



Ministry  
of Justice



# **Freedom of Information Statistics: Implementation in Central Government**

## **January – March 2015**

Ministry of Justice  
Statistics bulletin

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## Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and the associated Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) came fully into force on 1 January 2005. This bulletin presents statistics on their implementation within central government for the quarterly period January to March 2015 (with tables in Annex A covering the period from Q1 2012 until Q1 2015).

The previous quarterly and annual bulletins, together covering the period from January 2005 to March 2015, are available via the links on the following pages of the Gov.uk and National Archives websites:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/government-Fol-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/government-Fol-statistics) (for 2010-2015);

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/freedomofinformationquarterly-archive.htm> (for 2006-2009);

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/http://www.dca.gov.uk/Fol/reference/statisticsAndReports.htm> (for 2005 - 2007).

The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling of written requests for information received by monitored bodies during the relevant time period. Further definitions of these requests can be found in Annex B, which defines the information that is in scope of these statistics. This bulletin also includes requests for information that is already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means, which are exempted under Section 21 of the FOI Act. The total number of 'routine' information requests is not known; therefore, figures in this publication should be considered a lower bound for all information requests received by the monitored bodies.

This bulletin presents monitoring statistics for a total of 41 central government bodies, which includes all major departments of state. Over 100,000 bodies are subject to the FOI Act<sup>1</sup> and a substantial number of FOI requests are sent to those which are non-monitored. The trends that apply to monitored central government bodies cannot be assumed to apply universally.

More information regarding EIRs is available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-Folaeirs](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-Folaeirs).

### Departmental changes

Please refer to Annex C for a full list of monitored bodies. It details the inclusion of subordinate agencies.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/vo060725/text/60725w0081.htm#06072811011026](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/vo060725/text/60725w0081.htm#06072811011026)

## Key Findings

*The Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows individuals to request information from public bodies. This bulletin presents statistics on its use in 41 central government bodies – 21 Departments of State and 20 ‘other monitored bodies’ – and covers the first quarter of 2015 (January - March).*

### **Number of requests** [see Tables A1 & A2]

In the first quarter of 2015, monitored central government bodies received 12,881 non-routine Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. This is 704 (5%) fewer requests than in Q1 2014 but 2,132 (20%) greater than the number received in Q4 2014. This is the largest quarter on quarter rise in number of receipts since the implementation of the Act.

Between Q1 2006 and Q1 2015 the number of FOI requests recorded by monitored bodies increased by 61%, although the number of monitored bodies has remained fairly constant. The increase has been driven by requests to Departments of State.

### **Timeliness of response to requests** [see Tables A3 & A4]

90% of requests received during Q1 2015 received a response within the statutory deadline or were responded to within a permitted deadline extension. This is the same as the previous quarter, but a fall of 2 percentage points since Q1 2014. Across all monitored bodies in Q1 of 2015 between 71% and 100% of requests received a response ‘in time’.

### **Initial outcomes of requests** [see Tables A5 & A6]

Of all requests received during Q1 2015 where it was possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought (‘resolvable requests’, of which there were 9,531), 48% were granted in full and 31% were withheld in full. The remainder were either granted in part or a response had not yet been provided by the time of this bulletin.

The percentage of resolvable requests granted in full has fallen by 3 percentage points compared to Q1 2014, but increased by 1 percentage point from Q4 2014.

### **Exemptions and exceptions** [see Table A7]

In Q1 2015, one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied to 2,928 requests, which is 31% of all resolvable requests. The most common exemption, as in previous quarters, was section 40 (personal data). Section 40 was used in 47% of exempt requests.

### **Section 21** [See Table A8]

There were 558 Section 21 exemptions used (where a Section 21 was the only exemption used in a response) in Q1 2015, and 93% of these were provided within the 20-day deadline.

## 1. Number of requests [see Tables A1 & A2]

Following the first annual fall in requests received since 2007 in 2014, from January to March (Q1) 2015 the monitored central government bodies received a total of 12,881 non-routine FOI (Freedom of Information Act) requests. This is 704 (5%) fewer requests than were received in Q1 2014, but 2,132 (20%) greater than the number received in Q4 2014. The number of requests received generally tends to rise from Q4 to Q1, with the equivalent rises since Q4 2005 being between 8% and 22%. However, this is the largest quarter on quarter rise in number of receipts since the implementation of the Act.

Figure 1 shows that following an upwards trend starting in 2006, the number of requests peaked in Q1 2012 at 14,116 requests, which has not been exceeded since despite considerable quarter-on-quarter variation. This follows the initial surge in requests in 2005, when the FOI Act was first introduced.

**Figure 1: Number of requests received since the FOI Act's introduction in January 2005**

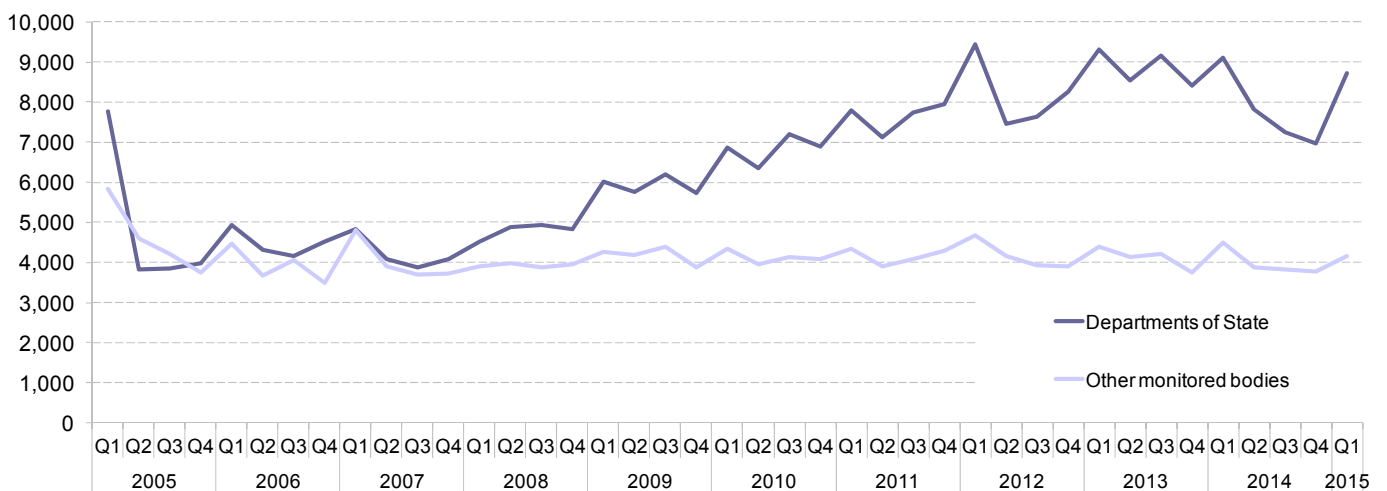


Figure 1 illustrates that the trends in the volume of requests over the past 6 years has largely been driven by requests to Departments of State. These reported receiving a total of 8,712 information requests in Q1 2015, 4% less compared with Q1 2014, and 25% more than Q4 2014. Other monitored bodies reported having received 4,169 requests, a fall of 7% from Q1 2014 and an increase of 10% from Q4 2014.

