



Ministry
of Justice

Statistics on the use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals

Quarterly update to 30th June 2016

Ministry of Justice

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Contents

Contents.....	1
Introduction	2
Key findings.....	4
1. Number of completed service requests for language interpreter and translation services.....	5
2. 'Success rate' of completed requests for language interpreter and translation services.....	7
3. Number and rate of complaints made relating to completed service requests	9
4. Number of completed 'off contract' requests for language interpreter and translation services.....	11
List of accompanying tables	12

Introduction

The data presented in this bulletin are statistics for face-to-face language interpreter and translation services provided to HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). These services are currently supplied under a contract with Capita Translation and Interpreting (TI); formerly known as Applied Language Solutions (ALS). More information on the current language services framework agreement can be found in the **‘Guide to language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals’**

The information presented in this publication covers completed requests for interpreter and translation services, and ‘proven’ complaints in relation to the services requested, between 2013 and Q2 2016. It also covers completed ‘off-contract’ service requests between 2013 and Q2 2016.

The statistics in this bulletin focus on four main areas:

- Completed language interpreter and translation services requests, broken down by requester type (criminal courts, tribunals and civil & family courts) and service type (standard languages, rare languages and special services);
- ‘Success rate’ of completed requests (which is calculated as the number of completed service requests which are either fulfilled, or the customer does not attend, as a proportion of all completed requests, excluding those cancelled by the customer);
- Number of complaints made (and complaint rate) relating to language interpreter and translation services requests, broken down by nature of complaints and by requester type and service type; and
- Number of completed ‘off contract’ language services requests, broken down by requester type and service type.

Data for completed requests and complaints relating to language interpreter and translation services are taken from the language service booking portal, managed by Capita TI.

Information about this bulletin and data included can be found in the **‘Guide to language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals’** which is published alongside this bulletin. It covers the language services framework agreement, explanatory notes, data sources and data quality, revision policy, and a glossary of terms used. It also includes a list of languages covered in the bulletin.

Data are not centrally held for the number of completed services, requests and complaints under the previous contracts (before 30 January 2012). It is therefore not possible to say whether performance levels have changed pre and post 30 January 2012.

When a request cannot be supplied under the contract, it is provided ‘off contract’. ‘Off contract’ requests are made directly by the courts and tribunals – that is, not through the language service booking portal. ‘Off contract’ requests data are collated by the Commercial and Contract Management Directorate within (MoJ). Information on ‘off contract’ requests for language services has been collected since April 2013.

Changes to the languages services contract

On 31 October 2016 the new contractual arrangements for Language Services come into effect, which replace the existing contract with Capita TI. Contracts were signed in August and will be split across two suppliers, with a new independent quality assurance service provided by a third:

Face to face and telephone interpretation	thebigword Group Ltd
Translation and Transcription	thebigword Group Ltd
Non-spoken languages (e.g. BSL)	Clarion UK Ltd
Independent Quality Assurance	The Language Shop (London Borough of Newham)

Future publications

We are changing how the language interpreter and translation statistics are published, to improve efficiency of our publication processes. In addition, we are also targeting an improvement in the timeliness of the release of these statistics by one month – to release statistics three months after the end of each reporting period.

From the next publication, we will incorporate the release of statistics on the use of language interpreter and translation services into the Criminal courts statistics quarterly (CCSQ) publication, as opposed to continuing with a standalone statistical release.

Specifically:

- March 2017 CCSQ publication will include statistics covering the final four months of the existing language services contract;
- June 2017 CCSQ publication will include the first set of statistics on completed requests under the new contract.
- Statistics will then continue to be released on a quarterly basis in the established, pre-announced March/June/September/December CCSQ schedule.

Users of the statistics

The primary users of these statistics are Ministers and officials in central government. Other users include judges, lawyers, other government departments and non-government bodies, as well as a number of voluntary organisations and stakeholders with an interest in this area.

The structure and content of this publication are continually being reviewed to reflect user requirements. If you have any feedback, questions or requests for further information about this statistical bulletin, please direct them to the appropriate contact given at the end of this report.

www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/VOGJE/

Key findings

Completed language services requests

Completed services requests made under the contract through the language service booking portal.

