



Ministry of
JUSTICE



Tribunals Service

Social Security and Child Support Statistics: 1 April 2010 to 28 February 2011

Statistical Notice

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Introduction

This Statistical Notice presents information on the activity of the Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) tribunal for the period, 1 April 2010 to 28 February 2011.

I have taken the decision to release this information outside the usual timetable for Statistical Releases due to the amount of Parliamentary and media interest in the work of SSCS over recent months and to ensure that debate is informed by the latest data. This Statistical Notice has been produced in response to the growing interest and to inform debate. It should be noted that information for January and February 2011 is provisional management information and may be amended when Official Statistics are published. This will be published monthly until the end of August 2011 when we will review the need for monthly publication. This is the second of such reports.

Quarterly official statistics for the Tribunals Service, for the first three quarters of 2010-11 (April to December 2010) have been published and are available at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/quart-stats-tribunals.htm>.

Iain Bell

Chief Statistician

Ministry of Justice

Key Findings

Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) had 378,300 receipts between April 2010 and February 2011, an increase of 25% over the same period in the previous year. There has been a 36% increase in the number of disposals by this jurisdiction from 247,900 in April 2009 - February 2010, to 338,300 in April 2010 – February 2011.

Receipts and Disposals

- Having reached a peak of 40,100 in August 2010, the number of SSCS receipts fell month on month until December 2010, with a small rise thereafter.
- The number of disposals has been generally rising since December 2009, with a peak of 35,600 in February 2011.
- In February 2011, the number of disposals exceeded receipts for the second month since April 2009.
- For Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefit (IB) specifically:
 - After month on month rises, the number of ESA/IB receipts went down each month from August 2010 until December 2010, and have had recent rises.
 - Disposals have been generally increasing since June 2009, reaching a peak of 20,100 in February 2011.
 - In three of the last four months (November 2010, January 2011 and February 2011), the number of ESA/IB disposals outstripped receipts. In December 2010, disposals were at similar levels to receipts.

Caseload Outstanding

- At 28 February, 2011, the caseload outstanding for SSCS was 193,200, an increase of 46% on the number at 28 February of the previous year.
- For ESA and IB cases, as disposals have exceeded receipts in two of the last three months, the numbers outstanding seem to have levelled off.

Clearances and Timeliness

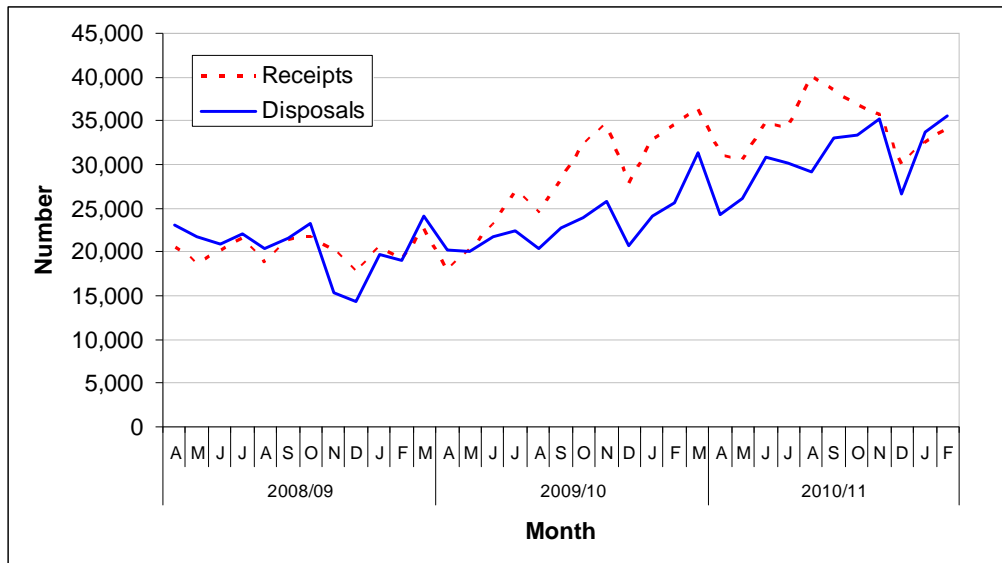
- The average clearance time (from receipt to disposal) has been increasing over the last couple of years. In February 2011, this average was 21.8 weeks.

