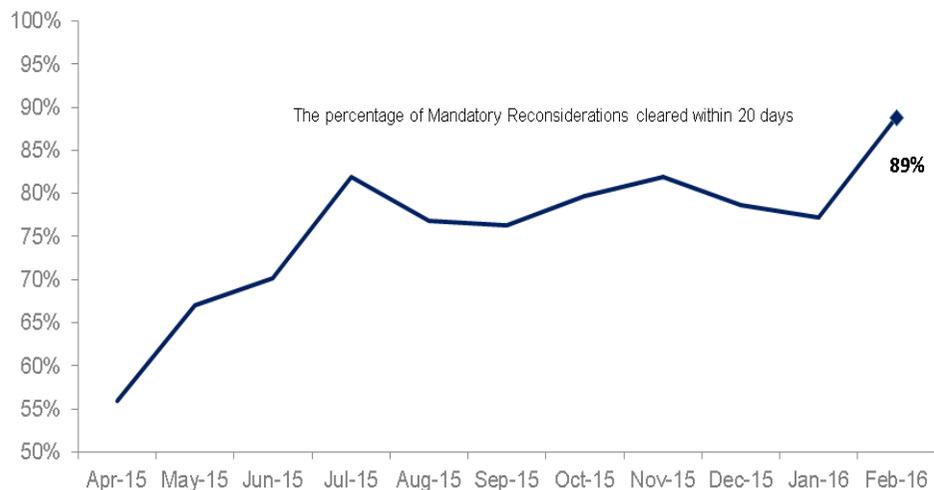
This is a slight decrease from October 2015 where, of the 120,280 Service Requests received, 90% were cleared within 28 days.

See **Table 8** for full data.

# Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals

The percentage of Mandatory Reconsiderations cleared within 20 days is at its highest point since April 2015.

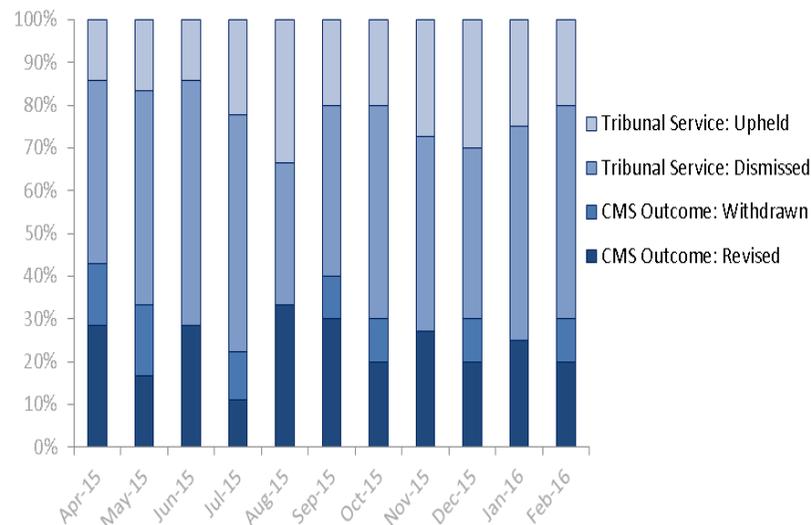
Mandatory Reconsiderations - April 2015 to February 2016



A Mandatory Reconsideration is when clients wish to dispute a decision and are required to ask the CMS to reconsider and revise the decision. The intention is that clients will then be able to make an informed decision on formally appealing to the Tribunal. An appeal cannot be lodged with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) until the Mandatory Reconsideration process has been completed.

## Appeal Outcomes have fluctuated since April 2015

Appeals Outcomes - April 2015 to February 2016



Appeals that are revised by the CMS or upheld by the Tribunal Service include those where the original decision made was correct but further evidence has been provided resulting in a revision.

### Main Findings

In February 2016, there were **1,010 Mandatory Reconsiderations** received and 840 cleared. Of these, 89% were cleared within 20 days.

See **Table 9** for the full breakdown.

