

**Freedom of Information Act
2000 – Statistics on
implementation in central
government
Q1: January – March 2010**

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

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Ministry of
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Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“Fol Act”) and the associated Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIRs”) came fully into force on 1 January 2005. This bulletin covers the period January to March 2010 and presents the latest quarterly set of statistics on their implementation within central government.

The previous quarterly bulletins, together covering the period from January 2005 to December 2009, are available via the links on the following pages of the Ministry of Justice and Freedom of Information websites:

www.justice.gov.uk/publications/freedomofinformationquarterly.htm

www.foi.gov.uk/reference/statisticsAndReports.htm

The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling of written requests for information received by monitored bodies during the relevant time period. **They cover only “non-routine” information requests**, and information given out on request as a part of routine business should not be counted. **Appendix A** gives a definition of a “non-routine” request, and other information on the scope of these statistics.

This bulletin presents monitoring statistics for a total of 44 central government bodies, including all major departments of state. **Appendix B** gives a full list of monitored bodies.

The statistics are designed to allow Monitored Bodies to compare performance and volumes and improve performance in handling freedom of Information requests, to further develop Freedom of Information policy across Government and for politicians, lobby groups and members of the public to hold Departments and Monitored Bodies to account.

Executive summary

Volumes [see Table 1]

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 11,199 requests were received an increase of 9 per cent on quarter 1 2009.

93 per cent of requests received had been processed at the time of monitoring

Departments of State reported receiving 6,857 “non-routine” information requests during the first quarter of 2010 (Q1). Other monitored bodies received 4,342 requests. .

363 requests handled under the amended Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) which came into force on 1 January 2005.

Timeliness [see Table 2 and Table B]

During Q1 of 2010, 89 per cent of all monitored bodies’ requests (excluding those “on hold” or lapsed) were “in time”, in that they were processed within the statutory deadline¹ or were subject to a permitted deadline extension. This figure is above both the previous quarter and the corresponding quarter of 2009.

Figures for individual Departments of State ranged from 55 per cent (Ministry of Defence) to 100 per cent (Department of Health). For the 21 Departments of State who received more than 20 requests in the quarter, 15 had more than 90 per cent of requests processed “in time”².

Outcomes [see Table 3 and Table C]

Of all “resolvable” requests received during Q1 of 2010 (i.e. requests where it was possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought), 54 per cent were granted in full, slightly lower than both the previous quarter and the corresponding quarter of 2009.

Figures for individual Departments of State ranged from 24 per cent (Cabinet Office) to 77 per cent (Communities and Local Government and the Government Equalities Office)².

¹ 20 working days generally, 30 working days for The National Archives

² The statistics reflect the management and implementation of the FOI Act by each monitored body and comparisons between Departments can be made on the 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

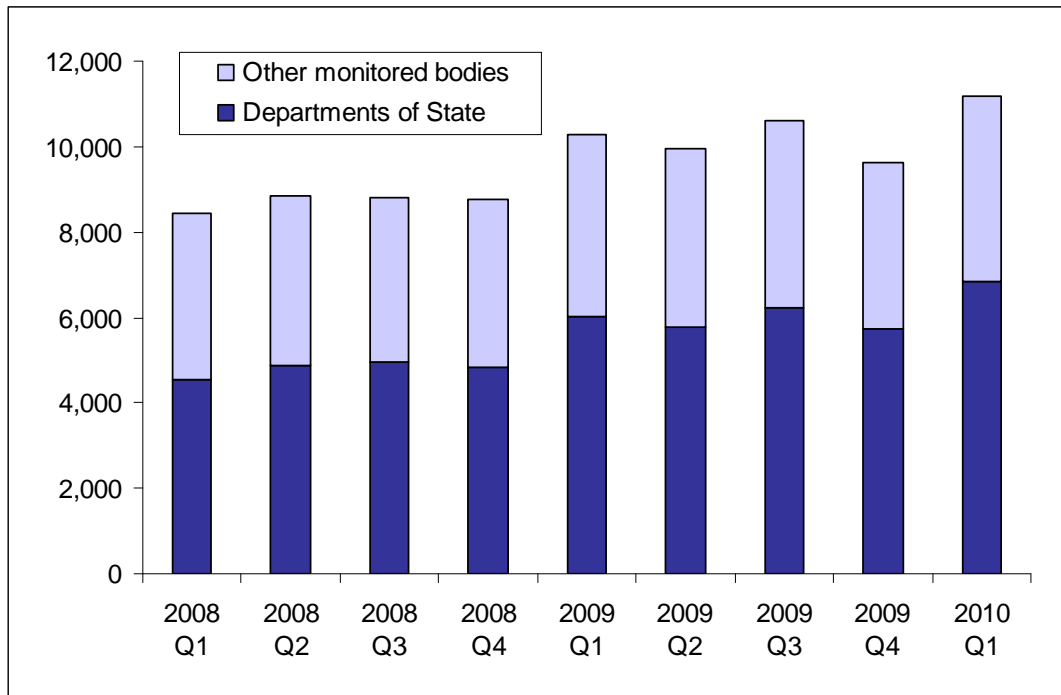
Commentary

Number of requests [see Table 1 and Table A]

Departments of State reported receiving a total of 6,857 information requests under the Freedom of Information Act and the associated Environmental Information Regulations during the quarter from 1 January to 31 March 2009 (Q1). Other monitored bodies reported having received 4,342 requests. Across all monitored bodies, therefore, a total of 11,199 requests were reported.

This overall total for Q1 of 2010 is 9 per cent greater than in the corresponding quarter last year (i.e. Q1 of 2009), and 17 per cent more than in the preceding quarter. It is the highest quarterly total number of requests received by monitored bodies since the very first quarter of the Act's implementation in Q1 2005. The number of requests received by Departments of State was 14 per cent more than during the same period last year, while the total received by other monitored bodies increased by 2 per cent. Departments of State accounted for 61 per cent of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q1 of 2010. Although the Government Equalities Office has been added to the list of monitored bodies this quarter, the number of requests received by the Government Equalities Office (30) means comparisons over time are still possible.

