



Ministry of
JUSTICE



HM Courts
& Tribunals
Service

Social Security and Child Support Statistics: 1 April 2011 to 30 April 2011

Statistical Notice

Published 15 June 2011

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Introduction

This Statistical Notice presents information on the activity of the Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) tribunal for the period, 1 April 2011 to 30 April 2011.

I have taken the decision to release this information outside the usual timetable for Statistical Releases due to the amount of Parliamentary and media interest in the work of SSCS over recent months and to ensure that debate is informed by the latest data. It should be noted that information is provisional management information and may be amended when Official Statistics are published. This notice will be published monthly until the end of August 2011 when we will review the need for monthly publication. This is the fourth of such reports and they have been published at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/statistics-and-data/tribunals/sscs-stats.htm>.

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

Information for the fourth quarter of 2010-11 and for the financial year 2010-11 will be published at the end of June, 2011.

Iain Bell

Chief Statistician

Ministry of Justice

Key Findings

Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) had 27,800 receipts between 1 April 2011 and 30 April 2011, a decrease of 11% compared to the same period last year (31,200), but 56% higher than for April 2009 (17,800). There has been a 38% increase in the number of disposals by this jurisdiction from 24,200 in April 2010 to 33,300 in April 2011 and there were 65% more disposals in April 2011 than there were in April 2009.

Receipts and Disposals

- Following a peak of 40,200 receipts in March 2011, the number of receipts in April 2011 (27,800) was the lowest since August 2009. The decrease in receipts follows a seasonal pattern. There were five fewer working days in April 2011 compared to March 2011 due to the bank holidays for Easter and the Royal Wedding.
- Following a record number of disposals in March 2011 (40,500), the number of disposals for April 2011 (33,300) returned to the similar levels seen in the previous six months. Again, the decrease compared to March follows a seasonal pattern.
- In April 2011, the number of disposals exceeded receipts for the fourth consecutive month.
- For Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefit (IB) specifically:
 - After increases in the previous three months, the number of ESA/IB receipts has fallen to 15,100 in April 2011.
 - After a peak of 23,000 disposals in March 2011, disposals in April 2011 (18,900) showed a seasonal decrease and returned to similar levels to those in the previous six months.
 - ESA/IB disposals outstripped receipts in April 2011 for the fifth time in the last six months (excluding December 2010). In December 2010, disposals were at similar levels to receipts.

Caseload Outstanding

- At 30 April, 2011, the caseload outstanding was 189,300, a decrease of 2% on the number at 31 March 2011 - the second decrease in the last three months. However, it is still 29% higher than at 30 April 2010 and almost treble the number outstanding at 30 April 2009.

- For ESA and IB cases, as disposals have exceeded receipts in five of the last six months, the numbers outstanding have started to fall.

Clearances and Timeliness

- The average clearance time (from receipt to disposal) has been increasing over the last couple of years. In April 2011, this average was 23.1 weeks.

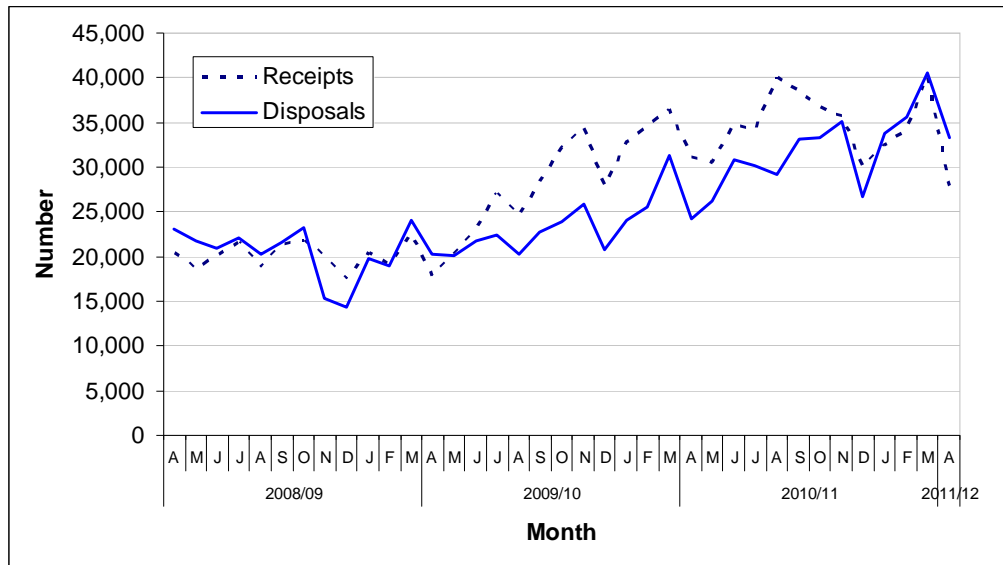
Commentary

Receipts and Disposals (Tables 1.1 and 2.1)