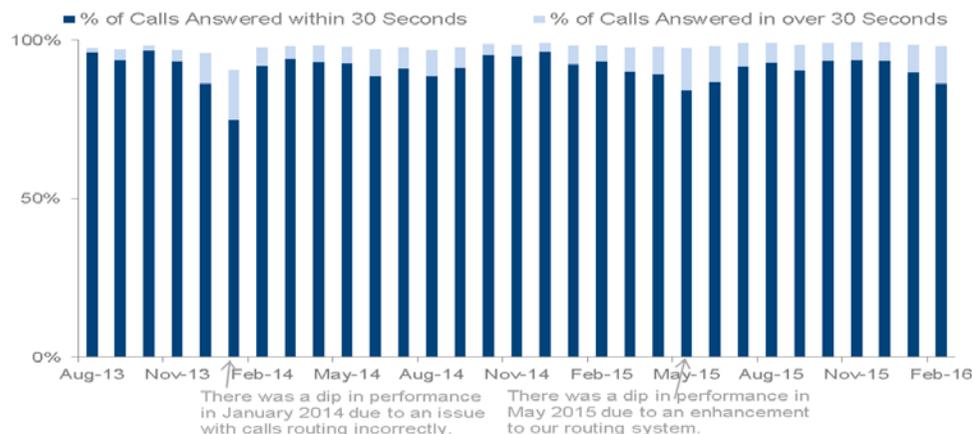
In February 2016, **90 appeals were received** from clients and 50 were cleared, of which 35 were Tribunal Service Outcomes and 15 were Child Maintenance Service Outcomes.

See **Table 10** for the further breakdowns.

## Service Standards

The proportion of calls answered remains high although there has been a decrease in calls being answered within 30 seconds.

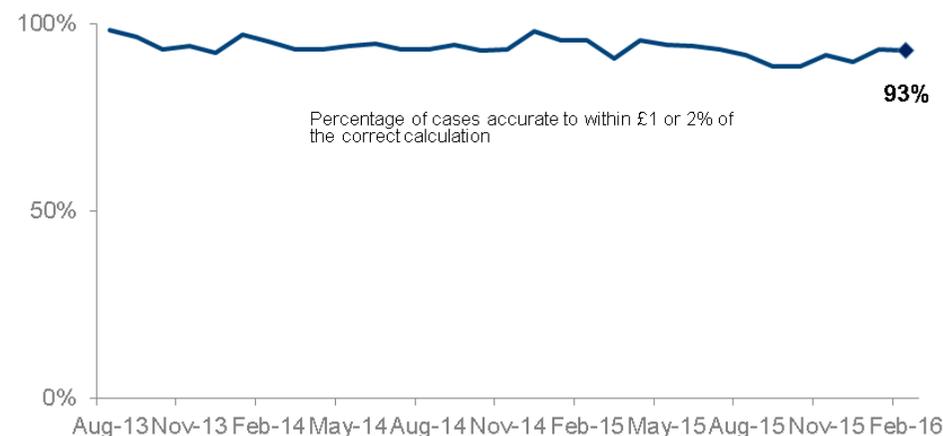
Percentage of Calls answered, split by time taken to answer - August 2013 to February 2016



In response to customer feedback an enhancement to telephony routing was introduced in May 2015. The enhancement has allowed even more customers to be routed to caseworkers with the appropriate knowledge and skills to deal with their enquiry or progress their case. This change has resulted in a small increase in the time taken to answer calls.

## Accuracy levels increased to 93% in February 2016 from 92% in November 2015

Accuracy levels - August 2013 - February 2016



Accuracy is defined as the proportion of cases that are accurate to within £1 or 2% of the correct calculation based on the latest assessment at the point of selection.

### Main Findings

There were **215 Complaints** received in February 2016. See **Table 11** for full data.

The proportion of calls answered has remained high overall other than the dip in January 2014 due to calls routing incorrectly. **In February 2016, 98% of calls were answered, with 86% answered within 30 seconds.** See **Table 12** for full data.

In month **Accuracy** stands at 93% in February 2016 which an increase of 1% from November 2015. See **Table 13** for full data.

## Methodology

Prior to December 2013, data are not representative of the full caseload due to the 2012 Scheme being introduced using a phased approach. During the early stages of the 2012 Scheme, applications were still accepted on the 2003 Scheme where the criteria were not met to apply to the 2012 Scheme. Please see the [Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics](#) for historical intake figures for CSA 1993 2003 cases.