Commentary

Receipts and Disposals (Tables 1.1 and 2.1)

1. The Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) tribunal had 378,300 receipts in the period 1 April 2010 – February 2011 – more than half of all receipts for the Tribunals Service. Receipts to SSCS have been increasing over the last couple of years – with the year to date receipts being 25% higher than for April 2009 – February 2010. Having reached a peak of 40,100 in August 2010, the number of receipts fell month on month until December 2010 and there have been small rises thereafter. There were 34,200 receipts in February 2011, an increase on the December figure, but this was still lower than monthly receipts for the previous 4 months.

Figure 1: Receipts and Disposals from April 2008 to February 2011



Source: TS monthly returns

2. Between 1 April 2010 and 28 February 2011, SSCS disposed of 338,300 cases - an increase of 36% on the number disposed of in the same period of the previous year.

3. **Figure 1** shows the trend in both receipts and disposals. The number of disposals has been generally rising since December 2009, with a peak of 35,600 in February 2011. In February 2011, the number of disposals exceeded receipts for the second month since April 2009 - there were 35,600 disposals compared with 34,200 receipts.

Receipts and Disposals by benefit type (Tables 1.1 and 2.1)

4. Of those 378,300 cases received between April 2010 and February 2011:

- 55% referred to Employment Support Allowance (ESA)/Incapacity Benefit (IB);
- 20% were for Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance (DLA/AA);
- 11% were for Job Seeker's Allowance.

5. The rise in SSCS receipts over recent years has mainly been caused by the introduction of Employment Support Allowance in October 2008 to replace Incapacity Benefit. In the period 1 April 2010 to 28 February 2011, SSCS had 209,300 receipts for these benefit types – 32% more than in the same period in 2009-10.

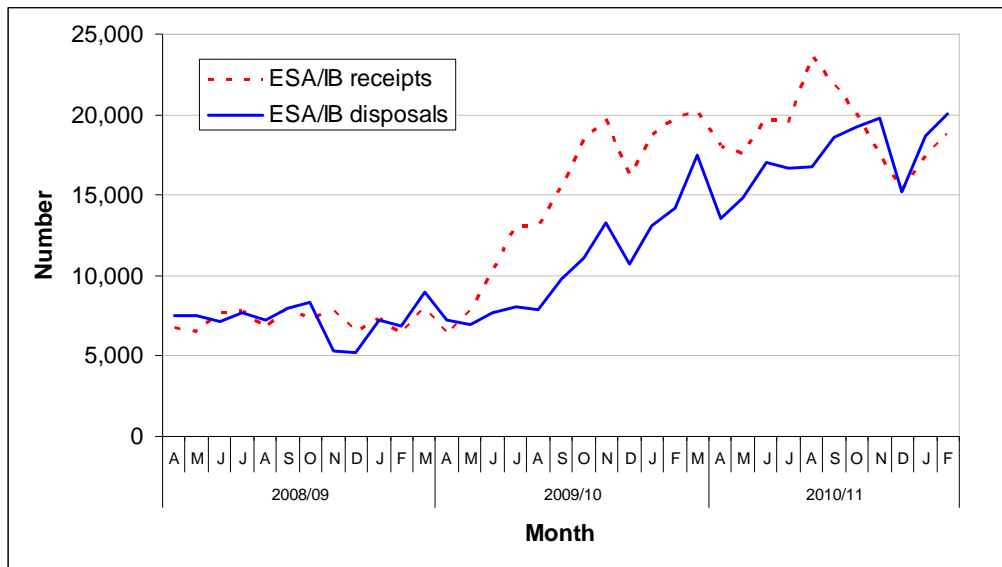
6. Sizeable monthly increases in ESA/IB receipts were seen from June 2009, where the number of receipts in that month was 10,200. The number generally continued to rise until August 2010, reaching a peak of 23,600 – 59% of all SSCS receipts for that month. Since August, the number of ESA/IB receipts has gone down each month until December 2010. There was a slight increase in the last two months, and in February there were 18,500 receipts.

7. Examining the other benefit types, there has been a rise in the number of receipts for Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA). In the period April 2010 – February 2011, there were 42,000 JSA receipts (up 52% on the same period of the previous year).

8. In the year to date to February 2011, 190,400 ESA/IB cases have been disposed of – 73% more than the 109,800 disposals in the same period of the previous year.

9. Similarly to receipts, the number of ESA/IB disposals has been generally increasing since June 2009, reaching its highest level of 20,100 in February 2011. For the third time in four months: November 2010, January 2011 and February 2011, the number of disposals has outstripped receipts. In December 2010, disposals were at a similar level to receipts.