Figure 1: Numbers of FoI requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies, quarterly from Q1 2008



Of the Departments of State, the Ministry of Justice reported having received 808 requests during Q1, the highest departmental total. The other Departments that received more than 700 requests were:

- Department for Work and Pensions - 797
- Department for Transport - 794,
- Home Office - 763,
- Ministry of Defence 738

Among other monitored bodies, the Health and Safety Executive reported having received 1,562 requests during Q1, while the National Archives received 927. 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. Both these monitored bodies account for almost 60 per cent of all requests received by all the other monitoring bodies. Therefore the trends for the other monitored bodies group as a whole are heavily dependant on the trends for these two particular bodies.

Monitoring statistics also show the number of non-routine information requests that fell fully or mostly under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). There were 363 such requests during the first quarter of 2010, accounting for 3.2 per cent of all requests received.

Of the monitored bodies with requests falling under the EIR the Rural Payments Agency with 80 requests had the highest total. The other Departments that received more than 40 requests were;

- Department for Transport - 63
- Communities and Local Government - 59
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - 41

Status of requests at time of monitoring [see Table 1]

A large majority of requests (93 per cent) received during Q1 had been processed by the time monitoring information was collected. Of the 825 requests that were still being processed by the monitored bodies, 72 (9 per cent) were reported as “on hold” or “lapsed” because a fee had been charged but no payment had been received. These requests are effectively in suspension, since public authorities are not obliged to respond until the fee has been paid.

Timeliness of response to requests [see Table 2 and Table B]

The FoI Act requires public bodies to respond to written requests for information within 20 working days of receipt (with limited exceptions, for example to allow additional time for the consideration of public interest). Across all monitored bodies;

- 84 per cent of requests received during Q1 of 2010 were sent a response within this standard deadline. - up from 82 per cent in Q4 2009)
- 89 per cent of the requests received during Q1 were “in time”, in that they either received a response within the standard deadline or were subject to a permitted deadline extension. This is an increase of 87 per cent from Q4 2009.

Although the standard statutory deadline for response to a FoI request is 20 working days, a 30 working day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to information transferred to the National Archives, which has provided response timeliness information on this basis.

Figure 2: Timeliness of responses to FoI requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies in Q1 2010

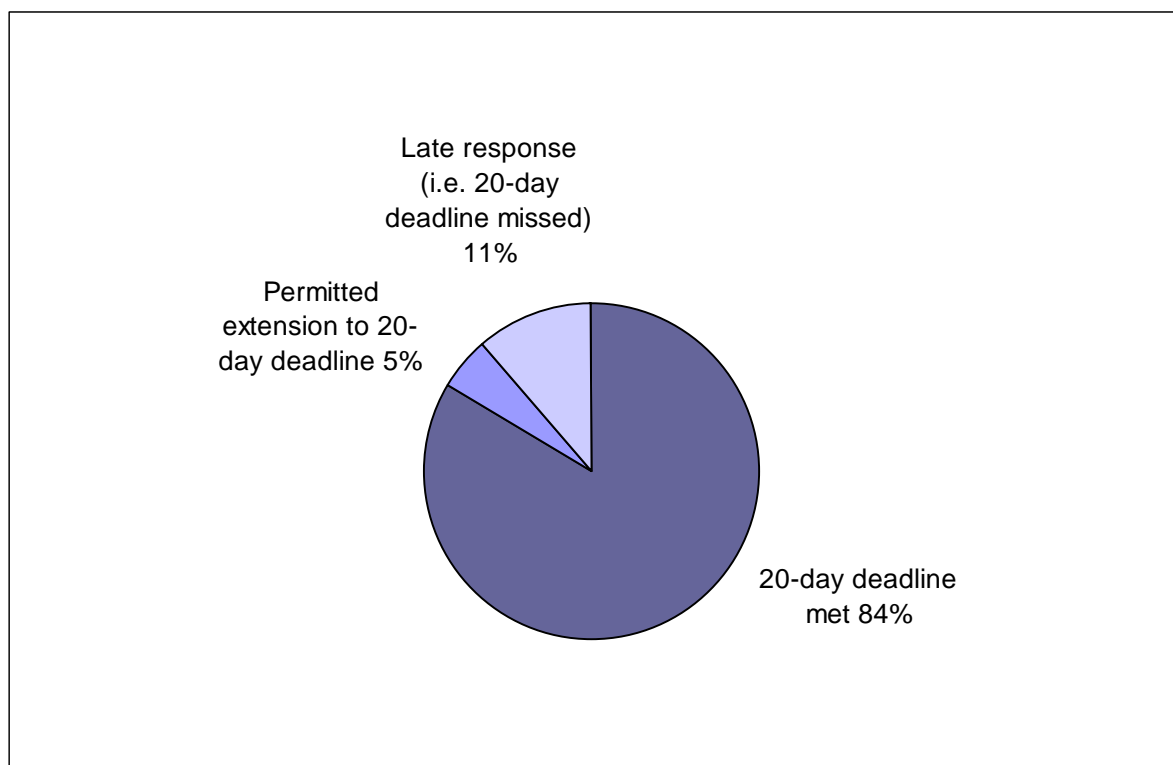
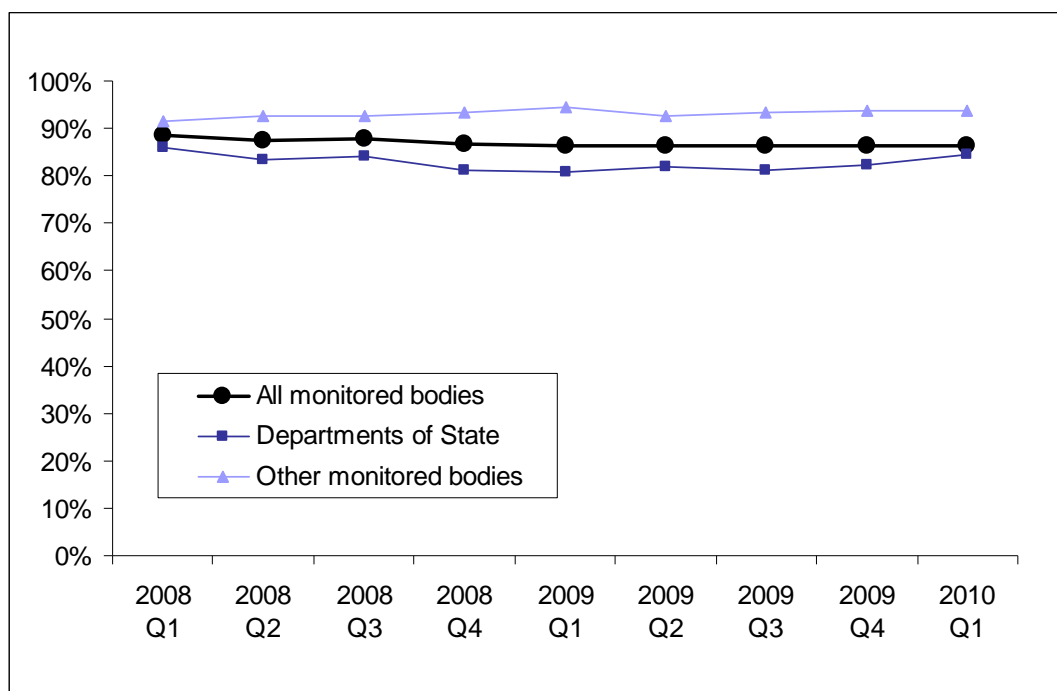


