

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Statistics on implementation in central government Q2: April - June 2010

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

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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 April to June 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 March 2010, are available via the links on the following pages of the Ministry of Justice and Freedom of Information websites:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/freedomofinformationquarterly.htm>

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090608181153/http://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 and Table A]

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 10,286 requests were received - an increase of 3 per cent on the second quarter of 2009 (Q2).

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

Departments of State reported receiving 6,339 “non-routine” information requests during the Q2 of 2010 – an increase of 10 per cent on the second quarter of 2009. Other monitored bodies received 3,947 requests – a decrease of 6 per cent compared to the second quarter of 2009.

There were 296 requests handled under the amended Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) which came into force on 1 January 2005 – an increase of 57 percent compared to the same quarter in 2009 although a decrease of 18 per cent compared to the previous quarter.

Timeliness [see Table 2 and Table B]

During Q2 of 2010, 90 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 is higher than in the previous quarter and the corresponding quarter of 2009.

Figures for individual Departments of State ranged from 69 per cent (Ministry of Defence) to 100 per cent (Department of Health and Department for Culture, Media and Sport). For the 20 Departments of State who received more than 20 requests in the quarter, 12 processed more than 90 per cent of requests “in time”².

Outcomes [see Table 3 and Table C]

Of all “resolvable” requests received during Q2 of 2010 (i.e. requests where it was possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought), 58 per cent were granted in full, higher than both the previous quarter and the corresponding quarter of 2009.

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 – see Appendix A for further information

Figures for individual Departments of State ranged from 31 per cent (Ministry of Justice) to 81 per cent (Department for Education)². However, caution should be taken in reading too much into these differences as it at least in part reflects the nature of requests received. For example, Ministry of Justice receives a large number of requests which relate to individual court cases which are exempt under the Act and therefore with-held in full.

Commentary

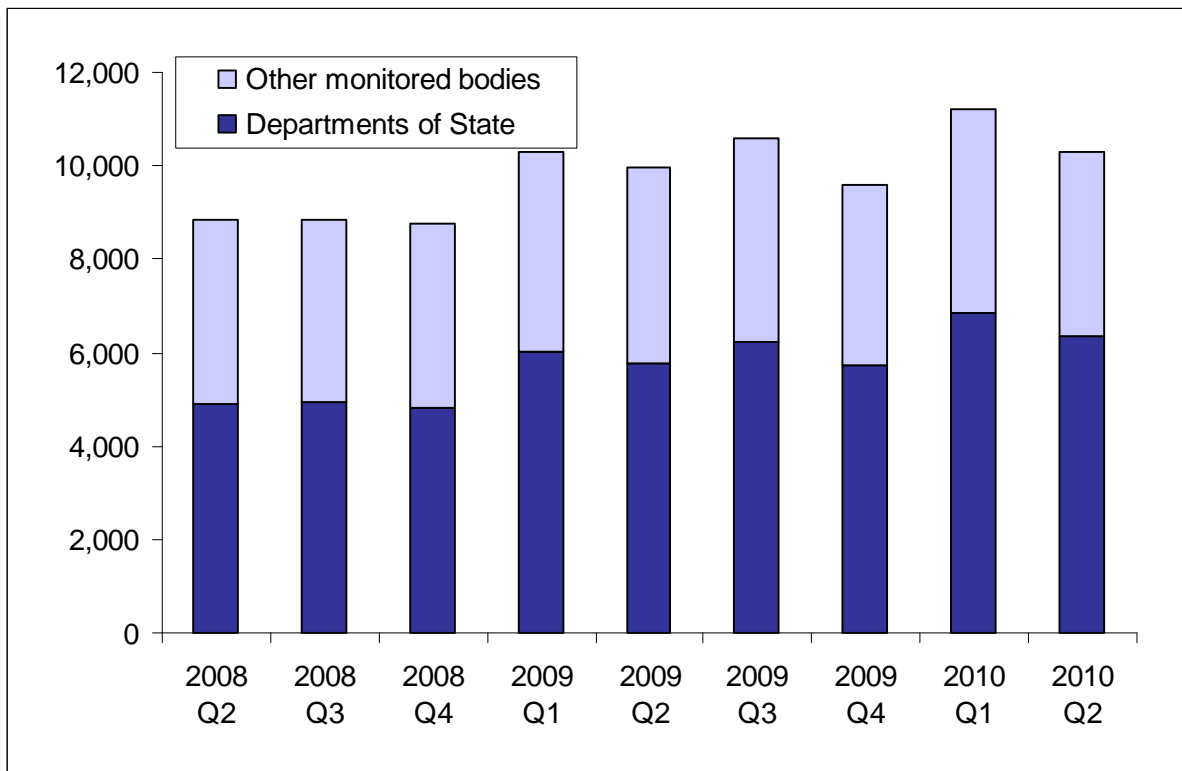
Number of requests [see Table 1 and Table A]

Departments of State reported receiving a total of 6,339 information requests under the Freedom of Information Act and the associated Environmental Information Regulations during the quarter from 1 April to 30 June 2010 (Q2). Other monitored bodies reported having received 3,947 requests. Across all monitored bodies, therefore, a total of 10,286 requests were reported.