Figure 2: ESA/IB Receipts and Disposals from April 2008 to February 2011



Source: TS monthly returns

Outcome of hearings (Table 2.2)

10. Table 2.2 provides some information on the outcome of Social Security and Child Support Cases that were cleared at hearing¹, and whether the decision was found in favour of the appellant or if the original decision made by DWP was upheld. In the year to date to February 2011, there were 245,700 hearing clearances – 32% more than in the same period of the previous year. Of these, 35% were found in favour of the appellant (but there is some variation in that proportion by benefit type).

Caseload outstanding (Table 3.1)

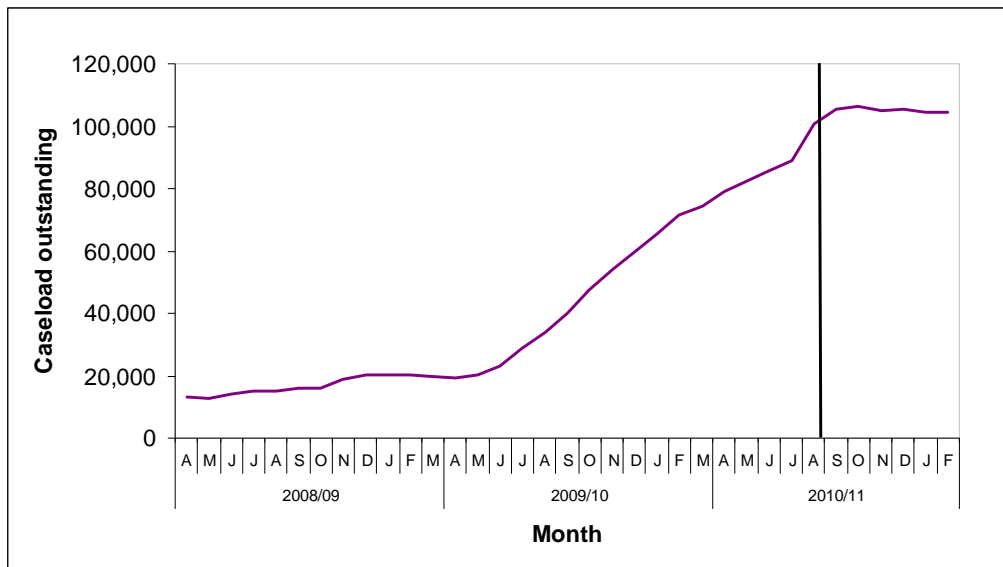
11. At 28 February, 2011, the caseload outstanding was 193,200, an increase of 46% on the number at 28 February of the previous year. Over half – 54% is in the “04 Tribunal category”, which is where ESA and IB cases are predominantly recorded. Examining just that category, the outstanding caseload was 104,400 at 28 February 2011 as compared with 71,400 at 28 February 2010.

12. Figure 3 shows significant rises in the caseload outstanding (for the “04 ESA/IB Tribunal Category”) around the time that receipts of ESA/IB started to

¹ These are cleared via a Tribunal (could be a panel or a member of the Judiciary sitting alone) with a decision/outcome.

increase. As disposals have exceeded receipts in three of the last four months, the numbers outstanding seem to have levelled off.

Figure 3: Caseload Outstanding for “04 Tribunal Category/ ESA/IB”, from April 2008 to February 2011 ²



Source: TS monthly returns

Performance (Table 4.1)