Figure 3: Percentage of FoI requests processed “in time” by Departments of State and other monitored bodies, quarterly from Q1 2008



Initial outcomes of requests [see Table 3 and Table C]

Of the 11,199 requests reported during Q1 of 2010 across all monitored bodies,

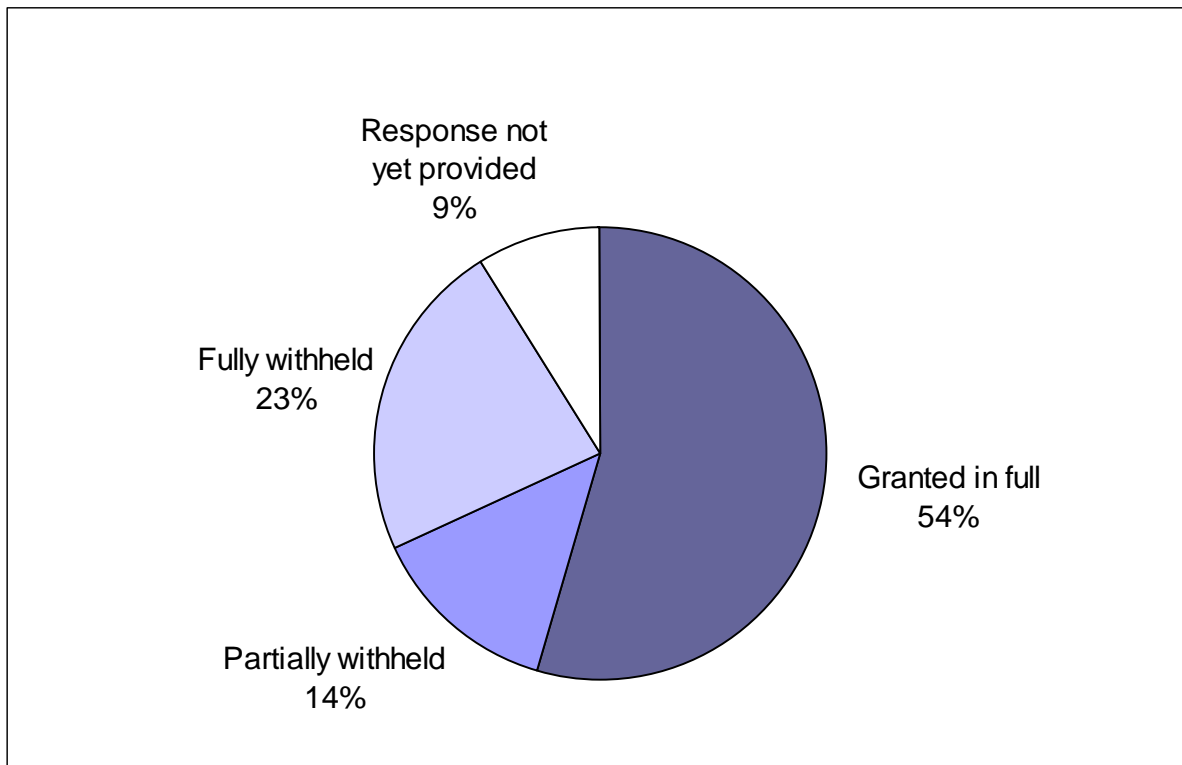
- 72 were “on hold” awaiting a fee payment.
- 2,003 requests sought information that was not held,
- and 720 were responded to with “advice and assistance” because the body handling the request needed further information in order to identify the information being sought.

As a result, the remaining 8,404 requests were assumed to be “resolvable”, in that it would have been possible to give a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought.

Of the “resolvable” requests received during Q1 of 2010,

- 54 per cent were granted in full, down from 55 per cent in Q4 2009
- 14 per cent were withheld in part,
- 23 per cent were withheld in full at the time of monitoring.
- 9 per cent had not yet received a substantive response.

Figure 4: Initial outcomes of “resolvable” FoI requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies in Q1 2010



Use of exemptions and exceptions [see Table 4]