Departments of State accounted for 68% of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q1 of 2015. This is a rise of 15 percentage points since Q1 2006 (52%) and a rise of 1 percentage point since Q1 2014

This is the first quarter since Q1 2014 where the number of requests has risen on the previous quarter. The Departments of State that reported the biggest absolute rise in requests compared to Q4 2014 were:

- Ministry of Defence, by 218 requests (a 26% increase);

- Home Office, by 214 requests (a 31% increase);
- Department for Work and Pensions, by 166 requests (a 15% increase).

Of the Departments of State, three bodies reported having received over 1,000 requests in Q1 2015. These were:

- Department for Work and Pensions – 1,248;
- Ministry of Defence – 1,049;
- Ministry of Justice – 1,036.

Among other monitored bodies, those that reported the highest number of requests in Q1 included:

- Health and Safety Executive – 1,338 requests;
- The National Archives – 825 requests;
- HM Revenue and Customs – 545 requests.

These bodies account for 65% of all requests received by all the other monitored bodies. Therefore, the trends for the other monitored bodies group as a whole are heavily dependant on the trends for these three particular bodies. The Health and Safety Executive is the only monitored body to have received more than 1,000 requests during each quarter since the Act was implemented. This is partly due to the nature of requests it receives: a large percentage are from solicitors representing an injured party, seeking disclosure of information collected during an investigation of a workplace incident.

### *Environmental Information Regulations*

Monitoring statistics also show the number of non-routine information requests that fell fully or mostly under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). There were 490 such requests during the first quarter of 2015, accounting for 4% of all requests received. The number of requests handled under EIR is down by 71 requests on Q1 2014, but up by 108 requests on Q4 2014. This is generally proportional to the change in overall volumes.

## 2. Timeliness of response to requests [see Tables A3 & A4]

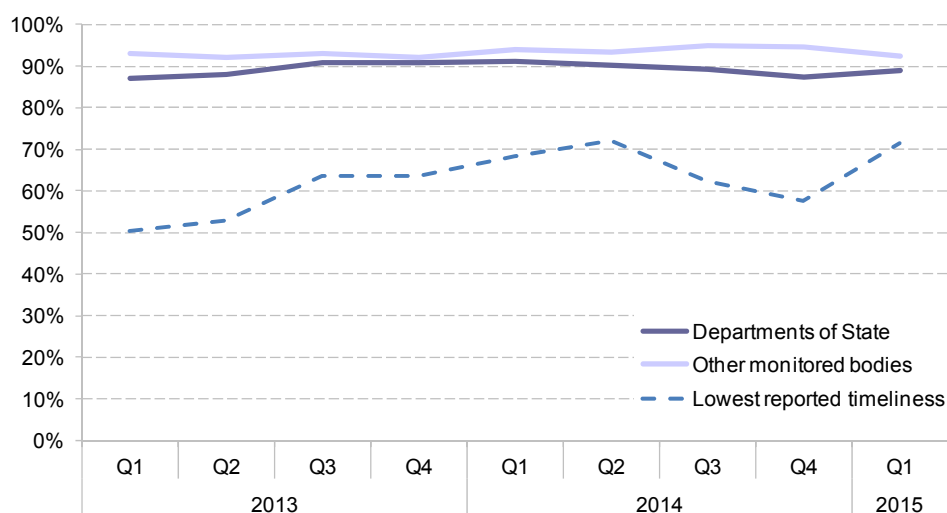
The FOI Act requires public bodies to respond to written requests for information within 20 working days of receipt (the standard deadline)<sup>2</sup>. In limited circumstances, additional time is allowed for the consideration of public interest. Requests answered within this extended time period are classed as “in time”. These timeliness statistics give a measure of how well monitored bodies are complying with the Act.

Across all monitored bodies, 85% of requests received during Q1 of 2015 were sent a response within the 20 (or 30 for the National Archives) working day deadline – this is unchanged since Q4 2014, but a decrease of 3 percentage points from Q1 2014. In Q1 2015, 90% of the requests received were handled ‘in time’, in that they either received a response within the standard deadline or were subject to a permitted deadline extension. This is unchanged from the previous quarter and a fall of 2 percentage points compared to Q1 2014.

A comparison between all monitored bodies showed that between 69% and 100% of requests received during Q1 of 2015 were responded to within the 20-day deadline, and between 71% and 100% of requests received in the same period were responded to ‘in time’.

Figure 2 shows that despite the rise in requests in the last quarter, average<sup>3</sup> timeliness (i.e. answering requests ‘in time’) for monitored bodies has been at least 89% for the last two years. It also illustrates that other monitored bodies (92% timeliness) were, on average, marginally timelier than Departments of State (89% timeliness) in Q1 2015.

**Figure 2: Percentage of FOI requests replied to ‘in time’ by Departments of State and other monitored bodies by quarter from Q1 2013**



<sup>2</sup> A 30 working deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to information transferred to the National Archives. They have therefore provided response timeliness information on this basis.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the mean.



### 3. Initial outcomes of requests [see Tables A5 & A6]

It may not be possible for a monitored body to resolve a request in full if the information sought is not held, further information is needed to be able to answer a request, or because a fee has been requested but has not been paid. Of the 12,881 requests reported during Q1 of 2015 across all monitored bodies, 3,350 were not resolvable, as follows:

- 35 were 'on hold' awaiting a fee payment;
- 2,251 requests sought information that was not held;
- 1,064 were responded to with 'advice and assistance' because the body handling the request needed further information<sup>4</sup> in order to identify the details being sought. If the requester provided appropriate information, the request is considered resolvable. Alternatively, if further information is needed to answer the request, and the requester has not provided any more detail, the public body will not be able to proceed with answering the request.

As a result, the remaining 9,531 (74%) requests were assumed to be 'resolvable', in that it was possible to give a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought.

Of the 'resolvable' requests received during Q1 of 2015:

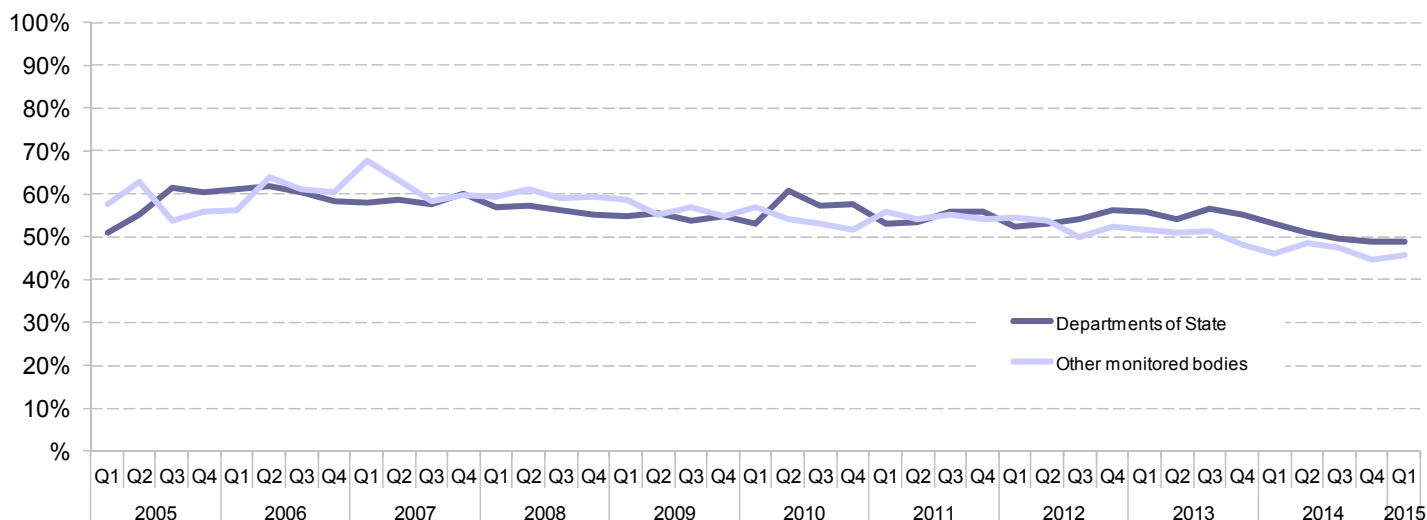
- 48% (4,537) were granted in full, down from 51% (5,065) in Q1 2014 and up from 47% (3,828) in Q4 2014;
- 31% (3,001) were withheld in full, down from 33% (3,284) in Q1 2014, and down from 33% (2,648) in Q4 of 2014;
- 14% (1,305) were withheld in part, up from 12% (1,240) in Q1 2014 but unchanged from 14% (1,155) in Q4 2014;
- The remainder (7%, 652) had not been answered by the end of the quarter.

Figure 3 illustrates the outcome of resolvable requests since 2005. It shows that the proportion of requests granted in full stayed fairly constant since the Act was introduced, although a slight downward trend has been emerging since the end of 2013. This may reflect a changing nature of requests as the monitored bodies have made more routine information available to the public in the form of regular quarterly and annual statistical publications.

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<sup>4</sup> Such as: to clarify unclear requests; to help to provide the information requested in an acceptable format; or when a request is transferred to another public authority

**Figure 3: Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full, Q1 2005 – Q4 2014**



#### 4. Use of exemptions and exceptions [see Table A7]

Under the FoI Act, a public authority can only refuse to provide requested information that it holds if the request is considered vexatious or repeated, the cost of compliance would exceed the appropriate limit, or if the information falls under one or more of the categories of exempt information ('exemptions') listed in Part II of the Act<sup>5</sup>. Similar arrangements apply to certain types of information under the EIRs. Requests that have been exempted under Section 21 (information available by other means) are recorded separately in Section 5 of this bulletin.

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 2,928 requests (31% of resolvable requests) were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q1 2015. This means that government has the requested information, but withheld some or all of it under an exemption listed in the Act.

The most commonly applied exemptions or exceptions in Q1 2015 were:

- Section 40 (Personal Information), which was applied to 1,370 requests, and in 47% of all exempt requests;
- Section 22 (Information intended for future publication), which was applied to 318 requests, and in 11% of all exempt requests;
- Section 31 (Law Enforcement), which was applied to 249 requests, and in 9% of all exempt requests;

<sup>5</sup> A summary of all exemptions can be found at: [www.justice.gov.uk/information-access-rights/FoI-guidance-for-practitioners/exemptions-guidance](http://www.justice.gov.uk/information-access-rights/FoI-guidance-for-practitioners/exemptions-guidance)

- Section 44 (Prohibitions on Disclosure), which was applied to 211 requests, and in 7% of all exempt requests;
- Section 30 (Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities), which was applied to 201 requests, and in 7% of all exempt requests.

These five exemptions are typically among the most frequent exemptions used since the FoI Act came into force.

## **5. Use of the Section 21 Exemption [See table A8]**

A Section 21 exemption can be used under the FoI Act when information is reasonably available by other means<sup>6</sup>. Section 21 has been reported individually in this bulletin since Q1 2013; previous publications have excluded FoI requests exempt under Section 21 because the FoI Act is not designed to provide a new access route to information already available.

However, Section 21 is a legitimate part of the use of the FoI Act and is subject to the relevant handling timescales. Inclusion of these statistics presents a more accurate picture of the effort by the monitored bodies in relation to the Act.

Government has decided to report this exemption separately as Section 21s are difficult to classify by outcome: the request is refused but only because the information is already published. Including Section 21 requests within the other parts of this bulletin could artificially inflate both volume and timeliness figures since the requests are relatively straightforward to answer.

In the first quarter of 2015, there were 558 requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied<sup>7</sup> either in full or in part. Of these, 93% of requests received a response within the 20-day deadline. This is an increase of 2 percentage points<sup>8</sup> from the previous quarter.

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<sup>6</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21)

<sup>7</sup> These only include requests where a Section 21 was the only exemption used.

<sup>8</sup> Note that the figure in the tables appears to be 1 percentage point due to rounding.

## Annex A: Statistical Tables

### Latest quarterly (A1, A3, A5, A7, A8) and quarter to quarter (A2, A4, A6) tables

Table A1	<i>Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2015, and their status at time of monitoring</i>
Table A2	<i>Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2013</i>
Table A3	<i>Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2015</i>
Table A4	<i>Proportion of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were answered ‘in time’, by quarter, since 1 January 2013</i>
Table A5	<i>Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2015</i>
Table A6	<i>Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2013</i>
Table A7	<i>Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January – 31 March 2015</i>
Table A8	<i>Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 January – 31 March 2015</i>

### Symbols and conventions

- Not applicable.
- 0 Nil.
- \* Percentage not supplied because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer (only applicable to pre 2014 publications).
- # Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C gives full details.
- † Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C.

**TABLE A1**

**Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2015, and their status at time of monitoring**

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring			Number handled under EIRs <sup>2</sup>
		Processed	'On hold' or lapsed <sup>1</sup>	Still being processed	
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>12,881</b>	<b>12,194</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>490</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>8,712</b>	<b>8,256</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>4,169</b>	<b>3,938</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>					
Attorney General's Office	62	61	0	1	1
Cabinet Office #	436	400	0	36	0
Communities and Local Government	302	281	0	21	80
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	280	273	0	7	11
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	157	149	0	8	11
Department for Education	554	533	0	21	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	275	247	0	28	76
Department for International Development	143	142	0	1	1
Department for Transport #	828	815	0	13	25
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,248	1,225	0	23	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	189	177	0	12	93
Department of Health	443	442	0	1	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	334	290	0	44	1
HM Treasury #	275	260	0	15	16
Home Office #	906	875	0	31	0
Ministry of Defence #	1,049	970	0	79	2
Ministry of Justice #	1,036	927	0	109	1
Northern Ireland Office	65	61	0	4	0
Scotland Office	61	60	0	1	0
UK Export Finance <sup>3</sup>	18	18	0	0	0
Wales Office	51	50	0	1	0

**TABLE A1 continued**

**Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2015 and their status at time of monitoring**

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring			Number handled under EIRs <sup>2</sup>
		Processed	'On hold' or lapsed <sup>1</sup>	Still being processed	
<b><i>Other bodies included in monitoring</i></b>					
Charity Commission	162	158	0	4	0
Competition and Markets Authority	50	50	0	0	0
Crown Prosecution Service	173	165	0	8	0
Debt Management Office	18	18	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	54	51	0	3	0
Health and Safety Executive	1,338	1,323	0	15	79
HM Land Registry	83	82	1	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	545	513	0	32	0
National Archives	825	666	34	125	0
National Savings and Investments	36	36	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	106	104	0	2	0
Office for Standards in Education	216	216	0	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	126	122	0	4	51
Office of Rail Regulation	52	51	0	1	0
Ordnance Survey	28	28	0	0	0
Royal Mint	5	5	0	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	173	171	0	2	39
Serious Fraud Office	35	35	0	0	0
Treasury Solicitor's Department	108	108	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	36	36	0	0	3

**Notes**

1 - Requests 'on hold' are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received at the time of monitoring. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made. Where a fee is charged and the deadline for payment expires, the request is deemed to have 'lapsed' as no further action is required from the public authority.

