



Ministry of
JUSTICE



Tribunals Service

Social Security and Child Support Statistics: 1 April 2010 to 31 January 2011

Statistical Notice

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Contents

Introduction	2
Key Findings	3
Commentary	4
Explanatory notes	9

Introduction

This Statistical Notice presents information on the activity of the Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) tribunal for the period, 1 April 2010 to 31 January 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. This Statistical Notice has been produced in response to the growing interest and to inform debate. It should be noted that information for October 2010 to January 2011 is provisional management information and may be amended when Official Statistics are published. This will be published monthly until the end of August 2011 when we will review the need for monthly publication.

Quarterly official statistics for the Tribunals Service, for April to September 2010 have been published and are available at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/quart-stats-tribunals.htm>.

Iain Bell

Chief Statistician

Ministry of Justice

Key Findings

Social Security and Child Support had 344,100 receipts between April 2010 and January 2011, an increase of 28% over the same period in the previous year. There has been a 36% increase in the number of disposals by this jurisdiction from 222,300 in April 2009 - January 2010, to 302,700 in April 2010 – January 2011.

Receipts and Disposals

- Having reached a peak of 40,100 in August 2010, the number of SSCS receipts fell month on month until December 2010.
- The number of disposals has been generally rising since December 2009, with a peak of 35,200 in November 2010.
- In January 2011, the number of disposals exceeded receipts for the first time since April 2009.
- For Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefit (IB) specifically:
 - After month on month rises, the number of ESA/IB receipts has gone down each month from August 2010 until December 2010.
 - Disposals have been generally increasing since June 2009, reaching a peak of 19,800 in November 2010.
 - In November 2010 and January 2011, the number of ESA/IB disposals outstripped receipts. In December 2010, disposals were at similar levels to receipts.

Caseload Outstanding

- At 31 January, 2011, the caseload outstanding for SSCS was 193,500, an increase of 59% on the number at 31 January of the previous year.
- For ESA and IB cases, as disposals have exceeded receipts in two of the last three months, the numbers outstanding seem to have levelled off.

Clearances and Timeliness

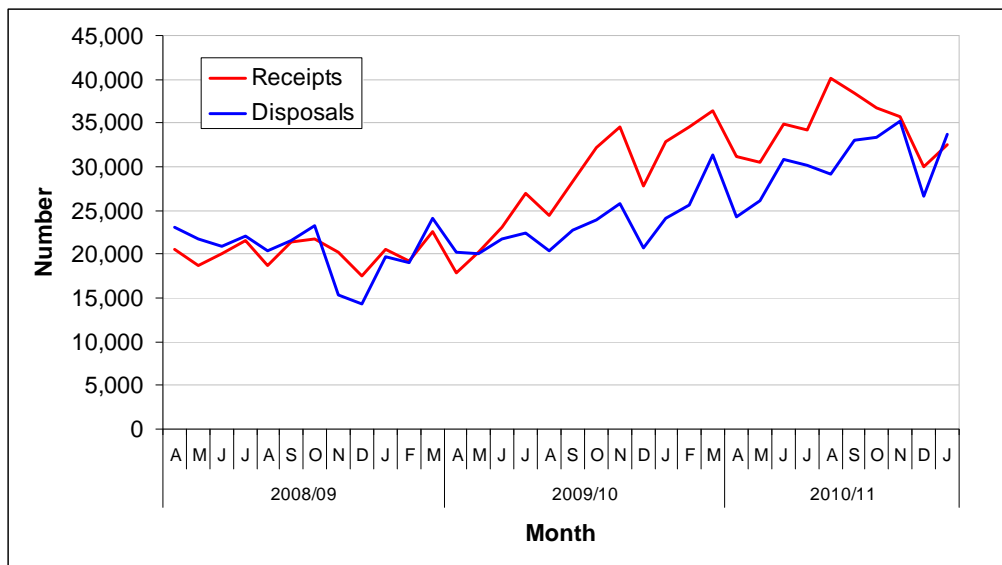
- The average clearance time (from receipt to disposal) has been increasing over the last couple of years. In January 2011, this average was 21.75 weeks.