1. The Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) tribunal had 27,800 receipts in the period 1 April 2011 – 30 April 2011 – more than half of all receipts received by Tribunals. Receipts to SSCS have been increasing over the last couple of years reaching a peak of 40,100 in August 2010. Since this time the level of receipts has varied. The 27,800 receipts in April 2011 show a decrease compared to the 40,200 received in March 2011 and are 11% lower than April 2010. However, they are still 56% higher than April 2009.

2. Following a peak of 40,200 receipts in March 2011, the number of receipts in April 2011 was the lowest since August 2009. The decrease in receipts follows a seasonal pattern. There were five fewer working days in April 2011 compared to March 2011, due to the bank holidays for Easter and the Royal Wedding.

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



Source: SSCS monthly returns

3. Between 1 and 30 April 2011, SSCS disposed of 33,300 cases – an increase of 38% on the number disposed of in April 2010, and 65% on the number disposed of in April 2009.

4. **Figure 1** shows the trend in both receipts and disposals. The number of disposals has been generally rising since December 2009 and following a peak in disposals in March 2011 (40,500), disposals in April 2011 returned to the similar levels seen in the previous six months. In April 2011, the number

of disposals exceeded receipts for the fourth consecutive month. In that month there were 33,300 disposals as compared with 27,800 receipts.

Receipts and Disposals by Benefit Type (Tables 1.1 and 2.1)

5. Of those 27,800 cases received between 1 April 2011 and 30 April 2011:

- 15,100 or 54% related to Employment Support Allowance (ESA)/Incapacity Benefit (IB);
- 5,200 or 19% were for Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance (DLA/AA);
- 3,900 or 14% were for Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA).

6. The rise in SSCS receipts over recent years has mainly been caused by the introduction of Employment Support Allowance in October 2008 to replace Incapacity Benefit. During April 2011, SSCS had 15,100 receipts for these two benefit types – 16% lower than in April 2010 but 139% more than April 2009. Individually, receipts in Employment Support Allowance fell by 11% compared to April 2010, whilst receipts for Incapacity Benefit fell by 42% over the same period.

7. Sizeable monthly increases in ESA/IB receipts were seen from June 2009 when receipts were 10,200, and the number generally continued to rise until August 2010, when ESA/IB receipts reached a peak of 23,600. Since August 2010, the number of ESA/IB receipts fell each month until December 2010, but then rose between January and March 2011, with March receipts of 22,400 the second highest since the benefit was introduced. In April, ESA/IB receipts have again fallen and at 15,100 are just below the December receipts of 15,200 and the lowest since August 2009.

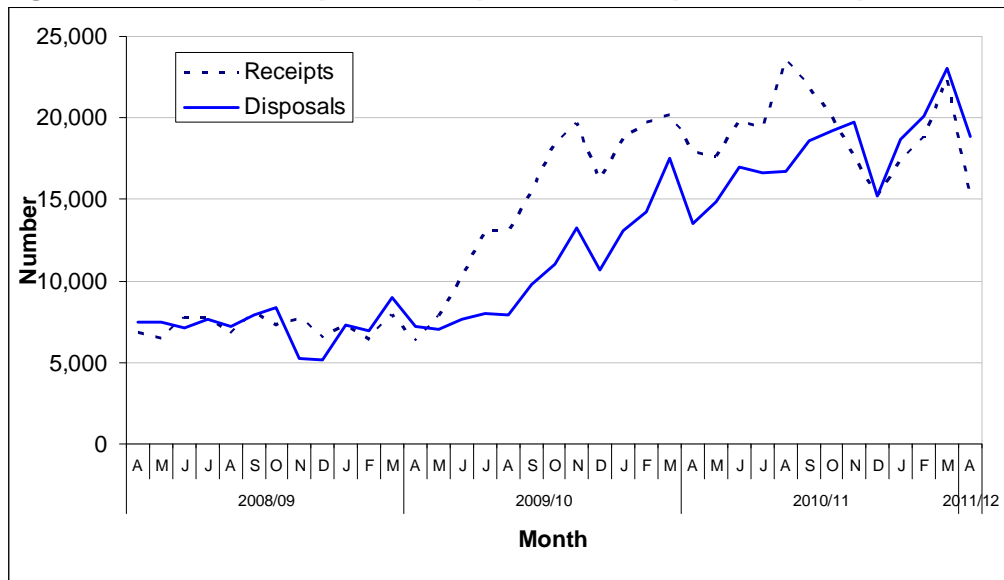
8. Examining the other benefit types, most saw a fall in the number of receipts when comparing April 2011 with April 2010. Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance fell by 13% from 6,000 in April 2010 to 5,200 in April 2011, while Income Support and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) both fell by 40%, Income Support from 1,300 in April 2010 to 750 in April 2011, and IIDB from 750 in April 2010 to 450 in April 2011. There were however increases in the number of receipts for Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA), Carers Allowance and Pensions Credits. In April 2011, there were 3,900 JSA receipts (a 40% increase on April 2010), 170 Pensions Credit receipts (up 55% on April 2010) and 150 Carers Allowance receipts (up 84% on the same period of the previous year).