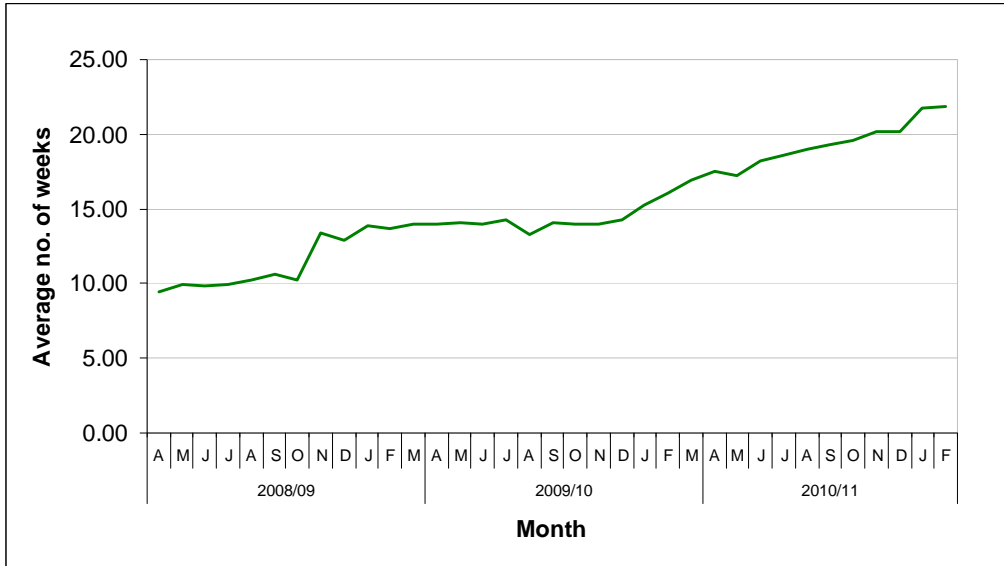
13. The performance indicator for SSCS is :

“The percentage of appeals where the final outcome is promulgated within sixteen weeks of receipt at SSCS” – against a 75% target.

14. In the year to date to February 2011, performance was 47% against the 75% target. An alternative measure of timeliness has been examined showing the average amount of time (in weeks) taken from receipt at the tribunal to clear or dispose of a case. Figure 4 shows that the average clearance time has been increasing over the last couple of years. In February 2011, this average was 21.8 weeks.

² All ESA/IB outstanding caseload captured from August 2010, prior to this date some cases were dealt with as Category 01

Figure 4: Average Clearance time for all SSCS disposals from April 2008 to February 2011



Explanatory notes

Data quality and sources

Information presented in this report is drawn from administrative sources. It should be noted that information for January 2011 to February 2011 is provisional management information and may be amended when Official Statistics are published.

Definitions

Receipt – Volumetric term covering the acceptance of a case within the Tribunals Service.

Disposal – A disposal is the closure of a case when work has ceased to be done. This can be through a claim being withdrawn, settled, dismissed or being heard at a hearing.

Hearing clearance - these are cleared via a Tribunal (could be a panel or a member of the Judiciary sitting alone) with a decision/outcome.

Non-hearing clearance – There are some Tribunal judgements (some go the judge who decides that they should be struck out).

Hearing – The hearing is a meeting at which the tribunal panel considers evidence (either orally or paper based) and reaches a decision (where the decision may be to adjourn or to agree a final outcome). If the hearing is adjourned and restarted, it counts as one hearing.

Examples of hearings include:

- Paper hearings;
- Oral hearings;
- Case Management Discussions;
- Decision on Eligibility.

Oral Hearing – A hearing where the party(ies) and/or their representative(s) have been invited to attend (this can be by telephone or by video conference).

Paper Hearing – Consideration of the case using documents, and not requiring any physical appearance by the parties.

Decision in favour – Decision in favour of the appellant.

Decision upheld – Decision made by the First Tier Agency and withheld by the Tribunal.

Withdrawal – The applicant/claimant/appellant ceases action either before or at the hearing.

Settlement – Cases settled without the need for a hearing. A third party may have been involved in the process.

Outcome of hearing – The outcome of the hearing is the final determination of the proceedings or of a particular issue in those proceedings.

Caseload outstanding – The number of cases outstanding at the end of the period and still waiting to be dealt with to completion.

Symbols and conventions

Figures in the tables are rounded independently and thus may not add to totals because of rounding. The following conventions have been used throughout:

- Values less than 100 remain as unit values.
- Values from 100 to 999 are rounded to the nearest 10.
- Values of 1,000 and over are rounded to the nearest hundred.

The following symbols have been used throughout the tables in this bulletin:

.	= Not applicable
..	= Not available
-	= Small Value
0	= Nil
(r)	= Revised data
(p)	= Provisional data

Contact points for further information

Current and previous editions of this publication are available for download at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/quart-stats-tribunals.htm>

Spreadsheet files of the tables and graphs contained in this document are also available for download from this address.