### Data Sources

From August 2013 to March 2014 **Intake and Caseload** information was produced through interrogation of the Siebel case management system. From April 2014 onwards, this information is sourced from an automated report.

### Data Quality

A system issue has been identified which impacts New Application Intake figures in **Table 1**. Investigations have been carried out which identified incorrect duplication of New Applications.

The identified duplicate cases that have been created from the system issue have been removed from the New Application Figures in **Table 1**. Work continues to explore the reasons for the duplicates which may result in future changes to methodologies.

New Application Intake figures include some cases where the client has closed an existing application and decided to come back to the CMS at a later date.

**Application Fee Exemptions** data are manually extracted via filters from the Siebel source system and are snapshot figures taken at that point in time. By interrogating the source system we are able to provide a case based view as at the end of each month. Data are available from December 2014.

**Children Benefiting in Table 3** is calculated on cases that have been compliant in the quarter. A statistically valid sample is taken from the cases that have a positive liability to calculate a figure for the average number of children per case. This figure is then multiplied by the number of cases paying in the quarter to give the number of Children Benefiting. The sampling is completed on a 6 monthly basis, with the average figure then used in the months between sampling. The most recent sample was taken in October 2015.

**Compliance** measures include cases paying both via the Calculation and Collection service and Direct Pay. **Table 4**: Proportion of Case Groups Contributing towards Current Liability is derived by dividing the number of Case Groups that have paid by the number of Case Groups due to pay. **Table 5**: Proportion of cash paid from Case Groups with a Current Liability is derived by dividing the amount of cash paid by the amount of cash due, from Case Groups that were due to pay.

Cases paying via Direct Pay are assumed to be fully compliant as clients can come back to the CMS if there is a default on their payment or to request a revised calculation.

**Service Type** information in **Table 6** provides Service Type information sourced directly from the Siebel source system. This data is available from August 2014, giving a case based view as at the end of each month.

**Outstanding Maintenance Arrears** information in **Table 7** is obtained from the Client Fund Accounts which are sourced by collating data from Sage General Ledger software with Operational Management Information.

**Changes of Circumstance** measures in **Table 8** include the number of changes received, cleared and outstanding. Data are sourced from a Siebel system extract. The proportion of clearances is derived by taking the number of Service Requests that have cleared within 28 days divided by the total number that have been received that month.

**Mandatory Reconsiderations** data in **Table 9** are sourced from a Siebel system extract. Measures include the number received, total cleared and, of those, the number revised and not revised. The proportion of clearances is derived by taking the number of Mandatory Reconsiderations that have cleared within 20 days divided by the total number that were cleared in the month.

**Appeals** measures in **Table 10** include the number of Appeals received and the total number cleared broken down by outcome type. Data are sourced from an Appeals Tracking System (ATS).

**Complaints** information in **Table 11** is sourced clerically.

**Telephony** data in **Table 12** is collated on an automated telephony system which routes callers to the correct caseworker. This system has a built in management information capability which produces detailed reports including calls received, calls answered and speed to answer for all calls.

**Accuracy** figures in **Table 13** are derived by checking a sample of cases on which new assessments or changes to assessments have been carried out to ensure that the calculation was accurate. The sample is derived by manually accessing the core system.

## Definitions

**Accuracy:** The proportion of cases assured that are cash value accurate to within a £1.00 or 2% tolerance (whichever is higher) of the correct current calculation based on the latest assessment at the point of selection.

**Appeals:** The number of appeals received on the 2012 Scheme where the client challenges the maintenance decision.

**Application Fee Exemptions:** Exemptions from applications fees can be applied in the following circumstances, where the applicant is under 19 years of age or they are or have been a victim of domestic violence (declare that they have suffered domestic violence or abuse, and they declared this to an approved body).

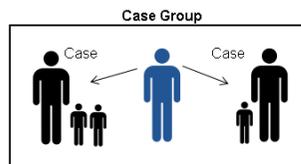
**Application Fee:** From 30 June 2014, all new applications to the 2012 Scheme were charged a £20 application fee.