The total number of completed requests for language interpreter and translation services increased by 1% in the latest quarter, from 38,300 in Q1 2016 to 38,700 in Q2 2016. The main driver for this quarter's increase was the increase in completed service requests at tribunals and civil and family courts, whilst there was a small decrease at criminal courts.

'Success rate' of completed service requests

The 'success rate' is the number of completed requests which are either fulfilled or the customer does not attend, as a proportion of all completed requests excluding those cancelled by the customer.

The success rate had increased from 86% in Q1 2013 to a peak of 98% in Q4 2015 but, since then, has decreased to 96% in Q2 2016; this is a one percentage point decrease from Q1 2016 (97%).

Number of complaints made relating to completed service requests

Complaints related to requests made under the contract through the language service booking portal.

The total number of 'proven' complaints was 430 in Q2 2016, a small decrease from 440 in Q1 2016. The rate of complaints has fallen from 4% in 2013 to just over 1% in Q2 2016.

In Q2 2016, the most common cause of complaint was 'interpreter was late', accounting for 30% (130) of all complaints. There were 30 'proven' complaints on 'interpreter quality', similar to Q1 2016.

Number of completed 'off contract' service requests

When a request can't be supplied under the contract, it is provided off contract. Off contract requests are made directly by courts and tribunals. Information on off contract requests for language services has been collected since April 2013.

The total number of 'off contract' service requests have increased to 300 requests in Q2 2016, from 220 in Q1 2016, an increase of 38%.

In Q2 2016, completed off contract service requests accounted for less than one per cent (0.8%) of total completed service requests (completed service requests made under the contract and completed requests made directly by the courts), similar to Q1 2016.

1. Number of completed service requests for language interpreter and translation services

This section presents statistics on the number of completed requests for language services made under the contract with Capita TI and booked through the language service booking portal.

In Q2 2016, there were a total of 38,700 completed service requests for language interpreter and translation services – an increase of 1% (400 requests) when compared with Q1 2016.

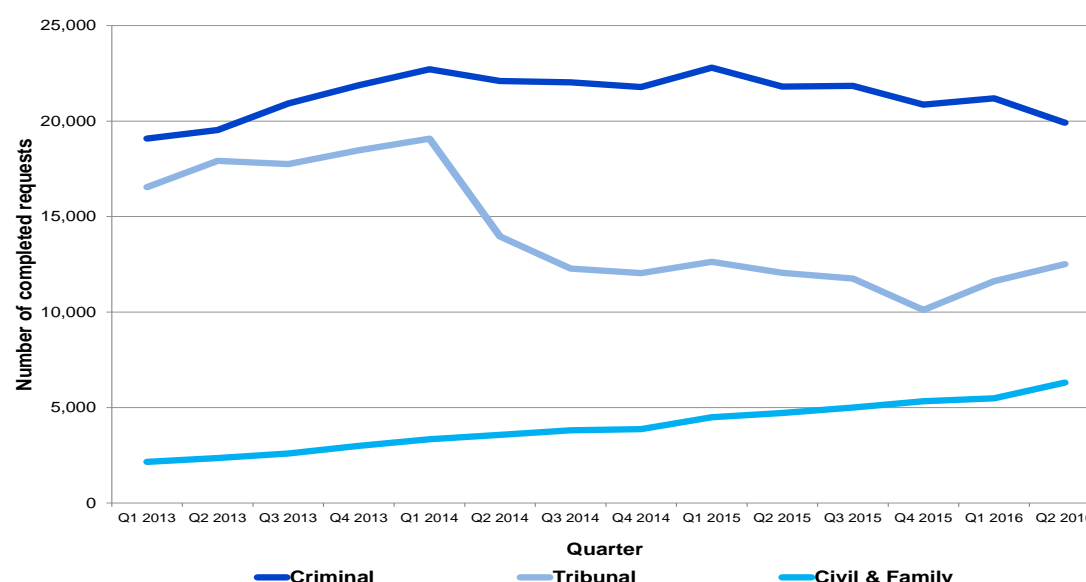
Completed service requests by requester type

The main driver for the increase was the increase in completed service requests at tribunals and civil and family courts. Completed service requests at tribunals, increased by 8% from the last quarter and are back to a similar level as Q2 2015. Completed service requests at civil and family courts increased by 15% since the last quarter. Completed service requests at criminal courts, however, decreased by 6%.