9. In April 2011, 18,900 ESA/IB cases were disposed of – 57% of all SSCS disposals for that month, 40% higher than the disposals in April 2010 and 163% higher than April 2009.

10. Similarly to receipts, the number of ESA/IB disposals has been generally increasing since June 2009, reaching their highest level of 23,000 in March 2011. In five of the last six months (excluding December 2010) the number of

ESA/IB disposals has outstripped receipts. In December 2010, disposals were at a similar level to receipts.

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



Source: SSCS monthly returns

Outcome of hearings (Table 2.2)

11. Table 2.2 provides some information on the outcome of Social Security and Child Support cases that were cleared at hearing¹, and whether the decision was found in favour of the appellant or if the original decision made by DWP was upheld. In the period 1 April 2011 to 30 April 2011, there were 25,800 hearing clearances – 37% more than in April 2010. Of these, 36% were found in favour of the appellant (but there is some variation in that proportion by benefit type: 38% of DLA/AA in favour of the appellant; 40% of ESA/IB; 16% of JSA; and, 8% of Social Fund).

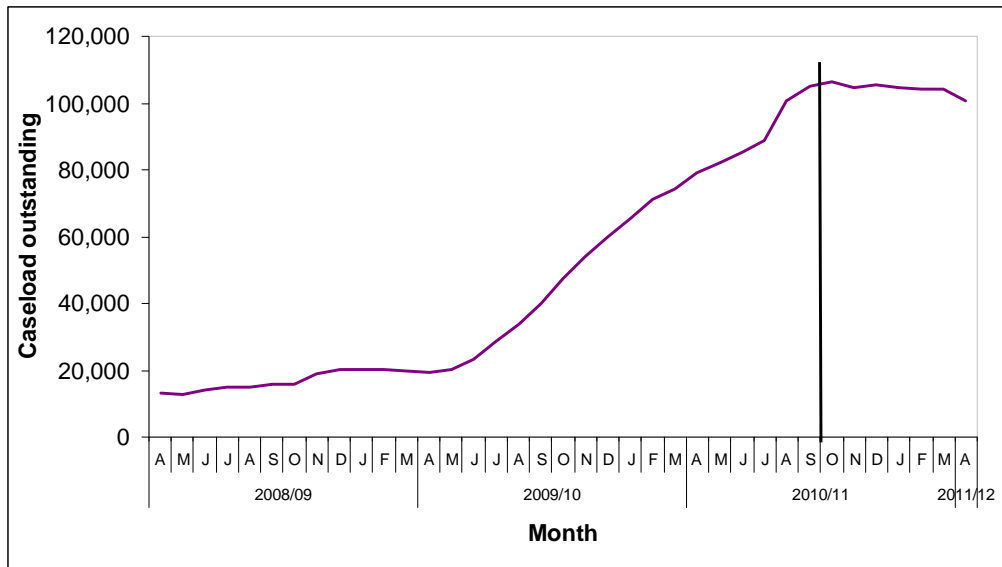
Caseload Outstanding (Table 3.1)

12. At 30 April, 2011, the caseload outstanding was 189,300, a decrease of 2% on the number at 31 March 2011- the second decrease in the last three months. However, it is still 29% higher than 30 April 2010 and almost treble the number outstanding at 30 April 2009. Over half of the outstanding caseload is in the “04 Tribunal Category” which is where ESA and IB cases are predominately recorded. Examining just that category, the outstanding caseload was 95,500 at 30 April 2011, as compared with 98,700 in March 2011 and 79,100 at 30 April 2010.