**Arrears Only:** These are cases with arrears which have no on-going maintenance liability.

**Calculation and Collection:** A case is classed as 'Calculation and Collection' when the maintenance calculation has been derived by the CMS (after assessment of the case) and the Paying Parent pays child maintenance to the CMS. The CMS then sends this money to the receiving parent. Money is paid into a bank or post office account or via [simple payment](#) method.

Further information on [how to pay child maintenance](#) is available online.

**Case Group:** A case group consists of all of the cases associated to a Paying Parent.



**Caseload:** The number of cases which are being managed on the 2012 statutory scheme.

**Cash Compliance:** The proportion of cash paid from case groups with a current liability.

**Change of Circumstances:** The number of Service Requests received that request a change of circumstance on a case.

**Children Benefiting:** The number of children benefiting from maintenance, calculated from cases in which a payment was received or had a direct pay arrangement in place.

**CMS:** Child Maintenance Service.

**Complaints:** The number of complaints received on the 2012 Scheme.

**Compliance:** The proportion of Case Groups who are contributing towards their current liability. A Case Group is considered to be contributing towards Current Liability if a case is Direct Pay or the Paying Parent has made a payment via the Collection Service in the quarter.

**Direct Pay:** A case is classed as 'Direct Pay' when the maintenance calculation has been derived by the CMS (after assessment of the case) and the Paying Parent pays child maintenance directly to the Receiving Parent. These cases are assumed to be fully meeting their current liability (since clients can come back to the CMS if there is a default on their payment or to request a revised calculation).

**Domestic Violence:** We have used, for this purpose, the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse developed by the Home Office.

This has been published, along with the list of approved organisations to which such an incident can be reported, alongside the Child Support Fees Regulations 2014.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/261882/child-support-fees-who-to-report-domestic-violence-to.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/261882/child-support-fees-who-to-report-domestic-violence-to.pdf)