In Q2 2016, criminal courts made the greatest use of face-to-face language interpreter and translation services. 51% of completed service requests were for criminal cases (including Crown Court and magistrates' courts completed cases), 32% were for tribunal cases, and 16% were for civil & family court cases.

These proportions in part reflect the numbers of people dealt with by the different courts and tribunals, with volume of proceedings at magistrates' courts and the Crown Court¹ higher than the number of cases heard in civil² & family³ courts and tribunals⁴.

Figure 1: Total number of completed language service requests, by requester type, Q1 2013 to Q2 2016



¹ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2016

² www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2016

³ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2016

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2016

Completed service requests have risen overall since Q1 2013 for civil & family courts and, whilst completed requests at tribunals have fallen overall since Q1 2014, they have increased more recently. At criminal courts, completed service requests have returned to similar levels as 2013.

Completed service requests by service type

In Q2 2016, 88% (34,100) of all completed services requests were for languages in the standard language group, 9% (3,700) were for languages in the rare language group and 2% (950) were for special services.

Completed service requests by outcome

In Q2 2016, 14% (5,600) of all completed service requests were cancelled as a result of customer action (this category includes 'Cancelled by customer' and 'Customer did not attend') – no change from Q1 2016.

Cancellations varied little by requester type, but did vary by service type – with 14% (4,800) of completed service requests for standard languages cancelled as a result of customer action in Q2 2016, compared to 15% (560) for rare languages and 25% (240) for special services.

In Q2 2016, the proportion of service requests not fulfilled as a result of suppliers' action (this includes categories 'Not fulfilled by supplier' and 'Supplier did not attend') increased by one percentage point compared with Q1 2016. Of the total completed service requests in Q2 2016, 3% (1,200) were not fulfilled by the contractor.

2: 'Success rate' of completed requests for language interpreter and translation services

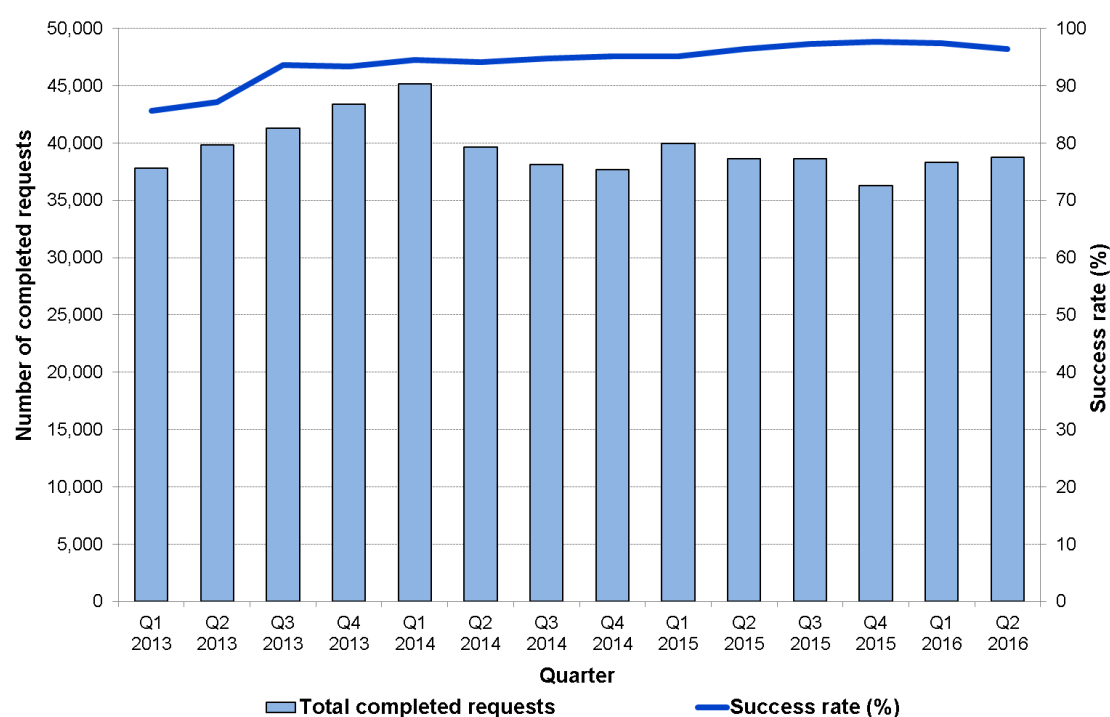
The success rate provides a measure of the successful completion of legitimate requests – it is calculated as the number of completed requests which are either fulfilled or the customer does not attend, as a proportion of all completed requests excluding those cancelled by the customer.