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

13. Figure 3 shows significant rises in the caseload outstanding (for the “04 Tribunal Category/ ESA/IB”) around the time that receipts of ESA/IB started to increase. As disposals have exceeded receipts in five of the last six months, the numbers outstanding have started to fall.

Figure 3: Caseload Outstanding for “04 Tribunal Category/ESA/IB” from April 2008 to April 2011²



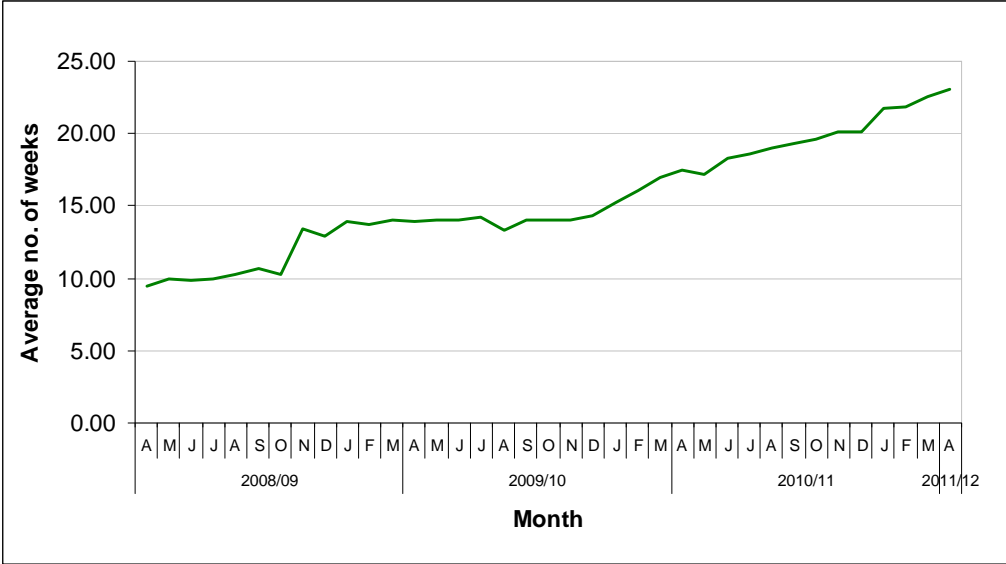
Source: SSCS monthly returns

Timeliness

14. A measure of timeliness has been examined showing the average amount of time (in weeks) taken from receipt at the tribunal to clear or dispose of a case. Figure 4 shows that the average clearance time has been increasing over the last couple of years. In April 2011, this average was 23.1 weeks for all benefits combined and 23.7 for ESA/IB cases. Individually, the average clearance time for ESA cases was 23.2 weeks, IB cases 26.6 weeks, DLA 27.9 weeks and JSA cases 13.1 weeks for April 2011.

² There is a discontinuity in the data series. All ESA/IB outstanding caseload captured from August 2010. Prior to this date some cases were dealt with as Category 01 and are not included.

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



Source: SCS monthly returns

Explanatory notes

Data quality and sources

Information presented in this report is drawn from administrative sources. It should be noted that some information contained in this notice is provisional management information and may be amended when Official Statistics are published.

Definitions

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

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

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

Non-hearing clearance – these are cases withdrawn prior to a hearing, struck out or superseded. There are some Tribunal judgements (some go the judge who decides that they should be struck out).

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

Examples of hearings include:

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

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

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

Decision in favour – Decision in favour of the appellant.

Decision upheld – Decision made by the First Tier Agency (Department of Work and Pensions) upheld by the Tribunal.

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

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

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

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

Contact points for further information

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

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

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

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Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