Commentary

Receipts and Disposals (Tables 1.1 and 2.1)

1. The Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) tribunal had 344,100 receipts in the period 1 April 2010 – January 2011 – more than half of all receipts for the Tribunals Service. Receipts to SSCS have generally been increasing over the last couple of years. Having reached a peak of 40,100 in August 2010, the number of receipts fell month on month until December 2010. There were 32,500 receipts in January 2011, an increase on the December figure, but this was still lower than monthly receipts for the previous 6 months.

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



Source: TS monthly returns

2. Between 1 April 2010 and 31 January 2011, SSCS disposed of 302,700 cases - an increase of 36% on the number disposed of in the same period of the previous year.

3. **Figure 1** shows the trend in both receipts and disposals. The number of disposals has been generally rising since December 2009, with a peak of 35,200 in November 2010. In January 2011, the number of disposals exceeded receipts for the first time since April 2009, with 33,700 disposals and 32,500 receipts.

Receipts and Disposals by benefit type (Tables 1.1 and 2.1)

4. Of those 344,100 cases received between April 2010 and January 2011:

- 55% referred to Employment Support Allowance (ESA)/Incapacity Benefit (IB);
- 20% were for Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance (DLA/AA);
- 11% were for Job Seeker's Allowance.

5. The rise in SSCS receipts over recent years has been in response to the introduction of Employment Support Allowance in October 2008 to replace Incapacity Benefit. In the period 1 April 2010 to 31 January 2011, SSCS had 190,500 receipts for these benefit types – 37% more than in the same period in 2009-10.

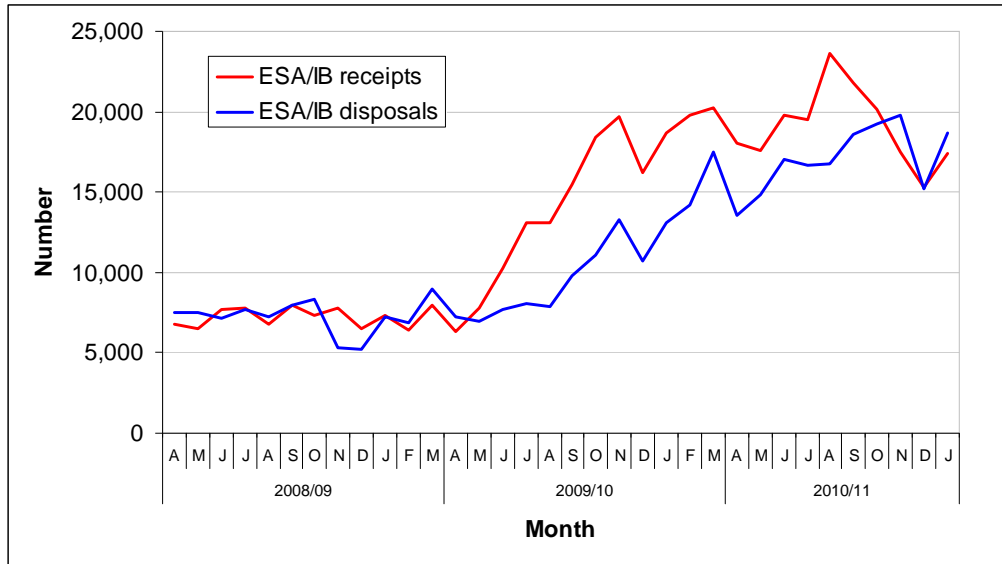
6. Sizeable monthly increases in ESA/IB receipts were seen from June 2009, where the number of receipts in that month was 10,200. The number generally continued to rise until August 2010, reaching a peak of 23,600 – 59% of all SSCS receipts for that month. Since August, the number of ESA/IB receipts has gone down each month until December 2010. There was a slight increase in January, where there were 17,400 receipts.

7. Examining the other benefit types, there has been a rise in the number of receipts for Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA). In the period April 2010 – January 2011, there were 37,600 JSA receipts (up 52% on the same period of the previous year).