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Email: press.office@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

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Email: tsstats@tribunals.gsi.gov.uk

General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from www.statistics.gov.uk

Table 1.1 SSCS Receipts by Benefit Type

Benefit	2009-10					2010-11 ^P				
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Jan ^P	Feb ^P
	Attendance Allowance	790	1,000	980	1,100	3,900	860	1,100	1,100	330	330
Disability Living Allowance	15,900	16,900	18,800	20,100	71,700	17,300	21,000	21,400	6,300	6,200
Bereavement Benefit	140	140	150	120	530	120	110	140	39	42
Carer's Allowance	260	380	260	210	1,100	310	440	420	120	140
Child Benefit Lone Parent	340	490	350	420	1,600	340	640	480	150	150
Child Support Allowance	1,100	1,000	940	1,100	4,200	940	930	920	270	310
Credits (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Tax Credits	390	340	300	550	1,600	710	720	670	240	320
COEG	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0	0
Compensation Recovery Unit	83	73	120	94	370	75	87	100	30	36
Housing/Council Tax	3,100	3,200	3,100	3,100	12,500	3,100	3,300	3,000	910	980
Disability Working Allowance	-	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	0	0
Employment Support Allowance	10,100	29,000	41,100	46,500	126,800	46,000	55,700	44,900	14,900	16,700
Health in Pregnancy Grant	0	120	270	220	610	120	93	50	37	49
Home Responsibilities Protection	-	-	12	10	25	7	6	-	5	-
Incapacity Benefit	14,200	12,600	13,100	12,200	52,200	9,400	9,100	8,000	2,500	2,100
Income Support	3,900	4,100	3,800	4,200	16,000	3,900	4,000	4,000	990	1,000
Industrial Death Benefit	0	0	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	1,700	1,100	1,800	2,700	7,300	2,600	2,200	2,300	700	710
Job Seekers Allowance	6,900	7,300	7,600	9,300	31,100	8,800	11,500	12,900	4,400	4,400
Lookalikes	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	67	64	54	69	250	57	71	57	8	15
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	16	19	31	14	80	17	42	23	6	-
Penalty Proceedings	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
Pensions credit	400	370	460	460	1,700	330	360	390	140	170
Retirement Pension	250	160	190	220	810	220	190	270	88	100
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	33	32	29	36	130	26	23	42	13	10
Social Fund	1,400	1,200	970	1,100	4,700	1,300	1,000	1,200	390	420
Vaccine Damage Appeals	0	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-
Total	61,100	79,800	94,600	103,800	339,200	96,500	112,600	102,500	32,500	34,200

Rounded Number

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

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Table 2.1 SSCS Disposals by Benefit Type

Rounded Number

Benefit	2009-10					2010-11 ^P				
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Jan ^P	Feb ^P
Attendance Allowance	880	920	910	840	3,500	850	850	850	320	290
Disability Living Allowance	17,500	17,000	15,500	15,500	65,400	15,500	16,200	15,100	5,500	5,800
Bereavement Benefit	120	150	130	120	520	110	100	110	45	62
Carer's Allowance	320	340	280	260	1,200	220	340	380	130	130
Child Benefit Lone Parent	450	450	380	370	1,700	340	440	480	140	170
Child Support Allowance	1,200	1,200	1,000	880	4,300	860	870	860	320	350
Credits (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
Tax Credits	320	430	330	350	1,400	510	690	730	260	270
COEG	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Compensation Recovery Unit	96	88	89	86	360	72	79	100	21	44
Housing/Council Tax benefit	3,300	3,300	3,100	3,200	12,900	2,800	3,000	3,100	1,100	1,100
Disability Working Allowance	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	-
Employment Support Allowance	2,300	11,200	23,400	33,600	70,500	35,300	42,500	45,900	15,700	17,100
Health in Pregnancy Grant	0	50	140	230	420	160	130	83	31	37
Home Responsibilities Protection	-	-	-	10	16	7	11	-	-	-
Incapacity Benefit	19,500	14,400	11,600	11,200	56,800	10,100	9,500	8,400	3,000	3,000
Income Support	5,300	4,700	4,000	3,800	17,700	3,400	3,800	4,100	1,400	1,400
Industrial Death Benefit	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	0
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	1,700	1,700	1,300	1,400	6,000	1,900	2,100	2,000	720	730
Job Seekers Allowance	6,900	7,600	6,900	7,500	28,800	7,400	9,900	11,400	4,400	4,400
Lookalikes	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	65	68	54	54	240	58	68	60	14	18
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	23	21	14	20	78	17	14	30	-	9
Penalty Proceedings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
Pensions Credit	430	420	370	430	1,600	360	380	430	150	160
Retirement Pension	260	220	160	200	850	190	190	210	88	86
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	41	32	24	22	120	26	27	36	8	9
Social Fund	1,400	1,300	990	980	4,700	980	1,200	1,000	430	390
Vaccine Damage Appeals	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	-
Total	62,100	65,600	70,500	81,000	279,300	81,200	92,500	95,200	33,700	35,600