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

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

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Tables

Symbols and conventions

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

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

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

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

Table 1.1 SSCS Receipts by Benefit Type

Benefit	Rounded Numbers										
	2009-10					2010-11 ^P					2011-12 ^P
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Q4 ^P	Total ^P	April 2011 ^P
Attendance Allowance	790	1,000	980	1,100	3,900	860	1,100	1,100	1,100	4,200	300
Disability Living Allowance	15,900	16,900	18,800	20,100	71,700	17,300	21,000	21,400	19,900	79,500	4,900
Bereavement Benefit	140	140	150	120	530	120	110	140	120	500	44
Carer's Allowance	260	380	260	210	1,100	310	440	420	460	1,600	150
Child Benefit Lone Parent	340	490	350	420	1,600	340	640	480	500	1,900	130
Child Support Allowance	1,100	1,000	940	1,100	4,200	940	930	920	940	3,700	250
Credits (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	6	0
Tax Credits	390	340	300	550	1,600	710	720	670	930	3,000	240
COEG	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Compensation Recovery Unit	83	73	120	94	370	75	87	100	100	370	27
Housing/Council Tax	3,100	3,200	3,100	3,100	12,500	3,100	3,300	3,000	3,000	12,300	810
Disability Working Allowance	-	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	0	-	0
Employment Support Allowance	10,100	29,000	41,100	46,500	126,800	46,000	55,700	44,900	50,800	197,400	13,300
Health in Pregnancy Grant	0	120	270	220	610	120	93	50	130	390	31
Home Responsibilities Protection	-	-	12	10	25	7	6	-	9	25	0
Incapacity Benefit	14,200	12,600	13,100	12,200	52,200	9,400	9,100	8,000	7,700	34,300	1,800
Income Support	3,900	4,100	3,800	4,200	16,000	3,900	4,000	4,000	3,100	15,100	750
Industrial Death Benefit	0	0	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	0
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	1,700	1,100	1,800	2,700	7,300	2,600	2,200	2,300	2,100	9,200	450
Job Seekers Allowance	6,900	7,300	7,600	9,300	31,100	8,800	11,500	12,900	13,800	47,000	3,900
Lookalikes	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	67	64	54	69	250	57	71	57	48	230	8
Others (Extinct/Rare Benefits)	16	19	31	14	80	17	42	23	15	97	-
Penalty Proceedings	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	-	-	0
Pensions credit	400	370	460	460	1,700	330	360	390	530	1,600	170
Retirement Pension	250	160	190	220	810	220	190	270	280	960	59
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	33	32	29	36	130	26	23	42	39	130	11
Social Fund	1,400	1,200	970	1,100	4,700	1,300	1,000	1,200	1,400	4,800	430
Vaccine Damage Appeals	0	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	7	0
Total	61,100	79,800	94,600	103,800	339,200	96,500	112,600	102,500	106,900	418,500	27,800

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

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Table 2.1 SSCS Disposals by Benefit Type

Benefit	2009-10					2010-11 ^P					2011-12 ^P
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Q4 ^P	Total ^P	April 2011 ^P
Attendance Allowance	880	920	910	840	3,500	850	850	850	1,000	3,600	350
Disability Living Allowance	17,500	17,000	15,500	15,500	65,400	15,500	16,200	15,100	18,200	65,000	6,200
Bereavement Benefit	120	150	130	120	520	110	100	110	150	480	34
Carer's Allowance	320	340	280	260	1,200	220	340	380	390	1,300	130
Child Benefit Lone Parent	450	450	380	370	1,700	340	440	480	500	1,800	150
Child Support Allowance	1,200	1,200	1,000	880	4,300	860	870	860	1,000	3,600	240
Credits (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Tax Credits	320	430	330	350	1,400	510	690	730	850	2,800	260
COEG	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-	0
Compensation Recovery Unit	96	88	89	86	360	72	79	100	88	340	25
Housing/Council Tax benefit	3,300	3,300	3,100	3,200	12,900	2,800	3,000	3,100	3,300	12,200	850
Disability Working Allowance	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	-	-	0
Employment Support Allowance	2,300	11,200	23,400	33,600	70,500	35,300	42,500	45,900	52,400	176,100	16,000
Health in Pregnancy Grant	0	50	140	230	420	160	130	83	120	480	25
Home Responsibilities Protection	-	-	-	10	16	7	11	-	10	30	-
Incapacity Benefit	19,500	14,400	11,600	11,200	56,800	10,100	9,500	8,400	9,400	37,300	2,900
Income Support	5,300	4,700	4,000	3,800	17,700	3,400	3,800	4,100	4,300	15,700	1,000
Industrial Death Benefit	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	0
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	1,700	1,700	1,300	1,400	6,000	1,900	2,100	2,000	2,100	8,100	720
Job Seekers Allowance	6,900	7,600	6,900	7,500	28,800	7,400	9,900	11,400	13,800	42,500	3,800
Lookalikes	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	6	-
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	65	68	54	54	240	58	68	60	46	230	15
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	23	21	14	20	78	17	14	30	18	79	8
Penalty Proceedings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	0
Pensions Credit	430	420	370	430	1,600	360	380	430	480	1,700	150
Retirement Pension	260	220	160	200	850	190	190	210	270	860	63
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	41	32	24	22	120	26	27	36	28	120	12
Social Fund	1,400	1,300	990	980	4,700	980	1,200	1,000	1,300	4,500	370
Vaccine Damage Appeals	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	8	-
Total	62,100	65,600	70,500	81,000	279,300	81,200	92,500	95,200	109,800	378,800	33,300

