

Freedom of Information request 1755/2013

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Information request

I would like to be provided with the number of people being transferred from severe disabled allowance and incapacity benefit will see a reduction in their net income as a result of being transferred to Employment and Support Allowance.

I would also like to be provided with the number of people who have transferred from severe disablement allowance and incapacity benefit to employment and support allowance who have been paid an additional payment on top of their award.

DWP response

Claimants who qualify for conversion to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and who receive more on existing incapacity benefits than the appropriate ESA rate, will have their existing rate of benefit protected at the point of conversion. They will be awarded additional allowances on a transitional basis (equivalent to the shortfall between the two rates) until the rate of ESA catches up. Information on the number of claimants who receive an additional allowance on a transitional basis could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

I can confirm that we hold information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

If claimants who are eligible for ESA receive less on incapacity benefits than the appropriate ESA rate, their benefit will immediately be increased to the ESA rate on conversion.

Estimates on the number of claimants whose income changes as a result of transferring from incapacity benefits to ESA are not available.