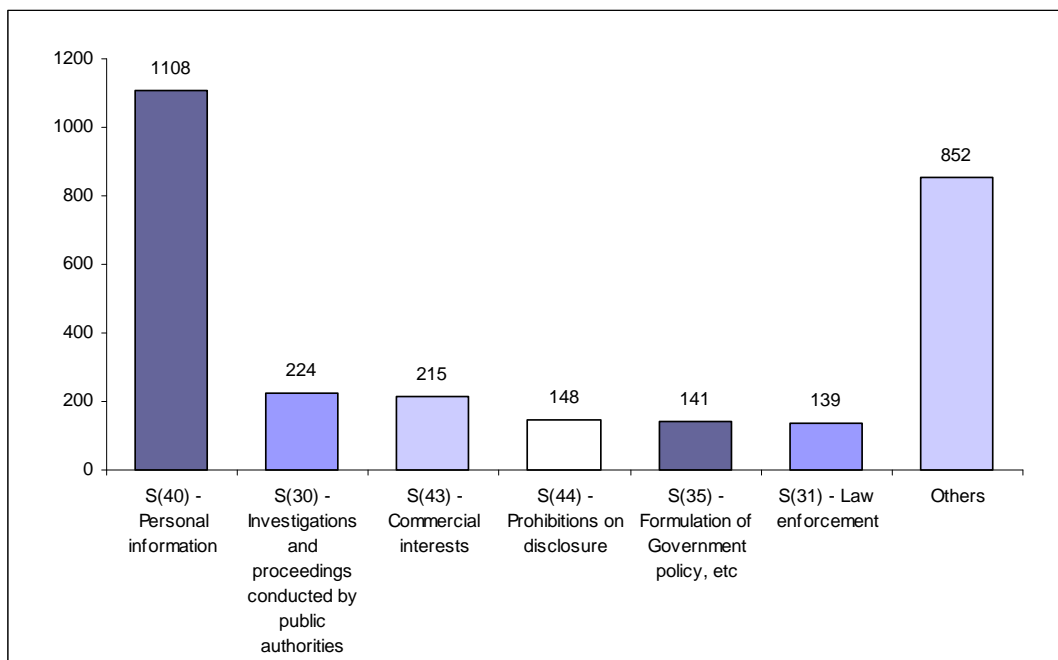
Under the FoI Act, a public authority can only refuse to provide requested information that it holds if:

- The request is considered vexatious or repeated
- The cost of compliance would exceed the appropriate limit
- The information falls in one or more of the categories of exempt information (“exemptions”) listed in Part II of the Act.

There are similar arrangements that apply to certain types of information under the EIRs. These list a number of “exceptions to the duty to disclose environmental information” in Part 3 of the Regulations.

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 2,386 requests were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q1. This quarterly total is markedly higher than it was prior to Q3 of 2006 because it now includes data on exemption usage by the Health and Safety Executive, which was not previously available.

Figure 5: Number of exemptions and exceptions applied by Departments of State and other monitored bodies on requests received in Q1 2010



The most commonly applied exemptions or exceptions in Q1 2010 were:

- Section 40 of the FoI Act (relating to personal information), which was applied to 1,108 requests,
- Section 30 (investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities), which was applied to 224 requests,
- and Section 43 (commercial interests), which was applied to 215 requests.

Departmental name changes

Please refer to note 1 in Appendix B for full details of departmental name changes that have occurred since Q1 2008, the period covered by the tables in this bulletin.

Tables

Latest quarterly tables

- Table 1. Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2010, and their status at time of monitoring
- Table 2. Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2010
- Table 3. Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2010
- Table 4. Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January – 31 March 2010

In-year performance and volume tables

- Table A. Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2008
- Table B. Proportion of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were answered “in time”, by quarter, since 1 January 2008
- Table C. Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2008

TABLE 1

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2010, and their status at time of monitoring¹

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring ¹			
		Processed	"On hold" or lapsed ²	Still being processed	Number handled under EIRs ³
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	11,199	10,374	72	753	363
TOTAL for Departments of State only	6,857	6,244	3	610	204
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,342	4,130	69	143	159
<i>Departments of State</i>					
Attorney General's Office	28	27	0	1	0
Cabinet Office	236	217	0	19	0
Communities and Local Government	243	232	3	8	59
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	279	261	0	18	0
Department for Children, Schools and Families	180	177	0	3	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	165	144	0	21	1
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	143	139	0	4	41
Department for International Development	92	85	0	7	0
Department for Transport #	794	772	0	22	63
Department for Work and Pensions #	797	765	0	32	1
Department of Energy and Climate Change	171	157	0	14	27
Department of Health	510	502	0	8	1
Export Credits Guarantee Department	23	22	0	1	1
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	311	282	0	29	0
Government Equalities Office	30	30	0	0	0
HM Treasury	438	432	0	6	0
Home Office #	763	685	0	78	0
Ministry of Defence #	738	463	0	275	8
Ministry of Justice #	808	752	0	56	1
Northern Ireland Office	66	61	0	5	1
Scotland Office	30	27	0	3	0
Wales Office	12	12	0	0	0

TABLE 1 continued

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2010, and their status at time of monitoring¹

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring ¹			
		Processed "On hold" or lapsed ²	Still being processed	Number handled under EIRs ³	
Other bodies included in monitoring					
Central Office of Information	13	13	0	0	0
Charity Commission	202	201	0	1	0
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	55	51	0	4	0
Crown Prosecution Service	135	132	0	3	0
Debt Management Office	10	10	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	57	55	0	2	1
Health and Safety Executive	1,562	1,535	0	27	69
HM Land Registry	49	48	1	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	391	382	0	9	1
National Archives	927	766	68	93	0
National Savings and Investments	23	23	0	0	1
Office for National Statistics	62	62	0	0	0
Office for Standards in Education	314	314	0	0	0
Office of Fair Trading	123	123	0	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	60	60	0	0	2
Office of Rail Regulation	67	67	0	0	2
Ordnance Survey	42	42	0	0	1
Royal Mint	8	6	0	2	0
Rural Payments Agency	91	89	0	2	80
Serious Fraud Office	33	33	0	0	0
Treasury Solicitor's Department	98	98	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	20	20	0	0	2

- Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

Notes

1 - Monitoring returns were submitted to the Ministry of Justice during May 2010

2 - 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.

3 - 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.