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

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Table 2.2 SSCS Hearing Outcomes by Benefit Type ¹

Benefit	Percentage												
	2010-11 ^p										2011-12 ^p		
	Quarter 1 ^p		Quarter 2 ^p		Quarter 3 ^p		Quarter 4 ^p		Total ^p		April 2011 ^p		
Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³	Decision in Favour ²	Decision Upheld ³
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Attendance Allowance	30%	69%	24%	74%	22%	76%	26%	73%	26%	73%	29%	71%	
Disability Living Allowance	39%	59%	38%	61%	38%	61%	38%	61%	38%	60%	39%	60%	
Bereavement Benefit	9%	91%	5%	95%	21%	78%	7%	93%	10%	90%	17%	83%	
Carer's Allowance	9%	91%	11%	87%	9%	91%	15%	85%	11%	88%	12%	88%	
Child Benefit Lone Parent	8%	91%	11%	88%	6%	94%	9%	91%	9%	91%	11%	89%	
Child Support Allowance	47%	51%	44%	52%	39%	58%	39%	57%	42%	55%	39%	52%	
Credits (Other)	.	.	.	.	.	.	0%	100%	0%	100%	.	.
Tax Credits	10%	90%	7%	92%	14%	86%	9%	89%	10%	89%	9%	90%	
COEG	.	.	.	.	.	.	0%	100%	0%	100%	.	.
Compensation Recovery Unit	36%	61%	41%	59%	42%	56%	29%	71%	38%	61%	31%	69%	
Housing/Council Tax benefit	26%	72%	21%	78%	23%	76%	22%	77%	23%	76%	24%	75%	
Disability Working Allowance	.	.	.	.	0%	100%	100%	0%	50%	50%	.	.
Employment Support Allowance	39%	60%	37%	62%	36%	63%	38%	62%	37%	62%	38%	61%	
Health in Pregnancy Grant	11%	89%	8%	92%	3%	97%	5%	95%	7%	93%	11%	89%	
HRP	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	
Incapacity Benefit	52%	47%	49%	50%	48%	52%	50%	49%	50%	50%	49%	50%	
Income Support	32%	67%	26%	73%	28%	70%	27%	72%	28%	71%	28%	71%	
Industrial Death Benefit	0%	100%	100%	0%	.	.	.	.	33%	67%	.	.
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	38%	60%	32%	64%	34%	62%	35%	62%	35%	62%	33%	66%	
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	16%	84%	12%	88%	14%	86%	13%	87%	13%	86%	16%	84%	
Lookalikes	0%	100%	100%	0%	.	.	33%	67%	40%	60%	0%	100%	
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	15%	85%	14%	86%	11%	89%	6%	94%	12%	88%	0%	100%	
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	38%	63%	45%	55%	28%	60%	36%	64%	35%	60%	50%	25%	
Penalty Proceedings	.	.	.	.	100%	0%	.	.	100%	0%	.	.
Pensions Credit	20%	78%	23%	76%	32%	68%	20%	78%	24%	75%	35%	65%	
Retirement Pension	8%	92%	3%	97%	7%	92%	10%	89%	7%	92%	9%	91%	
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	40%	60%	38%	63%	45%	50%	24%	76%	37%	62%	38%	63%	
Social Fund	10%	90%	11%	89%	9%	91%	8%	92%	9%	90%	8%	92%	
Vaccine Damage Appeals	.	.	50%	50%	0%	100%	0%	100%	17%	83%	0%	100%	
Total	38%	61%	34%	65%	33%	66%	34%	65%	35%	64%	36%	64%	

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable

.. Not available

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¹ Cases cleared at hearing include some withdrawals.

² Decision in favour of the appellant

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

Table 3.1 SSCS Caseload Outstanding¹

Rounded Numbers

	2009-10				2010-11 ^p				2011-12 ^p
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1 ^p	Q2 ^p	Q3 ^p	Q4 ^p	April 2011 ^p
Social Security and Child Support	68,500	85,400	112,600	138,800	158,400	182,600	193,400	194,200	189,300

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

.. Not available

- Small Value

p Provisional

¹ As on the last day of the period