The success rate in Q2 2016 was 96%, a one percentage point decrease from Q1 2016 (97%).

Success rate trend since 2013

In the first quarter of 2013, the success rate was 86% – this coincided with the dispute between the contractor and the interpreters over the reduction of mileage rate paid to interpreters. In Q3 2013, the success rate increased to 94%, after the settlement of the mileage rate dispute in May 2013. Since the first quarter of 2014, the success rate increased to a peak of 98% in Q4 2015 but, since then, has decreased to 96% in Q2 2016.

Figure 2: Number of completed language service requests and overall success rate, Q1 2013 to Q2 2016



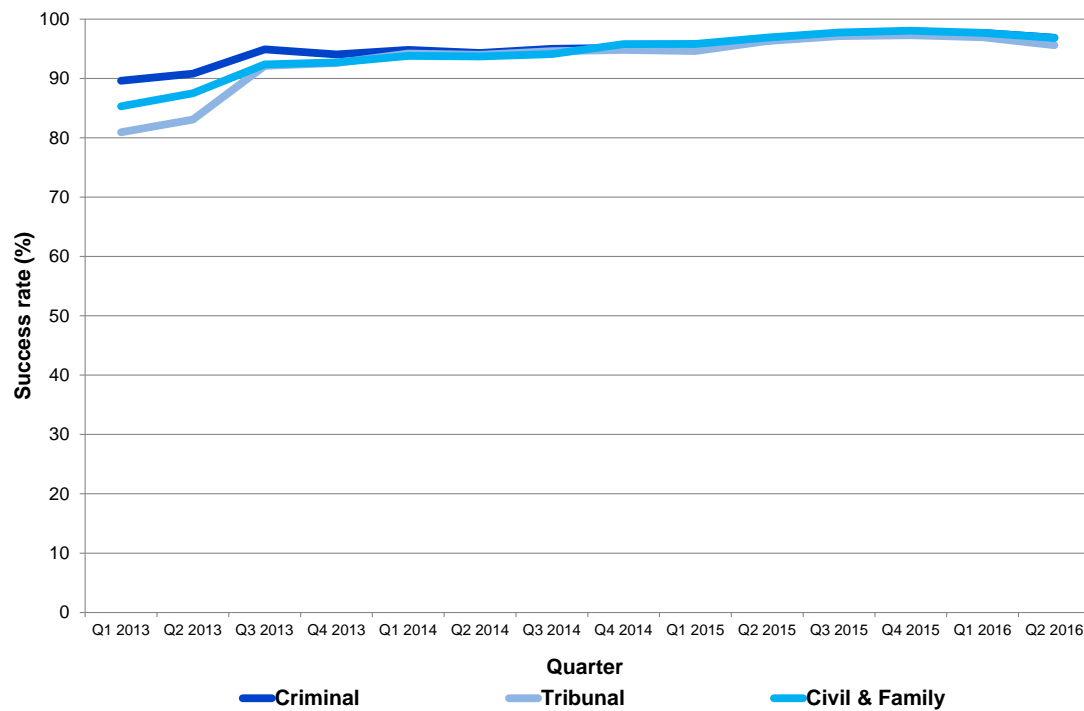
Success rate by service type

Success rates varied across different service types. In Q2 2016, standard language group completed service requests had a success rate of 97%, whilst for rare languages it was 89% and for special services it was 86%.