TABLE 2

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2010

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed ¹)	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 ² to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	11,127	9,313	546	1,268	84%	89%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	6,854	5,448	399	1,007	79%	85%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,273	3,865	147	261	90%	94%
Departments of State						
Attorney General's Office	28	26	1	1	93%	96%
Cabinet Office	236	196	16	24	83%	90%
Communities and Local Government	240	209	17	14	87%	94%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	279	232	32	15	83%	95%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	180	154	9	17	86%	91%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	165	126	36	3	76%	98%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	143	127	6	10	89%	93%
Department for International Development	92	78	10	4	85%	96%
Department for Transport #	794	718	28	48	90%	94%
Department for Work and Pensions #	797	601	9	187	75%	77%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	171	141	21	9	82%	95%
Department of Health	510	501	8	1	98%	100%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	23	21	0	2	91%	91%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	311	230	63	18	74%	94%
Government Equalities Office	30	23	0	7	77%	77%
HM Treasury	438	419	16	3	96%	99%
Home Office #	763	542	73	148	71%	81%
Ministry of Defence #	738	371	32	335	50%	55%
Ministry of Justice #	808	646	12	150	80%	81%
Northern Ireland Office	66	54	9	3	82%	95%
Scotland Office	30	21	1	8	70%	73%
Wales Office	12	12	0	0	*	*

TABLE 2 continued

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2010

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed ¹)	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 ² to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
Other bodies included in monitoring						
Central Office of Information	13	13	0	0	*	*
Charity Commission	202	187	0	15	93%	93%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	55	35	0	20	64%	64%
Crown Prosecution Service	135	127	3	5	94%	96%
Debt Management Office	10	10	0	0	*	*
Food Standards Agency	57	44	8	5	77%	91%
Health and Safety Executive	1,562	1,440	18	104	92%	93%
HM Land Registry	48	46	0	2	96%	96%
HM Revenue and Customs	391	347	2	42	89%	89%
National Archives ^	859	736	105	18	86%	98%
National Savings and Investments	23	22	0	1	96%	96%
Office for National Statistics	62	62	0	0	100%	100%
Office for Standards in Education	314	306	0	8	97%	97%
Office of Fair Trading	123	120	0	3	98%	98%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	60	57	1	2	95%	97%
Office of Rail Regulation	67	59	4	4	88%	94%
Ordnance Survey	42	40	2	0	95%	100%
Royal Mint	8	6	0	2	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	91	65	3	23	71%	75%
Serious Fraud Office	33	28	1	4	85%	88%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	98	97	0	1	99%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	20	18	0	2	*	*

Notes

* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

- Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

^ - 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.

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:

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Freedom of Information Act is extended to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest.

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Environmental Information Regulations is extended because of the complexity or volume of the request.

TABLE 3

Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2010

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed ¹)	Requests where advice and assistance ² provided	Requests where information not held	Total "resolvable" requests ³	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 ⁴	Response not yet provided ⁵		
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	11,127	720	2,003	8,404	4,578	1,148	1,925	753	54%	23%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	6,854	468	1,207	5,179	2,740	627	1,202	610	53%	23%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,273	252	796	3,225	1,838	521	723	143	57%	22%
Departments of State										
Attorney General's Office	28	0	13	15	5	4	5	1	*	*
Cabinet Office	236	36	57	143	35	10	79	19	24%	55%
Communities and Local Government	240	0	36	204	157	20	19	8	77%	9%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	279	27	79	173	88	27	40	18	51%	23%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	180	13	26	141	102	10	26	3	72%	18%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	165	13	14	138	88	23	6	21	64%	4%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	143	6	30	107	66	21	16	4	62%	15%
Department for International Development	92	0	9	83	43	8	25	7	52%	30%
Department for Transport #	794	7	115	672	494	54	102	22	74%	15%
Department for Work and Pensions #	797	18	76	703	389	88	194	32	55%	28%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	171	8	27	136	63	24	35	14	46%	26%
Department of Health	510	3	122	385	270	68	39	8	70%	10%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	23	1	1	21	11	3	6	1	52%	29%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	311	19	60	232	60	79	64	29	26%	28%
Government Equalities Office	30	0	0	30	23	6	1	0	77%	3%
HM Treasury	438	62	120	256	129	23	98	6	50%	38%
Home Office #	763	122	140	501	237	60	126	78	47%	25%
Ministry of Defence #	738	11	58	669	305	40	49	275	46%	7%
Ministry of Justice #	808	118	192	498	138	46	258	56	28%	52%
Northern Ireland Office	66	3	19	44	20	10	9	5	45%	20%
Scotland Office	30	0	8	22	12	2	5	3	55%	23%
Wales Office	12	1	5	6	5	1	0	0	*	*

TABLE 3 continued
Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2010

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed ¹)	Requests where advice and assistance ² provided	Requests where information not held	Total "resolvable" requests ³	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 ⁴	Response not yet provided ⁵		
Other bodies included in monitoring										
Central Office of Information	13	0	2	11	11	0	0	0	*	*
Charity Commission	202	11	23	168	111	37	19	1	66%	11%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	55	1	1	53	35	3	11	4	66%	21%
Crown Prosecution Service	135	7	33	95	57	10	25	3	60%	26%
Debt Management Office	10	0	2	8	7	1	0	0	*	*
Food Standards Agency	57	0	11	46	18	19	7	2	39%	15%
Health and Safety Executive	1,562	67	424	1,071	569	223	252	27	53%	24%
HM Land Registry	48	3	1	44	40	2	2	0	91%	5%
HM Revenue and Customs	391	5	36	350	186	23	132	9	53%	38%
National Archives	859	98	147	614	341	34	146	93	56%	24%
National Savings and Investments	23	0	1	22	14	0	8	0	64%	36%
Office for National Statistics	62	4	5	53	41	1	11	0	77%	21%
Office for Standards in Education	314	0	38	276	168	63	45	0	61%	16%
Office of Fair Trading	123	11	12	100	41	26	33	0	41%	33%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	60	14	10	36	24	10	2	0	67%	6%
Office of Rail Regulation	67	18	15	34	28	4	2	0	82%	6%
Ordnance Survey	42	0	21	21	21	0	0	0	100%	0%
Royal Mint	8	0	0	8	6	0	0	2	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	91	11	5	75	54	10	9	2	72%	12%
Serious Fraud Office	33	1	3	29	14	2	13	0	48%	45%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	98	1	5	92	34	53	5	0	37%	5%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	20	0	1	19	18	0	1	0	*	*

Notes

* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

- Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

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 (see note above) 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.