2 - The amended Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) came into force on 1 January 2005 to coincide with the FoI Act. For further information on the EIRs, see the main notes section of this publication.

3 - UK Export Finance is the operating name of the Export Credits Guarantee Department.

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

**TABLE A2**

**Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 Jan 2013**

Government body	2013				2014				2015
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>13,712</b>	<b>12,667</b>	<b>13,370</b>	<b>12,140</b>	<b>13,585</b>	<b>11,689</b>	<b>11,067</b>	<b>10,749</b>	<b>12,881</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>9,312</b>	<b>8,536</b>	<b>9,145</b>	<b>8,400</b>	<b>9,099</b>	<b>7,811</b>	<b>7,239</b>	<b>6,973</b>	<b>8,712</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>4,400</b>	<b>4,131</b>	<b>4,225</b>	<b>3,740</b>	<b>4,486</b>	<b>3,878</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>3,776</b>	<b>4,169</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>									
Attorney General's Office	53	64	78	64	57	41	53	45	62
Cabinet Office #	452	466	405	435	528	473	346	313	436
Communities and Local Government	247	212	208	175	197	171	210	202	302
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	227	238	298	234	301	230	251	221	280
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	136	134	138	124	137	152	109	125	157
Department for Education	476	454	390	439	518	443	370	414	554
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	176	170	243	237	318	214	196	189	275
Department for International Development	106	114	127	123	134	111	85	96	143
Department for Transport #	873	693	1,074	1,008	684	673	602	694	828
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,457	1,356	1,513	1,257	1,408	1,065	1,104	1,082	1,248
Department of Energy and Climate Change	168	154	207	212	240	153	141	158	189
Department of Health	567	524	514	398	469	490	451	293	443
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	285	338	293	309	369	275	271	235	334
HM Treasury #	779	689	642	522	388	449	330	285	275
Home Office #	1,129	884	893	768	872	741	736	692	906
Ministry of Defence #	940	816	904	903	1,022	856	781	831	1,049
Ministry of Justice #	1,083	1,103	1,038	1,068	1,308	1,133	1,062	992	1,036
Northern Ireland Office	56	41	60	46	60	58	40	33	65
Scotland Office	41	34	41	30	38	39	37	33	61
UK Export Finance	27	29	32	22	16	21	31	16	18
Wales Office	34	23	47	26	35	23	33	24	51

**TABLE A2 continued**

**Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 Jan 2013**

Government body	2013				2014				
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Charity Commission	173	151	158	142	167	156	126	162	162
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	-	-	20	32	40	50
Crown Prosecution Service	181	160	165	160	220	182	173	165	173
Debt Management Office	13	25	15	9	14	15	17	9	18
Food Standards Agency	98	44	40	35	53	41	38	41	54
Health and Safety Executive	1,657	1,447	1,417	1,246	1,378	1,246	1,243	1,236	1,338
HM Land Registry	98	133	93	72	100	96	87	104	83
HM Revenue and Customs	518	518	554	576	622	565	515	592	545
National Archives	864	861	902	713	909	830	783	716	825
National Savings and Investments	30	16	43	29	38	32	41	23	36
Office for National Statistics	73	61	84	48	82	65	71	75	106
Office for Standards in Education	166	172	186	209	309	184	159	176	216
Office of Fair Trading	96	85	87	83	69	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	56	67	74	94	97	90	115	106	126
Office of Rail Regulation	45	58	62	42	46	37	41	33	52
Ordnance Survey	15	16	35	20	13	11	25	15	28
Royal Mint	5	1	5	7	15	8	6	4	5
Rural Payments Agency	109	131	136	112	137	126	141	116	173
Serious Fraud Office	28	46	37	23	22	25	28	17	35
Treasury Solicitor's Department	141	85	56	69	110	94	99	66	108
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	34	54	76	51	85	55	88	80	36

**Notes**

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.



**TABLE A3**

**Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Timeliness of response			Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline	Percentage of requests 'in time' (i.e. meeting deadline or with permitted extension)
		20-day deadline met	Permitted extension <sup>2</sup> to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>12,846</b>	<b>10,914</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>8,712</b>	<b>7,281</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>4,134</b>	<b>3,633</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<i>Departments of State</i>						
Attorney General's Office	62	61	1	0	98%	100%
Cabinet Office #	436	326	59	51	75%	88%
Communities and Local Government	302	246	39	17	81%	94%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	280	263	13	4	94%	99%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	157	108	4	45	69%	71%
Department for Education	554	454	22	78	82%	86%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	275	198	20	57	72%	79%
Department for International Development	143	138	5	0	97%	100%
Department for Transport #	828	751	40	37	91%	96%
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,248	1,160	11	77	93%	94%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	189	160	15	14	85%	93%
Department of Health	443	435	8	0	98%	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	334	234	60	40	70%	88%
HM Treasury #	275	235	18	22	85%	92%
Home Office #	906	684	98	124	75%	86%
Ministry of Defence #	1,049	874	36	139	83%	87%
Ministry of Justice #	1,036	776	9	251	75%	76%
Northern Ireland Office	65	57	1	7	88%	89%
Scotland Office	61	55	0	6	90%	90%
UK Export Finance	18	18	0	0	100%	100%
Wales Office	51	48	0	3	94%	94%

**TABLE A3 continued**

**Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Timeliness of response			Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline	Percentage of requests 'in time' (i.e. meeting deadline or with permitted extension)
		20-day deadline met	Permitted extension <sup>2</sup> to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>						
Charity Commission	162	147	1	14	91%	91%
Competition and Markets Authority	50	48	0	2	96%	96%
Crown Prosecution Service	173	155	3	15	90%	91%
Debt Management Office	18	18	0	0	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	54	51	1	2	94%	96%
Health and Safety Executive	1,338	1,233	12	93	92%	93%
HM Land Registry	82	82	0	0	100%	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	545	434	0	111	80%	80%
National Archives <sup>3</sup>	791	623	150	18	79%	98%
National Savings and Investments	36	34	0	2	94%	94%
Office for National Statistics	106	102	0	4	96%	96%
Office for Standards in Education	216	203	3	10	94%	95%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	126	100	4	22	79%	83%
Office of Rail Regulation	52	47	3	2	90%	96%
Ordnance Survey	28	27	1	0	96%	100%
Royal Mint	5	4	0	1	80%	80%
Rural Payments Agency	173	159	7	7	92%	96%
Serious Fraud Office	35	29	2	4	83%	89%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	108	103	0	5	95%	95%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	36	34	0	2	94%	94%

**Notes**

1 - Requests 'on hold' or 'lapsed' are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made. They are therefore excluded from the calculation of timeliness measures.