Success rate by requester type

Success rates were similar across the different requester types. In Q2 2016, criminal and civil & family courts both had a success rate of 97%, compared to 96% at tribunals. There was a decrease of one percentage point in the success rate of each requester type compared to the last quarter.

Figure 3: Success rate (%) by requester type, Q1 2013 to Q2 2016



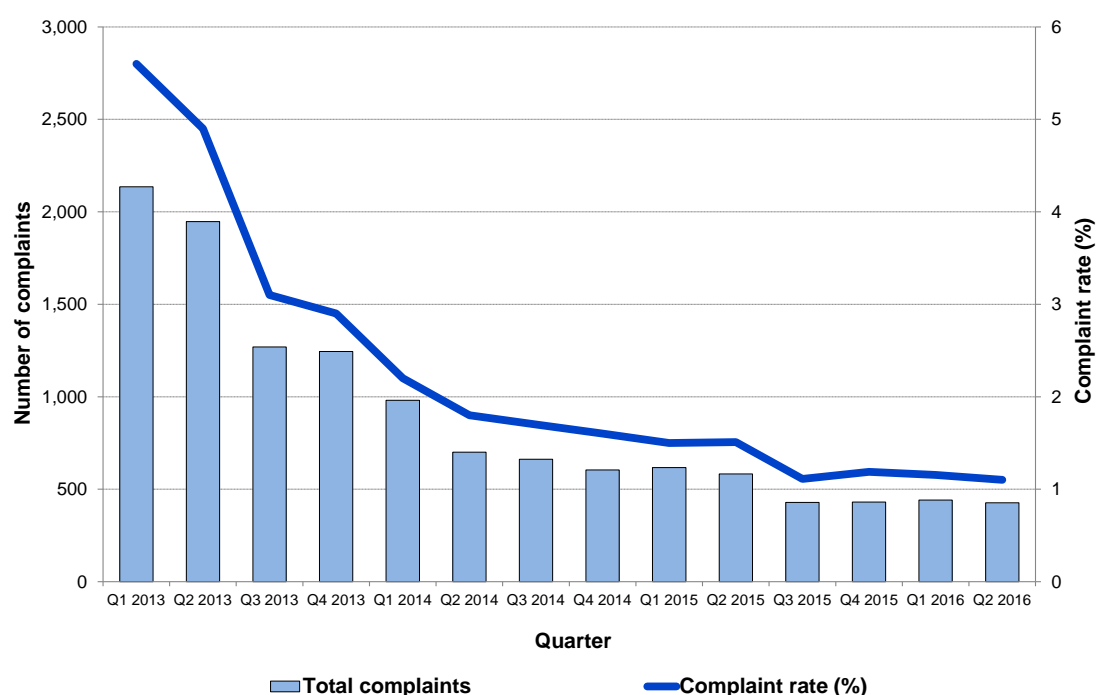
3. Number and rate of complaints made relating to completed service requests

Complaints related to requests made under the contract through the language service booking portal.

The complaint rate is calculated as the number of complaints lodged relating to the requests completed in a given period, which enables complaint volumes to be considered in the context of changing volumes of requests.

In Q2 2016, there were 430 'proven' complaints relating to completed requests, a small decrease of 3% from Q1 2016 (440 complaints).

Figure 4: Number of complaints and complaint rate, Q1 2013 to Q2 2016



The most common cause of complaint was 'interpreter was late'. In Q2 2016, this accounted for 30% (130) of all complaints made, a decrease of seven percentage points from Q1 2016.

Complaint rates since 2013

Overall, the complaint rate has declined from 4% in 2013 to 1% in Q2 2016. In Q1 2013, the period when the contractor reduced the mileage rate paid to interpreters, the complaint rate was 6%. This was followed by a decrease to 3% in Q4 2013, which corresponded to the settlement of the mileage rate. Since then the complaint rate has fallen to just over 1% in Q2 2016.