TABLE 4

Exemptions and exceptions¹ applied by monitored bodies* when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2010

Exemption / Exception ¹	Number of requests where exemption used		
	Departments of State only	Other monitored bodies	TOTAL
Total number of requests where one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied	1,243	1,143	2,386
Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of Fol Act²) was applied			
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	143	30	173
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	42	3	45
S(24) - National security	40	0	40
S(26) - Defence	12	3	15
S(27) - International relations	79	7	86
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	2	0	2
S(29) - The economy	9	1	10
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	14	210	224
S(31) - Law enforcement	76	63	139
S(32) - Court records, etc	67	12	79
S(33) - Audit functions	0	6	6
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	1	0	1
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc	129	12	141
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	48	3	51
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc and honours	18	0	18
S(38) - Health and Safety	19	8	27
S(39) - Environmental information	_3	_3	_3
S(40) - Personal information	475	633	1,108
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	62	92	154
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	36	9	45
S(43) - Commercial interests	171	44	215
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	24	124	148
Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	13	12	25
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	9	2	11
4(c) - Too general	4	0	4
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	12	2	14
4(e) - Internal communications	14	0	14
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	6	0	6
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	5	1	6
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	1	0	1
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	5	0	5
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	6	4	10
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	2	0	2
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	2	0	2

Notes

* - A full list of monitored bodies is shown in Appendix B. This also includes details of those departments of state whose figures include non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves.

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.

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 A

Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2008

Government body	2008				2009				2010
	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
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	8,429	8,865	8,825	8,764	10,294	9,964	10,597	9,612	11,199
TOTAL for Departments of State only	4,526	4,879	4,938	4,818	6,019	5,769	6,208	5,736	6,857
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,903	3,986	3,887	3,946	4,275	4,195	4,389	3,876	4,342
<i>Departments of State</i>									
Attorney General's Office	12	19	24	23	19	28	27	28	28
Cabinet Office	193	212	237	228	274	253	261	193	236
Communities and Local Government	150	191	183	174	204	200	237	198	243
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ¹	135	184	223	195	216	269	244	182	279
Department for Children, Schools and Families	139	162	141	112	217	213	251	173	180
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	106	131	119	110	176	142	164	122	165
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	101	116	121	108	131	145	159	142	143
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	22	39	71	59	74	-	-	-	-
Department for International Development	67	101	60	71	80	70	88	91	92
Department for Transport #	538	518	485	423	586	560	707	629	794
Department for Work and Pensions #	298	368	367	436	533	596	617	600	797
Department of Energy and Climate Change	-	-	-	45	55	54	88	89	171
Department of Health	329	343	345	332	423	485	503	486	510
Export Credits Guarantee Department	7	14	13	20	9	17	12	11	23
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	286	248	275	210	281	231	321	304	311
Government Equalities Office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
HM Treasury	293	447	324	350	446	399	315	291	438
Home Office #	470	510	509	508	643	638	577	637	763
Ministry of Defence #	718	635	685	654	758	670	766	724	738
Ministry of Justice #	580	542	676	670	757	679	732	731	808
Northern Ireland Office	45	50	45	41	65	49	82	59	66
Scotland Office	19	38	23	31	58	52	39	30	30
Wales Office	18	11	12	18	14	19	18	16	12

TABLE A continued

Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2008

Government body	2008				2009				2010
	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
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Central Office of Information	14	12	9	10	20	8	14	8	13
Charity Commission	125	114	128	142	142	133	149	133	202
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	-	-	-	-	33	41	59	62	55
Crown Prosecution Service	102	107	116	111	125	139	119	136	135
Debt Management Office ²	67	76	98	92	4	6	6	4	10
Food Standards Agency	31	27	20	29	28	29	36	36	57
Health and Safety Executive	1,584	1,742	1,559	1,574	1,711	1,669	1,589	1,523	1,562
HM Land Registry	17	29	25	24	33	41	29	47	49
HM Revenue and Customs	312	354	316	316	323	355	409	339	391
National Archives	1,004	823	1,002	950	1,056	885	1,010	787	927
National Savings and Investments	40	36	14	11	33	36	44	18	23
Office for National Statistics	24	17	30	27	32	29	33	37	62
Office for Standards in Education	240	259	225	332	318	317	292	272	314
Office of Fair Trading	66	86	82	61	79	128	162	139	123
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	46	41	31	28	53	39	42	45	60
Office of Rail Regulation	46	56	50	50	63	52	59	61	67
Ordnance Survey	33	53	53	44	37	60	67	41	42
Royal Mint	5	5	4	4	5	9	11	4	8
Rural Payments Agency	42	35	25	38	73	83	84	75	91
Serious Fraud Office	20	25	10	27	27	32	24	23	33
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	66	69	61	55	69	106	64	98
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	6	23	21	15	25	35	45	22	20

Notes

- Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

1 - Figures up to and including Q1 2009 are for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. Please see Appendix B for more information.

2 - Requests received by the Debt Management Office have been counted on a different basis in the statistics from Q1 2009 onwards compared to earlier periods. Please see Appendix B for more information.

TABLE B

Proportion of non-routine information requests received that were answered "in time", by quarter, since 1 January 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008				2009				2010
	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
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	89%	87%	88%	87%	86%	86%	86%	87%	89%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	86%	83%	84%	81%	81%	82%	81%	82%	85%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	92%	92%	93%	93%	95%	93%	93%	94%	94%
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	*	*	92%	100%	*	96%	96%	96%	96%
Cabinet Office	96%	92%	96%	95%	96%	95%	91%	86%	90%
Communities and Local Government	87%	92%	93%	92%	94%	95%	95%	95%	94%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ¹	93%	88%	90%	77%	77%	76%	79%	85%	95%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	94%	92%	92%	91%	87%	87%	80%	77%	91%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	82%	92%	95%	97%	100%	99%	98%	98%	98%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	88%	80%	84%	99%	91%	85%	85%	88%	93%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	77%	64%	69%	58%	66%	-	-	-	-
Department for International Development	82%	92%	93%	99%	96%	97%	98%	93%	96%
Department for Transport #	90%	87%	88%	92%	90%	90%	94%	95%	94%
Department for Work and Pensions #	70%	56%	62%	75%	77%	75%	79%	79%	77%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	-	-	-	71%	84%	72%	80%	87%	95%
Department of Health	93%	89%	91%	83%	89%	96%	96%	100%	100%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	96%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	98%	98%	99%	94%	96%	97%	96%	93%	94%
Government Equalities Office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77%
HM Treasury	99%	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%	98%	99%	99%
Home Office #	84%	83%	82%	78%	73%	65%	67%	68%	81%
Ministry of Defence #	86%	82%	86%	82%	66%	69%	49%	53%	55%
Ministry of Justice #	71%	65%	63%	51%	60%	71%	77%	81%	81%
Northern Ireland Office	81%	84%	93%	95%	97%	84%	99%	90%	95%
Scotland Office	*	89%	96%	68%	53%	67%	56%	80%	73%
Wales Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