2 - Permitted extensions include: extensions under the FOI Act to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest, and extensions under the EIR because of the complexity or volume of the request.

3 - Although the standard statutory deadline for responding to an information request is 20 working days, a 30-day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to archived information. The National Archives' timeliness figures are therefore reported on this basis.

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

TABLE A4

Percentage of non-routine information requests received since 1 Jan 2013 that were answered 'in time', by quarter

Government body	2013				2014				2015
	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:
	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>									
Attorney General's Office	100%	97%	95%	97%	98%	90%	100%	100%	100%
Cabinet Office #	86%	83%	85%	86%	95%	90%	94%	88%	88%
Communities and Local Government	87%	92%	89%	82%	80%	82%	72%	73%	94%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	96%	99%	96%	98%	98%	97%	96%	96%	99%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	99%	97%	96%	95%	98%	96%	96%	93%	71%
Department for Education	89%	87%	87%	85%	87%	91%	91%	92%	86%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	89%	89%	100%	97%	99%	92%	62%	58%	79%
Department for International Development	99%	99%	98%	99%	98%	98%	99%	98%	100%
Department for Transport #	96%	96%	96%	97%	95%	96%	97%	96%	96%
Department for Work and Pensions #	92%	95%	94%	94%	92%	91%	90%	91%	94%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	97%	96%	99%	97%	98%	92%	93%	94%	93%
Department of Health	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	95%	88%	88%	82%	88%	93%	90%	90%	88%
HM Treasury #	98%	96%	96%	96%	91%	96%	92%	93%	92%
Home Office #	50%	53%	72%	81%	87%	84%	87%	90%	86%
Ministry of Defence #	84%	87%	89%	88%	85%	87%	88%	84%	87%
Ministry of Justice #	90%	88%	89%	87%	89%	83%	81%	73%	76%
Northern Ireland Office	96%	98%	97%	93%	88%	88%	95%	91%	89%
Scotland Office	95%	100%	98%	93%	92%	95%	92%	94%	90%
UK Export Finance	78%	66%	94%	77%	100%	90%	90%	88%	100%
Wales Office	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	94%

**TABLE A4 continued**

**Percentage of non-routine information requests received since 1 Jan 2013 that were answered 'in time', by quarter**

Government body	2013				2014				2015
	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:
	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Charity Commission	91%	96%	95%	94%	98%	95%	93%	90%	91%
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	-	-	100%	97%	98%	96%
Crown Prosecution Service	77%	71%	64%	64%	95%	97%	94%	96%	91%
Debt Management Office	*	100%	*	*	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	100%	100%	98%	100%	98%	98%	100%	100%	96%
Health and Safety Executive	91%	89%	92%	92%	91%	92%	95%	94%	93%
HM Land Registry	99%	98%	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%	99%	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	92%	90%	92%	89%	88%	86%	90%	87%	80%
National Archives <sup>2</sup>	98%	99%	98%	98%	97%	97%	98%	98%	98%
National Savings and Investments	97%	*	95%	93%	95%	97%	100%	100%	94%
Office for National Statistics	88%	77%	98%	96%	100%	100%	99%	95%	96%
Office for Standards in Education	96%	97%	97%	98%	97%	99%	99%	97%	95%
Office of Fair Trading	97%	96%	92%	89%	97%	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	88%	94%	86%	90%	88%	91%	90%	95%	83%
Office of Rail Regulation	96%	95%	95%	98%	98%	92%	95%	100%	96%
Ordnance Survey	*	*	100%	*	100%	100%	96%	100%	100%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	93%	100%	67%	100%	80%
Rural Payments Agency	99%	97%	94%	87%	100%	100%	94%	99%	96%
Serious Fraud Office	79%	80%	92%	96%	68%	72%	93%	76%	89%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	98%	98%	100%	99%	99%	99%	98%	100%	95%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	94%	96%	96%	96%	99%	100%	99%	96%	94%

**Notes**

1 - A request is 'in time' if it was answered within the statutory response deadline, or within a permitted extension to this deadline. Permitted extensions include extensions under the FOI Act to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest, and extensions under the EIR because of the complexity or volume of the request. Requests 'on hold' or 'lapsed' are excluded from the calculation of timeliness measures. These requests are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received and so public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made.

2 - Although the standard statutory deadline for responding to an information request is 20 working days, a 30-day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to archived information. The National Archives' timeliness figures are therefore reported on this basis.

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

\* - Percentage not supplied because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

**TABLE A5**  
**Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Requests where advice and assistance <sup>2</sup> provided	Requests where information not held	Total 'resolvable' requests <sup>3</sup>	Initial outcome of request				Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full	Percentage of resolvable requests withheld in full
					Granted in full	Partially withheld	Fully withheld <sup>4</sup>	Response not yet provided <sup>5</sup>		
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>12,846</b>	<b>1,064</b>	<b>2,251</b>	<b>9,531</b>	<b>4,573</b>	<b>1,305</b>	<b>3,001</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>8,712</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>6,469</b>	<b>3,171</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>2,028</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>4,134</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>3,062</b>	<b>1,402</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>										
Attorney General's Office	62	16	22	24	5	7	11	1	21%	46%
Cabinet Office #	436	30	121	285	62	34	153	36	22%	54%
Communities and Local Government	302	20	67	215	120	41	33	21	56%	15%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	280	13	66	201	64	59	71	7	32%	35%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	157	27	22	108	55	19	26	8	51%	24%
Department for Education	554	44	81	429	275	59	74	21	64%	17%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	275	56	52	167	69	25	45	28	41%	27%
Department for International Development	143	4	15	124	65	7	51	1	52%	41%
Department for Transport #	828	9	133	686	530	57	86	13	77%	13%
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,248	86	85	1,077	686	60	308	23	64%	29%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	189	5	29	155	54	37	52	12	35%	34%
Department of Health	443	11	168	264	140	11	112	1	53%	42%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	334	16	69	249	66	57	82	44	27%	33%
HM Treasury #	275	22	111	142	42	26	59	15	30%	42%
Home Office #	906	145	153	608	205	99	273	31	34%	45%
Ministry of Defence #	1,049	85	161	803	404	96	224	79	50%	28%
Ministry of Justice #	1,036	97	129	810	233	110	358	109	29%	44%
Northern Ireland Office	65	4	18	43	32	2	5	4	74%	12%
Scotland Office	61	25	8	28	23	2	2	1	82%	7%
UK Export Finance	18	0	2	16	11	4	1	0	69%	6%
Wales Office	51	1	15	35	30	2	2	1	86%	6%