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

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^P Provisional

Table 2.2 SCS Outcomes by Benefit Type

Percentage

Benefit	2010-11 ^P									
	Quarter 1 ^P		Quarter 2 ^P		Quarter 3 ^P		January 2011 ^P		February 2011 ^P	
	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Attendance Allowance	..	..	24%	74%	22%	76%	21%	78%	28%	70%
Disability Living Allowance	..	..	38%	61%	38%	61%	37%	61%	37%	62%
AA/DLA	39%	60%	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bereavement Benefit	9%	91%	5%	95%	21%	78%	16%	84%	2%	98%
Carer's Allowance	9%	91%	11%	87%	9%	91%	13%	87%	13%	87%
Child Benefit Lone Parent	8%	91%	11%	88%	6%	94%	7%	93%	10%	90%
Child Support Allowance	47%	51%	44%	52%	39%	58%	41%	55%	41%	56%
Credits (Other)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0%	100%
Tax Credits	10%	90%	7%	92%	14%	86%	7%	88%	13%	87%
COEG	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Compensation Recovery Unit	36%	61%	41%	59%	42%	56%	30%	70%	32%	68%
Housing/Council Tax benefit	26%	72%	21%	78%	23%	76%	22%	77%	21%	78%
Disability Working Allowance	.	.	.	.	0%	100%	.	.	100%	0%
Employment Support Allowance	39%	60%	37%	62%	36%	63%	36%	63%	38%	61%
Health in Pregnancy Grant	11%	89%	8%	92%	3%	97%	7%	93%	10%	90%
HRP	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Incapacity Benefit	52%	47%	49%	50%	48%	52%	48%	52%	50%	49%
Income Support	32%	67%	26%	73%	28%	70%	24%	75%	29%	71%
Industrial Death Benefit	0%	100%	100%	0%	.	.	.	.	.	.
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	38%	60%	32%	64%	34%	62%	34%	63%	37%	59%
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	16%	84%	12%	88%	14%	86%	11%	89%	14%	85%
Lookalikes	0%	100%	100%	0%	.	.	0%	100%	0%	100%
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	15%	85%	14%	86%	11%	89%	10%	90%	0%	100%
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	38%	63%	45%	55%	28%	60%	25%	75%	50%	50%
Penalty Proceedings	.	.	.	.	100%	0%	.	.	.	.
Pensions Credit	20%	78%	23%	76%	32%	68%	22%	76%	15%	83%
Retirement Pension	8%	92%	3%	97%	7%	92%	7%	92%	9%	89%
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	40%	60%	38%	63%	45%	50%	17%	83%	20%	80%
Social Fund	10%	90%	11%	89%	9%	91%	8%	92%	8%	92%
Vaccine Damage Appeals	.	.	50%	50%	0%	100%	.	.	0%	100%
Total	38%	61%	34%	65%	33%	66%	32%	67%	35%	64%

Source: SCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable

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^P Provisional

¹ The total number of cases cleared at hearing includes some withdrawals. Thus, it is not the total of those decisions in favour and those upheld.

² Decision in favour of the appellant

³ Decision made by 1st Tier Agency upheld by the Tribunal

Table 3.1 SSCS Caseload Outstanding¹

Rounded Number

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10					2010-11 ^P				
	Q3	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2009-10 Total	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Jan ^P	Feb ^P
Social Security and Child Support	42,300	64,100	68,500	85,400	112,600	138,800	138,800	158,400	182,600	193,400	193,500	193,200

Source: TS Quarterly Reconciled Tables

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

.. Not available

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¹ As on the last day of the period

Table 4.1 SSCS Performance Indicators

Percentage

	PI Description	Period	Target	2009-10					2010-11 ^P				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Jan ^P	Feb ^P
Social Security and Child Support	The percentage of appeals where the first hearing takes place within 14 weeks of the receipt at SSCS	Pre 04/2010	75%	66	67	60	46	59	.	.			
	The percentage of appeals where the final outcome is promulgated ¹ within 16 weeks of the receipt at SSCS	Post 04/2010	75%	.	.	.	.	.	48	46	47	46	45

Source: TS Quarterly Reconciled Tables

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

.. Not available

^P Provisional

¹ Promulgation is the formal publication of the decision