TABLE B continued

Proportion of non-routine information requests received that were answered "in time", by quarter, since 1 January 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008				2009				2010
	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
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Central Office of Information	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Charity Commission	90%	97%	98%	95%	99%	89%	91%	95%	93%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	-	-	-	-	36%	59%	71%	85%	64%
Crown Prosecution Service	99%	100%	97%	100%	99%	98%	96%	99%	96%
Debt Management Office ²	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	*	*	*
Food Standards Agency	100%	100%	*	100%	100%	97%	100%	97%	91%
Health and Safety Executive	90%	92%	91%	91%	94%	93%	92%	92%	93%
HM Land Registry	*	97%	96%	88%	94%	80%	97%	94%	96%
HM Revenue and Customs	77%	77%	79%	87%	88%	83%	85%	88%	89%
National Archives [^]	96%	97%	95%	96%	98%	98%	97%	99%	98%
National Savings and Investments	100%	94%	*	*	94%	100%	100%	*	96%
Office for National Statistics	96%	*	97%	96%	91%	93%	94%	100%	100%
Office for Standards in Education	95%	95%	96%	96%	98%	97%	99%	95%	97%
Office of Fair Trading	94%	97%	100%	98%	96%	95%	96%	94%	98%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	89%	100%	97%	86%	91%	77%	95%	87%	97%
Office of Rail Regulation	98%	96%	100%	98%	97%	92%	100%	98%	94%
Ordnance Survey	88%	85%	83%	93%	95%	98%	97%	98%	100%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	76%	77%	92%	84%	97%	88%	90%	92%	75%
Serious Fraud Office	*	92%	*	100%	85%	63%	38%	96%	88%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	99%	100%	99%	100%	98%	100%	99%	97%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	*	87%	100%	*	56%	74%	100%	77%	*

- Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

[^] - 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.

¹ - Figures up to and including Q1 2009 are for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. Please see Appendix B for more information.

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Notes

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:

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Freedom of Information Act is extended to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest.

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Environmental Information Regulations is extended because of the complexity or volume of the request.

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 this calculation.

TABLE C

Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008				2009				2010
	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
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	58%	59%	57%	57%	56%	55%	55%	55%	54%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	57%	57%	56%	55%	55%	56%	54%	55%	53%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	59%	61%	59%	59%	59%	55%	57%	55%	57%
<i>Departments of State</i>									
Attorney General's Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Cabinet Office	25%	25%	31%	23%	27%	23%	29%	39%	24%
Communities and Local Government	62%	57%	64%	78%	68%	72%	69%	78%	77%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ¹	40%	40%	39%	25%	31%	40%	46%	47%	51%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	59%	76%	63%	72%	69%	60%	70%	75%	72%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	63%	55%	60%	56%	60%	68%	66%	66%	64%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	66%	60%	65%	75%	66%	71%	69%	65%	62%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	*	66%	62%	75%	65%	-	-	-	-
Department for International Development	63%	67%	72%	89%	66%	64%	66%	51%	52%
Department for Transport #	73%	71%	69%	73%	76%	65%	70%	73%	74%
Department for Work and Pensions #	73%	73%	68%	77%	67%	64%	64%	63%	55%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	-	-	-	39%	36%	48%	50%	46%	46%
Department of Health	70%	74%	73%	65%	68%	69%	75%	76%	70%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	52%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	34%	31%	35%	25%	28%	33%	30%	33%	26%
Government Equalities Office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77%
HM Treasury	33%	46%	46%	48%	41%	60%	52%	56%	50%
Home Office #	46%	51%	44%	47%	40%	41%	40%	50%	47%
Ministry of Defence #	70%	66%	67%	59%	59%	61%	44%	45%	46%
Ministry of Justice #	31%	33%	37%	33%	40%	36%	31%	26%	28%
Northern Ireland Office	42%	41%	57%	48%	65%	53%	56%	43%	45%
Scotland Office	*	42%	*	54%	59%	67%	43%	74%	55%
Wales Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

TABLE C continued

Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008				2009				2010
	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
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Central Office of Information	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Charity Commission	66%	44%	51%	60%	65%	56%	66%	64%	66%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	-	-	-	-	69%	58%	77%	44%	66%
Crown Prosecution Service	46%	36%	33%	48%	56%	48%	62%	66%	60%
Debt Management Office ²	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	*	*	*
Food Standards Agency	45%	52%	*	19%	36%	40%	38%	15%	39%
Health and Safety Executive	49%	50%	54%	55%	51%	55%	52%	50%	53%
HM Land Registry	*	93%	96%	95%	97%	95%	97%	88%	91%
HM Revenue and Customs	50%	53%	56%	63%	67%	50%	45%	49%	53%
National Archives	77%	85%	67%	64%	71%	60%	63%	59%	56%
National Savings and Investments	92%	81%	*	*	94%	74%	84%	*	64%
Office for National Statistics	*	*	64%	*	63%	*	70%	60%	77%
Office for Standards in Education	47%	60%	44%	48%	45%	46%	65%	64%	61%
Office of Fair Trading	25%	27%	17%	20%	22%	21%	34%	35%	41%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	64%	77%	*	*	62%	54%	77%	70%	67%
Office of Rail Regulation	83%	75%	68%	69%	78%	87%	74%	78%	82%
Ordnance Survey	85%	80%	84%	72%	63%	66%	71%	76%	100%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	57%	53%	*	72%	68%	67%	77%	80%	72%
Serious Fraud Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	48%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	68%	74%	75%	67%	29%	63%	23%	30%	37%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	*	*	*	*	73%	68%	80%	*	*

- Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

1 - Figures up to and including Q1 2009 are for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. Please see Appendix B for more information.

Notes

"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.