8. In the year to date to January 2011, 170,300 ESA/IB cases have been disposed of – 78% more than the 95,600 disposals in the same period of the previous year.

9. Similarly to receipts, the number of ESA/IB disposals has been generally increasing since June 2009, reaching a peak of 19,800 in November 2010. In that month and in January 2011, the number of 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 January 2011



Source: TS monthly returns

Outcome of hearings (Table 2.2)

10. 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 year to date to January 2011, there were 220,200 hearing clearances – 32% more than in the same period of the previous year. Of these, 35% were found in favour of the appellant.

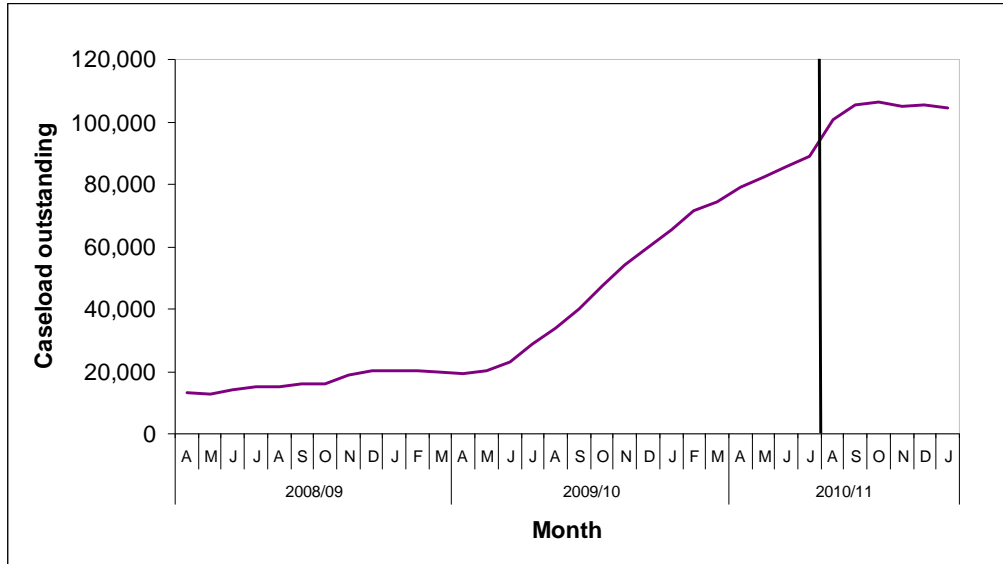
Caseload outstanding (Table 3.1)

11. At 31 January, 2011, the caseload outstanding was 193,500, an increase of 59% on the number at 31 January of the previous year. Over half – 54% is in the “04 Tribunal category”, which is where ESA and IB cases are predominantly recorded. Examining just that category, the outstanding caseload was 104,500 at 31 January 2011 as compared with 65,300 at 31 January 2010.

12. Figure 3 shows significant rises in the caseload outstanding (for the “04 Tribunal Category”) around the time that receipts of ESA/IB started to increase. As disposals have exceeded receipts in two of the last three months, the numbers outstanding seem to have levelled off.

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

Figure 3: Caseload Outstanding for “04 Tribunal Category” April 2008 to July 2010, and for all ESA/IB Caseload Outstanding from August 2010



