

Freedom of Information request 2014-591

Date received 6 February 2014

Date of response 13 August 2014

Information request

- 1) Can you provide me with statistics region by region of timescale taken from DWP sending out ESA50 to the claimant, to the time the claimant gets a decision.
- 2) If delays occur in question 1, how many delays have there been above the normal timeframe, which I again would like regional statistics for.
- 3) If Delays occurred were there financial penalties applied to the DWP or ATOS or JCP, I would also like the statistical data for that too.
- 4) What is average timescale for ESA if it isn't 16 weeks?

DWP response

In response to questions 1, 2 and 4, total and regional statistics on the number of initial assessments for new claims to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) where the functional assessment has been completed and the number (including the average number) of calendar days from (a) the claimant making a new claim for ESA and the issue of an ESA50 form, (b) the issue of an ESA50 form and the assessment date and (c) the assessment date and the Decision Maker's final decision on the claim are available in the table below:

Please note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution. Please read the table notes.

Number of initial assessments completed for New Claims to ESA and the number of calendar days from the start of the ESA claim to the Jobcentre Plus Decision Maker's decision by Region: October 2008 – June 2013

Length of time between:	Region:	Volume of completed functional assessments:			Median number of days
		91 Days	91 days	Total	

		or less	to 20 weeks	assessments completed	taken:
(a) The claimant making a new claim for ESA and the issue of an ESA50 form	East Midlands	113,000	19,800	132,800	21
	East of England	107,900	18,100	126,100	30
	London	170,900	34,400	205,300	31
	North East	101,600	10,600	112,200	21
	North West	254,000	27,400	281,400	22
	Scotland	181,200	26,800	208,000	24
	South East	141,800	22,100	163,900	21
	South West	105,700	11,200	116,900	20
	Wales	105,100	14,500	119,700	25
	West Midlands	154,400	14,300	168,700	26
	Yorks & Humber	155,300	19,500	174,700	20
	Unknown/Abroad	-	-	-	-
Total	1,591,000	218,600	1,809,600	24	
(b) The issue of an ESA50 form and the assessment date	East Midlands	114,500	26,100	140,600	56
	East of England	88,600	42,600	131,200	68
	London	124,500	86,500	211,000	76
	North East	98,100	19,400	117,500	56
	North West	224,300	69,700	294,000	62
	Scotland	164,500	51,200	215,700	63
	South East	101,900	71,000	172,900	78
	South West	71,200	52,300	123,500	77
	Wales	84,400	40,200	124,700	69
	West Midlands	113,500	61,200	174,700	72
	Yorks & Humber	141,900	41,600	183,500	60
	Unknown/Abroad	-	-	-	-
Total	1,327,500	561,800	1,889,200	65	
(c) The assessment date and the Decision Maker's final decision on the claim	East Midlands	119,200	5,800	125,000	17
	East of England	107,900	7,300	115,200	13
	London	179,500	8,700	188,300	17
	North East	98,100	3,300	101,400	16
	North West	250,000	8,400	258,400	18
	Scotland	183,900	7,400	191,400	17
	South East	142,500	12,200	154,700	20
	South West	104,600	4,500	109,100	13
	Wales	105,300	3,900	109,300	15
	West Midlands	146,200	6,500	152,700	12
	Yorks & Humber	152,900	7,900	160,800	21
	Unknown/Abroad	-	-	-	-
Total	1,590,200	76,000	1,666,200	16	

Source: Department for Work and Pensions and ATOS Healthcare

Notes:

1. All values are rounded; therefore addition of all volumes for outcomes may not sum to total cases. Caseload volumes have been rounded to the nearest 100. "-" denotes nil or negligible.
2. The average number of days is the median number of calendar days.
3. The duration for (c) is calculated using the date the DWP Decision Maker makes their final decision on the claim. The claimant may not receive the decision until a few days later. We therefore cannot estimate the length of time it takes for the claimant to receive the decision.
4. The analysis above only includes those where an initial functional assessment has been completed. Those still waiting for an assessment are excluded as they are still awaiting a decision.
5. For around 10% of all new claims, the duration cannot be determined due to data not being available, so these have been excluded from the analysis above. These are mainly claims with one or more of the dates missing so the time from the claim start to the notification of the WCA output cannot be calculated. Those still waiting for an assessment are also excluded.
6. The data presented above comes from benefit claims data held by the Department for Work and Pensions. It related to new ESA claims only; Incapacity Benefits (IB) claims reassessments are not included. In October 2008, ESA replaced IB for new claims. Starting with a trial in October 2010, and reaching a full scale national roll-out in April 2011, existing IB claims began to be phased out, with claimants reassessed to see if they qualify for ESA instead.
7. Data is for new ESA claims made between October 2008 and June 2013 and is the latest data available at the time of the request.
8. As the Official Statistics on ESA and the WCA do not focus on benefit durations, the underlying data used to provide the information has not been quality assured to the same level, and should be treated with caution.

In response to question 3, we are only able to comment on the services provided by Atos Healthcare within the question asked.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) contractual agreement with Atos Healthcare contains Performance Service Levels (including customer service targets) which also contain automatic financial remedies where there is service level failure based on pre estimate of loss to the Department. The contractual performance of Atos Healthcare is monitored closely by the DWP.

The Department has decided not to disclose the information regarding financial remedies, in accordance with Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000; this exemption covers Commercial Interests. The medical services Contract will in due course be re-let by means of a

competitive procurement exercise. Releasing details of Atos Healthcare's underlying financial model, in particular details of financial remedies that they have factored into the contract would, or would be likely to prejudice their commercial interests.

In applying this exemption the Department has balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information and considers that release of the information would prejudice the interest of Atos Healthcare and the Department's future dealings with Atos Healthcare or other service providers.