Appendix A – Important 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 Fol 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 only to **the “non-routine” information requests** that government departments have received. 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.

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 handing of information requests.

As a result 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 reflect the management and implementation of the FOI Act by each monitored body and comparisons between Departments can be compared on this basis.

In summary, it is important to note that:

- (i) These statistics only cover “non-routine” information requests, and do 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.**

Uses 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 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 bodies included in the figures.

Appendix B – 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 May 2010. 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 44 government bodies, including all major departments of state (i.e. Ministerial departments).

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 (NMGDs) and excludes Executive Agencies, although these classifications are not mutually exclusive and periodic “Machinery of Government” changes make it difficult to define the list precisely.

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 first quarter of 2010.

Departments of State

- Attorney General’s Office
- Cabinet Office
- Communities and Local Government
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- 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
Government Equalities Office
HM Treasury
Home Office
Ministry of Defence
Ministry of Justice
Northern Ireland Office
Scotland Office
Wales Office

Other monitored bodies

Central Office of Information
Charity Commission
Child Maintenance and Enforcement 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 (OFSTED)
Office of Fair Trading
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)
Office of Rail Regulation
Ordnance Survey
Royal Mint
Rural Payments Agency
Serious Fraud Office
Treasury Solicitor's Department
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)

Notes

1. The following departmental changes occurred between the beginning of January 2008 and the end of March 2010, the period covered by the in-year performance and volume tables (Tables A, B and C) in this bulletin.

The **Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)** was created on 3 October 2008, bringing together responsibilities previously held by BERR and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The Q4 2008 figures for DECC relate to information requests received by the department between 3 October 2008 and 31 December 2008. Information requests relating to these responsibilities received on 1 and 2 October are counted under BERR or Defra as appropriate.

The **Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (CMEC)** was created in October 2008, and has assumed responsibility for the Child Support Agency (CSA), previously an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) whose requests were included within the DWP statistics. Requests to CMEC in Q4 2008 were included under the figures for DWP. Requests to CMEC are separately identified for the first time in the Q1 2009 statistics.

The **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)** was created on 5 June 2009, bringing together the responsibilities previously held by BERR and DIUS. The Q2 statistics for BIS include requests received by BERR and DIUS between 1 April and 4 June. The figures in Tables A, B and C for earlier quarters relate to requests received by BERR.

The **Government Equalities Office (GEO)** was created in October 2007. Figures for requests received by the GEO have been included in the statistics in Q1 2010 for the first time. Requests to the GEO were not included in the statistics up to and including Q4 2009. The GEO's inclusion should therefore be borne in mind when comparing 2010 data for the Departments of State and all monitored bodies groups with earlier quarters. However, the small volume of requests received by the GEO in Q1 (30 requests) means that the GEO constitutes a very small proportion of the total requests received by these groups as a whole, and so direct comparisons with earlier quarters can still be made

2. Cabinet Office figures include requests that were addressed to 10 Downing Street.
3. The statistics on requests received by the Debt Management Office (DMO) have been counted on a different basis from Q1 2009 onwards compared to earlier quarters. It was identified that the figures for 2008 and earlier years included a significant number of public enquiries which do not fall under the definition of "non-routine" used for these monitoring statistics. For Q1 2009 onwards, the DMO's figures only report on "non-routine" information requests as required, but it has not been possible to revise figures for previous quarters. This definitional difference should be borne in mind when comparing DMO's statistics since Q1 2009 with those for earlier periods.
4. 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.

Department for Transport

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- Driving Standards Agency
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
- Government Cars Despatch Agency
- Highways Agency
- Marine and Coastguard Agency
- Vehicle Certification Agency
- Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

Department for Work and Pensions

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- Appeals Agency
- Disability Carers Service
- Jobcentre plus
- Pension Service
- Rent Service

Department for Culture Media and Sport

Figures include requests received by the Royal Parks Agency.

Home Office

From 2006 onwards, figures include requests received by the Criminal Records Bureau, the Borders and Immigration Agency, and the UK Passport Service. The latter agency was absorbed within the Identity and Passport Service from 1 April 2006. Previously-supplied figures for the year 2005 only included requests received by the Home Office itself.

Ministry of Defence

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- ABRO (Army Base Repair Organisation) (Trading Fund)
- Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency
- Army Training and Recruiting Agency
- British Forces Post Office
- Defence Analytical Services Agency
- Defence Aviation Repair Agency (Trading Fund)
- Defence Bills Agency
- Defence Communications Services Agency
- Defence Estates
- Defence Medical Education and Training Agency
- Defence Procurement Agency
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Trading Fund)
- Defence Storage and Distribution Agency
- Defence Transport and Movements Agency
- Defence Vetting Agency

Disposal Services Agency
Duke of York's Royal Military School
Met Office (Trading Fund)
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency
Pay and Personnel Agency
RAF Training Group Defence Agency
Service Children's Education
UK Hydrographic Office (Trading Fund)
Veterans Agency

Ministry of Justice

Figures include requests received by HM Court Service where they were referred to the department's Data Access and Compliance Unit.

Explanatory notes

1. The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling by central government bodies of information requests received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol 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.
2. The Fol 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 Fol Act. Further information is available at:

www.foi.gov.uk/index.htm

3. The (amended) EIRs also came into force on 1 January 2005, to coincide with the Fol 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 their website at:
www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/policy/opengov/eir/index.htm
4. These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to MoJ in May 2010. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 January to 31 March 2010. The collection of monitoring data began on the 21st working day after the last day of this period (i.e. on 29 April 2010), since 20 working days is the statutory deadline for public authorities to respond to information requests under both the Fol Act and the EIRs.
5. Only “non-routine” information requests are counted in these statistics. Important notes on the scope and consistency of these statistics are given in **Appendix A**.
6. These statistics cover a total of 44 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 Q1 2010 is shown in **Appendix B**.

7. This is the twenty-first quarterly statistical bulletin on the implementation of the FoI Act. This publication has been prepared jointly by the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division and the Information Directorate of the Ministry of Justice.

Symbols and conventions

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

- = Not applicable
- 0 = Nil

Contact points for further information

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:

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Other queries about the Freedom of Information Act 2000 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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