Source: TS monthly returns

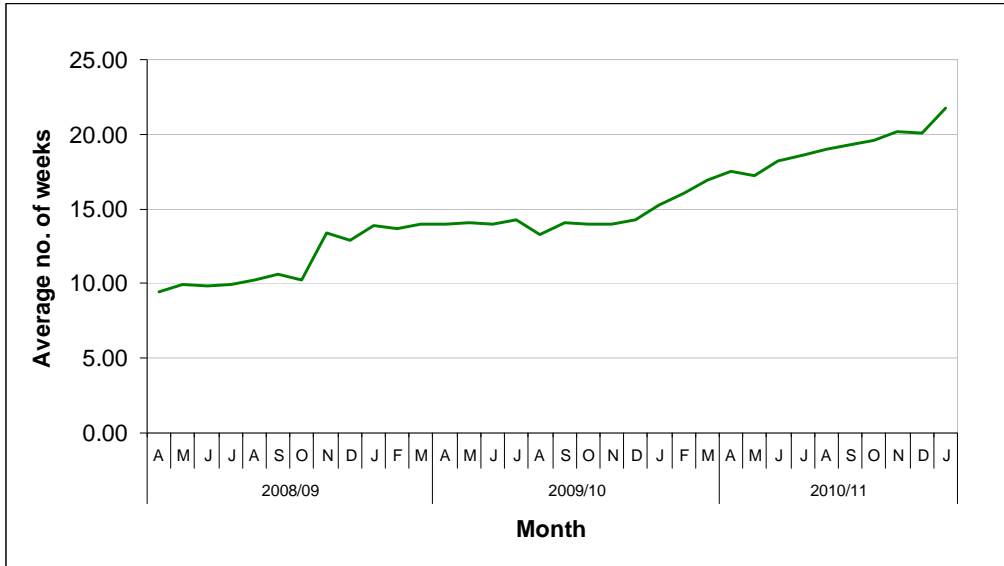
Performance (Table 4.1)

13. The performance indicator for SSCS is :

“The percentage of appeals where the final outcome is promulgated within sixteen weeks of receipt at SSCS” – against a 75% target.

14. In the year to date to January 2011, performance was 47% against the 75% target. An alternative measure of timeliness has been examined showing the average amount of time (in weeks) taken 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 January 2011, this average was 21.75 weeks.

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



Explanatory notes

Data quality and sources

Information presented in this report is drawn from administrative sources. It should be noted that information for October 2010 to January 2011 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 a 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 is no Tribunal judgement.

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) 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 and withheld 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.

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

Contact points for further information

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

Email: press.office@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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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

Table 1.1 SSCS Receipts by Benefit Type

Benefit	2009-10					2010-11				Number
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Q1 ^P	Q2 ^P	Q3 ^P	Jan ^P	
	Attendance Allowance	790	1,000	980	1,100	3,900	860	1,100	1,100	330
Disability Living Allowance	15,900	16,900	18,800	20,100	71,700	17,300	21,000	21,400	6,300	
Bereavement Benefit	140	140	150	120	530	120	110	140	39	
Carer's Allowance	260	380	260	210	1,100	310	440	420	120	
Child Benefit Lone Parent	340	490	350	420	1,600	340	640	480	150	
Child Support Allowance	1,100	1,000	940	1,100	4,200	940	930	920	270	
Tax Credits	390	340	300	550	1,600	710	720	670	240	
Credits (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	
COEG	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0	
Compensation Recovery Unit	83	73	120	94	370	75	87	100	30	
Housing/Council Tax	3,100	3,200	3,100	3,100	12,500	3,100	3,300	3,000	910	
Disability Working Allowance	-	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	0	
Employment Support Allowance	10,100	29,000	41,100	46,500	126,800	46,000	55,700	44,900	14,900	
Health in Pregnancy Grant	0	120	270	220	610	120	93	50	37	
Home Responsibilities Protection	-	-	12	10	25	7	6	-	5	
Incapacity Benefit	14,200	12,600	13,100	12,200	52,200	9,400	9,100	8,000	2,500	
Income Support	3,900	4,100	3,800	4,200	16,000	3,900	4,000	4,000	990	
Industrial Death Benefit	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	700	
Job Seekers Allowance	6,900	7,300	7,600	9,300	31,100	8,800	11,500	12,900	4,400	
Lookalikes	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	67	64	54	69	250	57	71	57	8	
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	16	19	31	14	80	17	42	23	6	
Penalty Proceedings	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	
Pensions credit	400	370	460	460	1,700	330	360	390	140	
Retirement Pension	250	160	190	220	810	220	190	270	88	
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	33	32	29	36	130	26	23	42	13	
Social Fund	1,400	1,200	970	1,100	4,700	1,300	1,000	1,200	390	
Vaccine Damage Appeals	0	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	
Total	61,100	79,800	94,600	103,800	339,200	96,500	112,600	102,500	32,500	