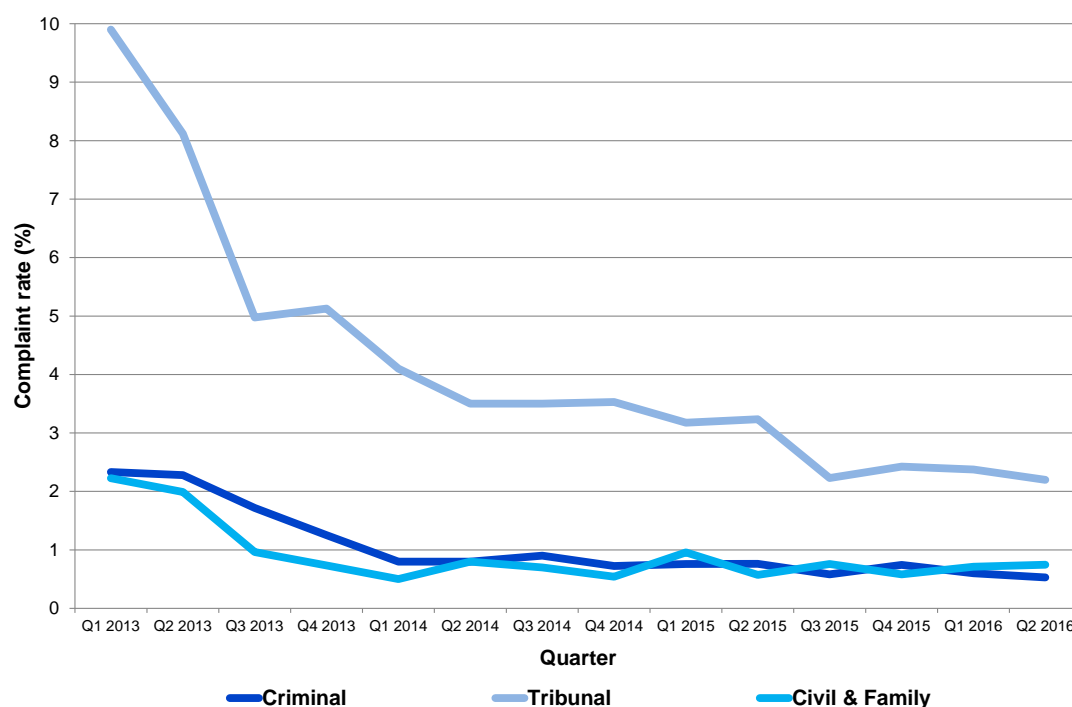
Complaints by requester type

In Q2 2016, the majority of complaints came from tribunals (280), which accounted for 64% of all complaints made in the quarter. The complaint rate for tribunals was 2%, the same as Q1 2016. The most common complaint at tribunals was that the 'interpreter was late' (100) and 'no interpreter available' (100).

The complaint rate at criminal courts was less than 1% in Q2 2016 similar to Q1 2016. This is consistent with statistics published by MoJ on the proportion of ineffective trials in the criminal courts for which interpreter availability is recorded as the reason for the trial being ineffective. In Q2 2016, interpreter availability accounted for less than one percent (130) of the total number of ineffective trials in the Crown Court and magistrates' courts combined⁵.

The civil & family court complaint rate fluctuated between 2013 and Q2 2016 but has been under 1% since Q2 2013.

Figure 5: Complaint rate by requester type, Q1 2013 to Q2 2016



Complaints by service type

In Q2 2016, the standard language group had the highest number of complaints, accounting for 75% (320) of all complaints. This group, however, had the lowest complaint rate at 1% in the quarter, similar to Q1 2016.

The rare language group had a complaint rate of 3% in Q2 2016, although the number of complaints accounted for only 22% (100) of all complaints in the quarter.

The special services group complaint rate was 1% in Q2 2016 (10 complaints) and accounted for 3% of all complaints.

⁵ Key reasons for ineffective trials in magistrates' courts and the Crown Court can be accessed in the *Criminal court statistics quarterly* publication on the Ministry of Justice website:
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2016

4. Number of completed 'off contract' requests for language interpreter and translation services

Completed 'off contract' requests are requests for language services made outside the Capita TI contract. Requests for the service are made directly by the courts and tribunals – that is, not through the language service booking portal. Information on off contract requests for language services has been collected since April 2013.