**TABLE A5 continued**

**Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Requests where advice and assistance <sup>2</sup> provided	Requests where information not held	Total 'resolvable' requests <sup>3</sup>	Initial outcome of request				Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full	Percentage of resolvable requests withheld in full
					Granted in full	Partially withheld	Fully withheld <sup>4</sup>	Response not yet provided <sup>5</sup>		
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>										
Charity Commission	162	13	27	122	48	42	28	4	39%	23%
Competition and Markets Authority	50	1	11	38	23	4	11	0	61%	29%
Crown Prosecution Service	173	24	16	133	50	12	63	8	38%	47%
Debt Management Office	18	0	2	16	7	8	1	0	44%	6%
Food Standards Agency	54	4	4	46	26	10	7	3	57%	15%
Health and Safety Executive	1,338	53	456	829	393	223	198	15	47%	24%
HM Land Registry	82	2	2	78	73	2	3	0	94%	4%
HM Revenue and Customs	545	27	46	472	144	17	279	32	31%	59%
National Archives	791	102	42	647	293	79	150	125	45%	23%
National Savings and Investments	36	4	9	23	20	1	2	0	87%	9%
Office for National Statistics	106	2	20	84	67	5	10	2	80%	12%
Office for Standards in Education	216	48	19	149	40	26	83	0	27%	56%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	126	5	19	102	55	14	29	4	54%	28%
Office of Rail Regulation	52	8	7	37	21	12	3	1	57%	8%
Ordnance Survey	28	6	1	21	17	2	2	0	81%	10%
Royal Mint	5	0	0	5	3	0	2	0	60%	40%
Rural Payments Agency	173	42	9	122	58	10	52	2	48%	43%
Serious Fraud Office	35	6	2	27	19	4	4	0	70%	15%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	108	1	12	95	34	19	42	0	36%	44%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	36	0	20	16	11	1	4	0	69%	25%

**Notes**

1 - Requests 'on hold' or 'lapsed' are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made.

2 - 'Advice and assistance' would be provided to a requester when the body 'reasonably requires further information in order to identify and locate the information requested'. See section 1(3) of the Freedom of Information Act for further details.

3 - 'Resolvable requests' are all those where it is possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the requested information. They exclude requests which are 'lapsed' or 'on-hold', where the information was not held, and where it was necessary to provide advice and assistance since in each of these cases it would not have been possible to resolve the request in the form it was asked.

4 - 'Fully withheld' requests include those which were refused because it was estimated that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

5 - This table counts as 'resolvable' all requests where a response has not yet been provided. This assumption is likely to be generally true but may be incorrect in a small number of cases.

It should also be noted that requests where a response has not yet been provided are more likely to involve considerations which are complex and finely balanced. As a result, it cannot be assumed that these requests will be granted and refused in the same proportions as 'resolvable' requests in general.

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

TABLE A6

Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 Jan 2013<sup>1</sup>

Government body	2013				2014				2015
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>									
Attorney General's Office	53%	*	36%	57%	73%	50%	29%	7%	21%
Cabinet Office #	23%	24%	25%	20%	21%	22%	29%	16%	22%
Communities and Local Government	61%	69%	63%	64%	65%	58%	53%	48%	56%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	43%	35%	37%	39%	34%	31%	31%	29%	32%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	44%	64%	68%	59%	58%	60%	71%	47%	51%
Department for Education	67%	65%	71%	67%	53%	59%	68%	66%	64%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	53%	69%	58%	58%	72%	68%	48%	34%	41%
Department for International Development	74%	58%	69%	60%	62%	60%	60%	56%	52%
Department for Transport #	75%	74%	78%	75%	76%	77%	77%	77%	77%
Department for Work and Pensions #	76%	71%	66%	69%	69%	65%	65%	63%	64%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	42%	37%	49%	55%	48%	44%	38%	24%	35%
Department of Health	57%	54%	59%	44%	58%	42%	19%	37%	53%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	23%	26%	29%	37%	26%	31%	27%	30%	27%
HM Treasury #	44%	46%	50%	41%	38%	54%	47%	42%	30%
Home Office #	37%	40%	42%	43%	42%	37%	38%	38%	34%
Ministry of Defence #	62%	64%	61%	63%	62%	52%	52%	52%	50%
Ministry of Justice #	38%	34%	39%	41%	34%	36%	37%	34%	29%
Northern Ireland Office	48%	*	74%	*	43%	40%	56%	50%	74%
Scotland Office	70%	77%	86%	*	76%	74%	88%	94%	82%
UK Export Finance	56%	52%	79%	*	81%	50%	60%	38%	69%
Wales Office	96%	95%	73%	*	81%	57%	50%	100%	86%

TABLE A6 continued

Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 Jan 2013

Government body	2013				2014				2015
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Charity Commission	53%	45%	39%	50%	48%	45%	47%	50%	39%
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	-	-	19%	48%	48%	61%
Crown Prosecution Service	46%	47%	46%	43%	35%	36%	34%	38%	38%
Debt Management Office	*	*	*	*	78%	69%	50%	63%	44%
Food Standards Agency	38%	39%	62%	33%	49%	67%	68%	55%	57%
Health and Safety Executive	48%	51%	50%	47%	44%	53%	52%	52%	47%
HM Land Registry	86%	91%	95%	86%	88%	67%	75%	91%	94%
HM Revenue and Customs	38%	29%	36%	37%	34%	27%	31%	18%	31%
National Archives	63%	56%	56%	51%	50%	59%	45%	51%	45%
National Savings and Investments	86%	*	95%	90%	100%	83%	90%	75%	87%
Office for National Statistics	92%	89%	87%	83%	78%	84%	82%	83%	80%
Office for Standards in Education	32%	30%	27%	25%	19%	22%	30%	20%	27%
Office of Fair Trading	32%	35%	30%	44%	67%	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	68%	81%	81%	75%	72%	59%	43%	49%	54%
Office of Rail Regulation	50%	42%	28%	38%	41%	35%	48%	50%	57%
Ordnance Survey	*	*	67%	*	67%	60%	78%	50%	81%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	46%	14%	17%	75%	60%
Rural Payments Agency	74%	78%	61%	61%	59%	68%	51%	46%	48%
Serious Fraud Office	57%	31%	44%	*	37%	44%	36%	43%	70%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	32%	38%	50%	53%	49%	50%	48%	41%	36%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	73%	86%	89%	80%	89%	68%	86%	48%	69%

**Note**

1 - 'Resolvable requests' are all those where it would have been possible to provide a substantive response. They exclude requests which are 'lapsed' or 'on-hold', where the information was not held, and where it was necessary to provide advice and assistance to the requester, since in each of these cases it would not have been possible to resolve the request in the form it was asked.

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

\* - Percentage not supplied because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.