Source: SSCS Gaps 2 database

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

.. Not available

~Small Value

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Table 2.1 SSCS Disposals by Benefit Type

Benefit	2009-10					2010-11			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Q1 ^p	Q2 ^p	Q3 ^p	Jan ^p
Attendance Allowance	880	920	910	840	3,500	850	850	850	320
Disability Living Allowance	17,500	17,000	15,500	15,500	65,400	15,500	16,200	15,100	5,500
Bereavement Benefit	120	150	130	120	520	110	100	110	45
Carer's Allowance	320	340	280	260	1,200	220	340	380	130
Child Benefit Lone Parent	450	450	380	370	1,700	340	440	480	140
Child Support Allowance	1,200	1,200	1,000	880	4,300	860	870	860	320
Tax Credits	320	430	330	350	1,400	510	690	730	260
Credits (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
COEG	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Compensation Recovery Unit	96	88	89	86	360	72	79	100	21
Housing/Council Tax benefit	3,300	3,300	3,100	3,200	12,900	2,800	3,000	3,100	1,100
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	15,700
Health in Pregnancy Grant	0	50	140	230	420	160	130	83	31
Home Responsibilities Protection	-	-	-	10	16	7	11	-	-
Incapacity Benefit	19,500	14,400	11,600	11,200	56,800	10,100	9,500	8,400	3,000
Income Support	5,300	4,700	4,000	3,800	17,700	3,400	3,800	4,100	1,400
Industrial Death Benefit	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	720
Job Seekers Allowance	6,900	7,600	6,900	7,500	28,800	7,400	9,900	11,400	4,400
Lookalikes	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-
Maternity Benefit/Allowances	65	68	54	54	240	58	68	60	14
Others (Extinct/rare Benefits)	23	21	14	20	78	17	14	30	-
Penalty Proceedings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Pensions Credit	430	420	370	430	1,600	360	380	430	150
Retirement Pension	260	220	160	200	850	190	190	210	88
Severe Disablement Benefit/Allowance	41	32	24	22	120	26	27	36	8
Social Fund	1,400	1,300	990	980	4,700	980	1,200	1,000	430
Vaccine Damage Appeals	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	0
Total	62,100	65,600	70,500	81,000	279,300	81,200	92,500	95,200	33,700

Rounded Number

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 SCS Outcomes at Hearing by Benefit Type

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

Source: SCS Gaps 2 database

Source:

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable

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¹ The total number of cases cleared at hearing includes some withdrawals. Thus, it is not the total of those decisions in favour and those upheld.

² Decision in favour of the appellant

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

Table 3.1 SSCS Caseload Outstanding ¹

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10					2010-11			
	Q2	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2009-10 Total	Q1 ^p	Q2 ^p	Q3 ^p	Jan ^p
Social Security and Child Support	40,100	51,700	68,500	85,400	112,600	138,800	138,800	158,400	182,600	193,400	193,500

Number

Source: TS Quarterly Reconciled Tables

Figures may not add to totals because of rounding

. Not applicable (data was not collected)

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¹ As on the last day of the period

Table 4.1 SCS Performance Indicators

Percentage												
	PI Description	Period	Target	2009-10					2010-11			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1 ^p	Q2 ^p	Q3 ^p	Jan ^p
Social Security and Child Support	The percentage of appeals where the first hearing takes place within 14 weeks of the receipt at SCS	Pre 04/2010	75%	66	67	60	46	59	.	.		
	The percentage of appeals where the final outcome is promulgated within 16 weeks of the receipt at SCS	Post 04/2010	75%	.	.	.	.	.	48	46	47	46

Source: TS Quarterly Reconciled Tables

. Not applicable (data was not collected)
 .. Not available

p Provisional

¹ Promulgation is the formal publication of the decision