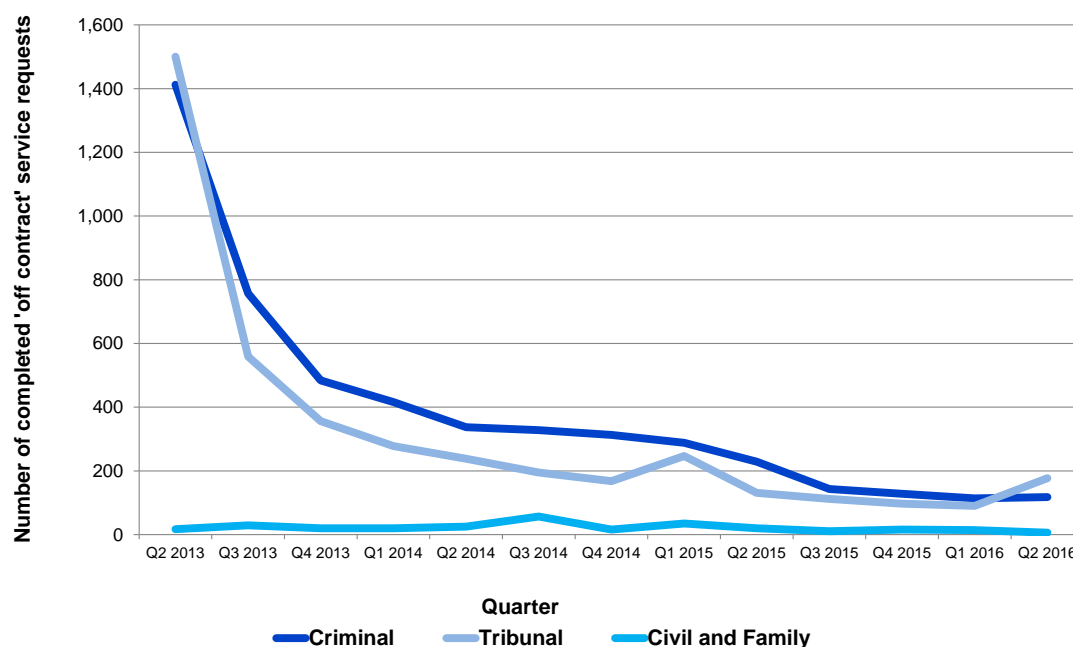
The total number of 'off contract' service requests have increased to 300 requests in Q2 2016 from 220 in Q1 2016, an increase of 38%, driven by requests at tribunals.

Completed 'off contract' service requests accounted for less than one percent (0.8%) of all completed service requests for language interpreter and translation services in Q2 2016 (completed service requests made under the contract and completed service requests made directly by the courts and tribunals), similar to Q1 2016.

Completed 'off contract' services requests by requester type and service type

In Q2 2016, 'off contract' requests at tribunals increased from 90 in Q1 2016 to 180 in Q2 2016; this accounted for 59% (180) of all completed off contract service requests for language interpreter and translation services. Criminal courts accounted for 39% (120), while civil & family courts accounted for 2% (10), similar volumes to the last quarter.

Figure 6: Number of completed 'off contract' requests by requester type, Q2 2013 to Q2 2016



In Q2 2016, the standard language group accounted for 58% of all completed off contract service requests for language interpreter and translation services. Within the standard language group, criminal courts accounted for around 59% of all completed off contract service requests. However, within the rare language group, tribunals accounted for the majority (80%) of completed off contract service requests.

List of accompanying tables

Accompanying this publication are the following tables:

Table 1:	Number and rate of completed service requests by outcome, by requester type and service type, 2013 to Q2 2016
Table 2	Number and rate of complaints by category of complaint, by requester type and service type, 2013 to Q2 2016
Table 3	Number and rate of completed "off contract" service requests by service type and requester type, 2013 to Q2 2016

Contacts

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

Ministry of Justice News Desk

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: newsdesk@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division of the Ministry of Justice:

David Jagger

Ministry of Justice

102 Petty France

London

SW1H 9AJ

Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.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

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