**Intake:** The number of new applications received to the 2012 statutory scheme.

**Mandatory Reconsiderations:** This is where the CMS review the entire decision before a client can appeal against it.

**Outstanding Maintenance Arrears:** This is Maintenance arrears accrued on the 2012 Scheme.

**Resolution:** The first stage of a complaint where CMS attempt to resolve the complaint.

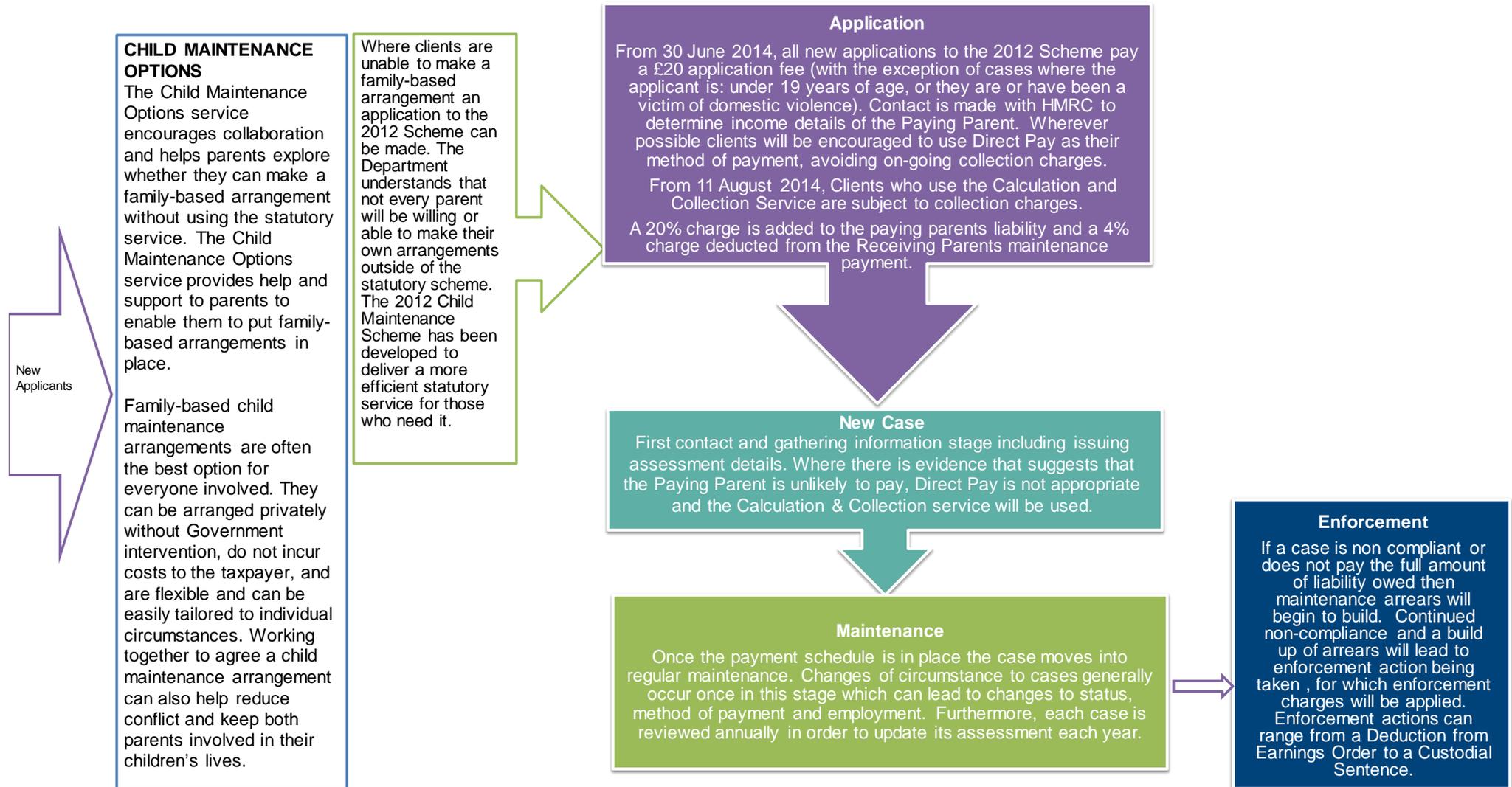
**Review:** The second stage of a complaint which occurs if the complainant is not satisfied with the proposed resolution from the first stage.

**Service Request:** This is generated when the client requests a change or an action is required on the case.

**Service Type:** This is the chosen method of payment of cases due to pay maintenance. Service type is split by cases paying via the Calculation & Collection Service or via Direct Pay.

**Telephony:** The proportion of calls answered and the percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds.

# 2012 Scheme Overview



## Notes

The 1993 and 2003 statutory schemes continue to be delivered by the Child Support Agency (CSA). However, over time the 2012 Scheme will be the only child support scheme in operation. The process to close CSA cases began on 30 June 2014 and is expected to take around three years.

Comparisons should not be made to previous schemes because of the different objectives of the 2012 Scheme and the relatively high proportion of cases in the course of making their first payment. The reforms to the child maintenance system are to place emphasis on supporting parents to set up collaborative, family-based child maintenance arrangements, so that the statutory scheme is no longer the default option.

## Uses and Users

The main users of the statistics in this document include: the public, external interest groups, Parliament, Department for Work and Pensions Ministers, Ministers and officials in other Government departments, academics, the media and external commentators and Department for Work and Pensions policy and operational officials.

The CMS 2012 Experimental Statistics are used by a number of internal stakeholders for:

- Monitoring and reporting performance trends against key indicators
- Informing briefing, lines to take and press releases
- Internal communications
- Answering Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests
- Undertaking internal analysis and producing figures at a lower and more granular level
- Setting internal performance measures
- Policy evaluation and to help external users gauge the effectiveness of Child Maintenance Systems

Our internet based publication means that we cannot ascertain all the varied uses of the numbers produced. However, we do know the experimental statistics are used for:

- Providing general information on the Child Maintenance Service in Great Britain
- Measuring performance of the new Child Maintenance Scheme.
- Informing discussions and meetings with external stakeholders and MPs
- Social research and academic studies of the effectiveness of social policy

## Feedback Welcome

The Department for Work and Pensions is always glad to hear the comments and views of customers on the 2012 Experimental Statistics. Please email [cm.analysis.research@dpw.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cm.analysis.research@dpw.gsi.gov.uk).