**TABLE A7**

**Exemptions and exceptions<sup>1</sup> applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Exemption / Exception <sup>1</sup>	Number of requests where exemption used		
	Departments of State only	Other monitored bodies	TOTAL
<b>Total number of requests where one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied</b>	<b>1,705</b>	<b>1,223</b>	<b>2,928</b>
<b>Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of FoI Act<sup>2</sup>) was applied</b>			
S(21) - Information available by other means	-	-	-
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	273	45	318
S(22A) - Research intended for future publication	0	0	0
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	84	11	95
S(24) - National security	66	4	70
S(26) - Defence	33	0	33
S(27) - International relations	64	7	71
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	3	0	3
S(29) - The economy	2	2	4
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	9	192	201
S(31) - Law enforcement	118	131	249
S(32) - Court records, etc.	60	17	77
S(33) - Audit functions	1	10	11
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	1	0	1
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc.	153	11	164
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	91	10	101
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc. and honours	25	2	27
S(38) - Health and Safety	33	30	63
S(39) - Environmental information	- <sup>3</sup>	- <sup>3</sup>	- <sup>3</sup>
S(40) - Personal information	767	603	1,370
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	48	76	124
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	28	13	41
S(43) - Commercial interests	144	34	178
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	28	183	211
<b>Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied</b>			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	44	21	65
4(a) - Information not available	4	2	6
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	36	12	48
4(c) - Too general	8	0	8
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	8	1	9
4(e) - Internal communications	28	0	28
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	2	5	7
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	4	0	4
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	0	0	0
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	1	0	1
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	7	5	12
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	4	0	4
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	0	0	0
<b>Environmental Exceptions</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>192</b>

**Notes**

1 - 'Exemptions' refers to the provisions in Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act (and the similar 'exceptions' in Part 3 of the Environmental Information Regulations) which classify certain types of information as exempt from the release obligations. More than one exemption or exception can apply to a single information request.

2 - The exemption described in section 21 of the Act ('Information accessible ... by other means') is not listed here, because requests falling under this exemption do not meet the formal definition of a 'non-routine' request and therefore are not counted in these monitoring statistics. Figures for Section 21 exemptions can be found in Table A8

3 - The exemption listed at section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act ('Environmental Information') effectively states that information requests which fall within the scope of the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) should be handled as these Regulations specify. Requests for environmental information which are refused should apply one of the EIR exceptions listed above.

**TABLE A8**

**Section 21 exemptions<sup>1</sup> applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Government body	Number of requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied	Timeliness of response		Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline
		20-day deadline met	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)	
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b><i>Departments of State</i></b>				
Attorney General's Office	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Cabinet Office #	32	28	4	<b>88%</b>
Communities and Local Government	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	27	27	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Education	35	31	4	<b>89%</b>
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	7	5	2	<b>71%</b>
Department for International Development	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Transport #	25	25	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Work and Pensions #	36	35	1	<b>97%</b>
Department of Energy and Climate Change	12	11	1	<b>92%</b>
Department of Health	35	35	0	<b>100%</b>
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	14	10	4	<b>71%</b>
HM Treasury #	20	20	0	<b>100%</b>
Home Office #	64	55	9	<b>86%</b>
Ministry of Defence #	36	34	2	<b>94%</b>
Ministry of Justice #	72	68	4	<b>94%</b>
Northern Ireland Office	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Scotland Office	0	0	0	-
UK Export Finance	0	0	0	-
Wales Office	5	5	0	<b>100%</b>

**TABLE A8 Continued**

**Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2015**

Government body	Number of requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied	Timeliness of response		Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline
		20-day deadline met	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)	
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>				
Charity Commission	2	2	0	100%
Competition and Markets Authority	1	1	0	100%
Crown Prosecution Service	1	1	0	100%
Debt Management Office	0	0	0	-
Food Standards Agency	0	0	0	-
Health and Safety Executive <sup>2</sup>	9	-	-	-
HM Land Registry	19	19	0	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	37	31	6	84%
National Archives	0	0	0	-
National Savings and Investments	1	1	0	100%
Office for National Statistics	16	16	0	100%
Office for Standards in Education	5	5	0	100%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	0	0	0	-
Office of Rail Regulation	2	2	0	100%
Ordnance Survey	1	1	0	100%
Royal Mint	0	0	0	-
Rural Payments Agency	1	1	0	100%
Serious Fraud Office	0	0	0	-
Treasury Solicitor's Department	38	38	0	100%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	0	0	0	-

**Notes**

1 - A section 21 exemption is defined as information available by other means.

2 - The HSE was unable to provide timeliness data for Section 21 exemptions. Therefore, timeliness figures may not sum.

3 - These tables cover requests that were exempted either fully or in part under Section 21, where a Section 21 was the only exemption used

4 - Section 21 is an absolute exemption, which means that no consideration of the public interest test is required to withhold information.

# - Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

## Annex B: Note on the scope and consistency of the statistics

### **Defining the scope of Freedom of Information monitoring**

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol) states that (subject to certain conditions):

*‘Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled—*

*(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and*

*(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him’*

Regulation 5 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 states that (subject to certain conditions):

*‘A public authority that holds environmental information shall make it available on request.’*

Following their introduction on 1 January 2005, the above provisions apply to all relevant requests for information made to public authorities, no matter how routine and straightforward they may be.

Government departments supply large amounts of information, both on request and proactively, as an established and routine part of their business. This includes information released in the form of leaflets, correspondence exchanges, reports and other published material, and through websites and departmental FOI Publication Schemes. All information released on request is covered by the Freedom of Information Act. However, it would be both uninformative and fundamentally unfeasible to count all such activity in departmental Freedom of Information monitoring returns.

The statistics in this bulletin therefore relate to all ‘non-routine’ information requests that government departments have received, and those routine information requests that are handled under Section 21. Essentially, this means that departments’ statistics should only count those requests where:

1. It was necessary to take a considered view on how to handle the request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, and
2. Departmental Freedom of Information officer(s) were informed of the request and logged it in their case management systems.

More information can be found by accessing the following link:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/262792/25section2.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262792/25section2.pdf)

## Defining a request

The full definition of an 'information request' for the purposes of inclusion in the Ministry of Justice's monitoring returns is shown below. This definition was circulated to members of the central government 'Freedom of Information Practitioners' Group' in November 2004.

*'[An information request for monitoring purposes is one ...]*

1. *Which meets the criteria in section 8 of the Freedom of Information Act and if the request falls under the Environmental Information Regulations it includes requests made in any form or context, including oral requests; **and***
2. *Which is a request for information that is not already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means; **and***
  - (i) Which results in the release of one or more documents (in any media) or inclusion of extracts of documents in the information released; **or***
  - (ii) Results in information being withheld under an exemption or exception from the right of access (either the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations); **or***
  - (iii) The request is not processed because the department estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit in accordance with section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act; **or***
  - (iv) The request is not processed because the department is relying on the provisions of section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act; **or***
  - (v) Where a search is made for information sought in the request and it is found that none is held.'*

## Consistency of the statistics

It is necessary to apply a definition of this sort in order to set a clear boundary to the coverage of our monitoring, and thereby obtain meaningful information from the process. The definition shown above has been widely disseminated to Freedom of Information officers in government and we have tried to ensure that it is applied consistently across all monitored bodies.

However, there is considerable variation in the way these bodies are structured and managed, and in the mechanisms that they have put in place to meet their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. For example, some bodies operate a centralised Freedom of Information secretariat that co-ordinates responses to all information requests received. Others give a greater degree of autonomy to individual work areas in the handling of information requests.

Because of these differences, there could be a degree of inconsistency in the way in which bodies have interpreted and applied the definition of an 'information request' for monitoring purposes. However, the statistics effectively count those requests which have been dealt with by each monitored body formally under the FOI Act. As such, the statistics report on how many such requests for information each monitored body has received and how they have implemented the Act's requirements in providing responses. Direct comparisons between the statistics for different monitored bodies can therefore be made on this basis.

**In summary:**

- (i) These statistics cover both 'non-routine' information requests, and 'routine' information requests which are answered under a Section 21 exemption. This does not give a representative picture of all requests for information received in government.
- (ii) There is likely to be a degree of inconsistency between monitored bodies' interpretations of the definition of an 'information request' for monitoring purposes. This should be borne in mind when using these statistics.

**Users of the statistics**

The main users of these statistics are departmental FOI teams responsible for coordinating responses and requests, Ministers and officials with responsibility for developing information access policy, and other non-governmental bodies and individuals with an interest in the accessibility of government information. The statistics are used to monitor the implementation of the FOI Act by central government, both as a whole and by each individual body included in the figures.

## Annex C: Government bodies included in these statistics

The statistics in this bulletin have been derived from monitoring returns completed by Freedom of Information officers in government departments during February 2015. This is the latest set of quarterly Freedom of Information statistics to be published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the government department which now has lead responsibility for the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The first eight bulletins in this series were published by the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

The formal monitoring work covers a total of 41 government bodies, including all major departments of state (i.e. Ministerial departments)<sup>9</sup>.

The monitored bodies which are not departments of state nonetheless have significant policymaking, regulatory or information-handling functions. As far as possible, this list includes major non-Ministerial Government Departments and excludes Executive Agencies. However, periodic “Machinery of Government” changes make it difficult to define the list precisely.

The statistics reflect the management and implementation of the FOI Act by each monitored body and comparisons between departments can be made on this basis. There could be a degree of inconsistency in the way in which bodies have interpreted and applied the definition of an “information request” for monitoring purposes as outlined in Annex B.

### Coverage within the UK

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Office and the Wales Office are included in these statistics. However, we have not collected formal monitoring data from the National Assembly for Wales, or from the bodies that make up the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies in Scotland. This legislation lies outside the scope of the monitoring work on which this bulletin is based. However, the Scotland Office has been included here because, although it deals with matters relating to Scotland, it is based in England and hence falls under the scope of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 rather than the corresponding Scottish legislation.

The following is a full list of the bodies covered by the monitoring statistics in the fourth quarter of 2014.

### Departments of State

- Attorney General’s Office
- Cabinet Office
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills<sup>10</sup>
- Department for Communities and Local Government

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<sup>9</sup> The Ministerial departments excluded from this publication are the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland, the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons and the Office of the Leader of the House of Lords.

<sup>10</sup> Previous publications had erroneously included the Met Office in the list of bodies included in the monitoring by BIS. The Met Office has never included requests to the Met Office in their reports.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
Department for Education  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Department for International Development  
Department for Transport  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Department of Energy and Climate Change  
Department of Health  
Export Credits Guarantee Department  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
HM Treasury  
Home Office  
Ministry of Defence  
Ministry of Justice  
Northern Ireland Office  
Scotland Office  
Wales Office

#### **Other monitored bodies**

Charity Commission  
Crown Prosecution Service  
Debt Management Office  
Food Standards Agency  
Health and Safety Executive and Commission  
HM Land Registry  
HM Revenue and Customs  
National Archives  
National Savings and Investments  
Office for National Statistics  
Office for Standards in Education  
Office of Fair Trading  
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets  
Office of Rail Regulation<sup>11</sup>  
Ordnance Survey  
Royal Mint  
Rural Payments Agency  
Serious Fraud Office  
Treasury Solicitor's Department<sup>12</sup>  
Water Services Regulation Authority

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<sup>11</sup> On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the Office of Rail Regulation changed its name to the Office of Rail and Road. Reports will continue to use the former name until Q2 2015 monitoring period.

<sup>12</sup> On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the Treasury Solicitor's Department changed its name to the Government Legal Department. Reports will continue to use the former name until Q2 2015 monitoring period.



## Notes

1. The figures provided by a number of Departments of State count the non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. The departments and agencies affected are shown below.

### Cabinet Office

Figures include requests received by the following:

Requests that were addressed to 10 Downing Street  
Central Office of Information

### Department for Education

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Standards and Testing Agency  
Education Funding Agency  
Teaching Agency  
National College for School Leadership

### Department for Transport

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency  
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency  
Highways Agency<sup>13</sup>  
Marine and Coastguard Agency  
Vehicle Certification Agency

### Department for Work and Pensions

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission  
Disability and Carers' Service  
Jobcentre plus  
Pension Service

### HM Treasury

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Office for Budget Responsibility

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<sup>13</sup> From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the Highways Agency became Highways England, a new Government Owned Company. Highways England are a separate public authority from the Department for Transport, including for the purposes of the FOI Act.

## Home Office

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- Criminal Records Bureau
- Borders and Immigration Agency
- Identity and Passport Service
- National Fraud Authority
- Government Equalities Office

## Ministry of Defence

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- Defence Support Group (DSG)<sup>14</sup>
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL)
- UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO)

## Ministry of Justice

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- HM Courts and Tribunals Service
- National Offender Management Service
- National Probation Service
- Legal Aid Agency
- Official Solicitor and Public Trustee
- Judicial Office
- Office of the Public Guardian

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<sup>14</sup> From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the Defence Support Group is no longer a government agency.

## Annex D: Explanatory notes

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling by central government bodies of information requests received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs). They are collected and published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), with assistance from Freedom of Information officers across central government.

The FOI Act received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. Under the Act, anybody may request information from a public authority which has functions in England, Wales and/or Northern Ireland. The Act confers two statutory rights on applicants:

- To be told whether or not the public authority holds that information; and if so,
- To have that information communicated to them.

These statutory rights came into force on 1 January 2005. The MoJ is the lead department responsible for the FOI Act. Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

The (amended) EIRs also came into force on 1 January 2005, to coincide with the FOI Act. They clarify and extend previous rights to environmental information held by public authorities. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is the lead department responsible for the EIRs. Further information is available from the Gov.uk website:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-Folaeirs](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-Folaeirs)

These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to MoJ in July and August 2015. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 April to 30 June 2015. Thanks are due to FOI officers for their work in preparing these returns. The collection of monitoring data began on the 21st working day after the last day of this period (i.e. on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015), since 20 working days is the statutory deadline for public authorities to respond to information requests under both the FOI Act and the EIRs.

Both 'non-routine' information requests and 'routine' information requests (that are covered under Section 21) are counted in these statistics. Important notes on the scope and consistency of these statistics are given in Annex B.

These statistics cover 41 central government bodies. At the commencement of the Act in January 2005, there were 43 bodies covered by the monitoring statistics, but the precise number can change from time to time due to 'Machinery of Government' changes. A full list of the monitored bodies in Q4 2014 is shown in Annex C.

## Contacts

Press enquires on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in a particular government body should be addressed to that body's Press Office.

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

Paul Halford  
Tel: 020 3334 3546  
Email: Paul.Halford@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

Daniel Minshull  
Justice Statistics Analytical Services  
Ministry of Justice  
7th Floor, 102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ  
Tel: 020 3334 6411  
Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other queries about the Freedom of Information Act 2000 should be directed to:

Information Directorate  
Ministry of Justice  
6th Floor  
102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ  
Tel: 020 3334 3625  
Email: informationrights@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](mailto:statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

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