This overall total for Q2 of 2010 is 3 per cent greater than in the corresponding quarter last year (i.e. Q2 of 2009), and 8 per cent less than in the preceding quarter. The number of requests received by Departments of State was 10 per cent more than during the same period last year, while the total received by other monitored bodies decreased by 6 per cent.

Departments of State accounted for 62 per cent of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q2 of 2010. Although the Government Equalities Office was added to the list of monitored bodies from Q1 2010 onwards, the relatively small number of requests it receives each quarter means comparisons with requests volumes in earlier quarters are still possible.

Figure 1: Numbers of FoI requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies, quarterly from Q2 2008



Of the Departments of State, the Ministry of Justice reported having received 805 requests during Q2, the highest departmental total. The other departments that received more than 600 requests were:

- Department for Work and Pensions – 748
- Home Office – 699
- Ministry of Defence – 693
- Department for Transport – 605

Among other monitored bodies, the Health and Safety Executive reported having received 1,656 requests during Q2, while the National Archives received 733. 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 more than 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 296 such requests during the second quarter of 2010, accounting for 2.9 per cent of all requests received.

Of the monitored bodies with requests falling under the EIRs, the Rural Payments Agency, with 73 requests, had the highest total. The other monitored bodies that received more than 40 requests were;

- Department for Transport - 52
- Communities and Local Government - 41

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

A large majority of requests (95 per cent) received during Q2 had been processed by the time monitoring information was collected. Of the 540 requests that were still being processed by the monitored bodies, 76 (14 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;

- 86 per cent of requests received during Q2 of 2010 were sent a response within this standard deadline - up from 84 per cent in Q1 2010)
- 90 per cent of the requests received during Q2 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 89 per cent from Q1 2010.

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 Q2 2010

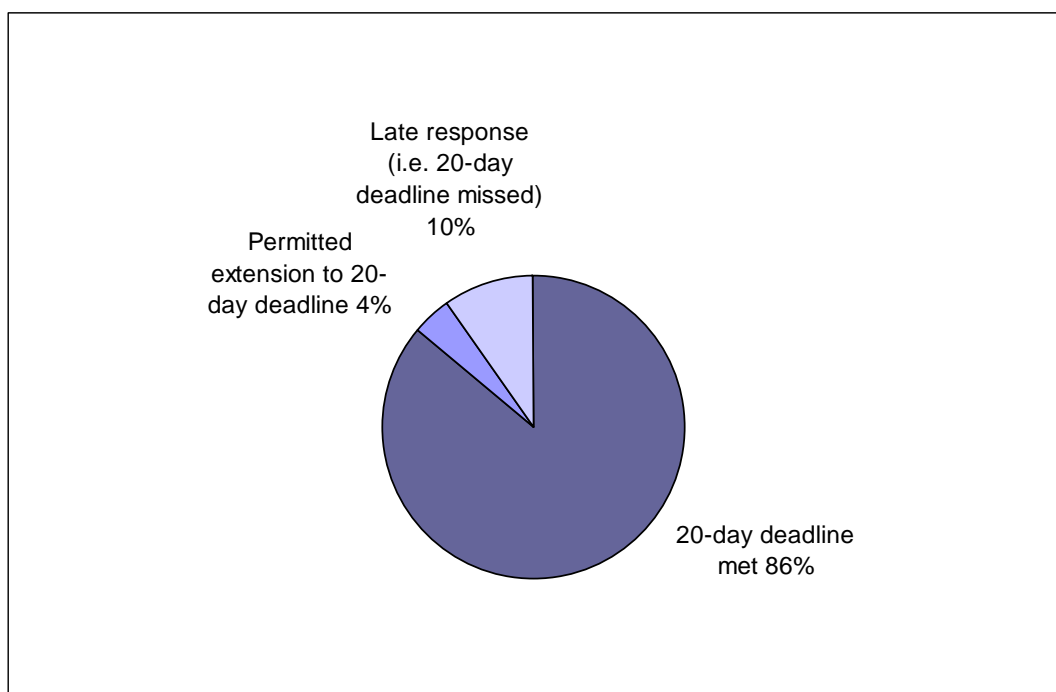
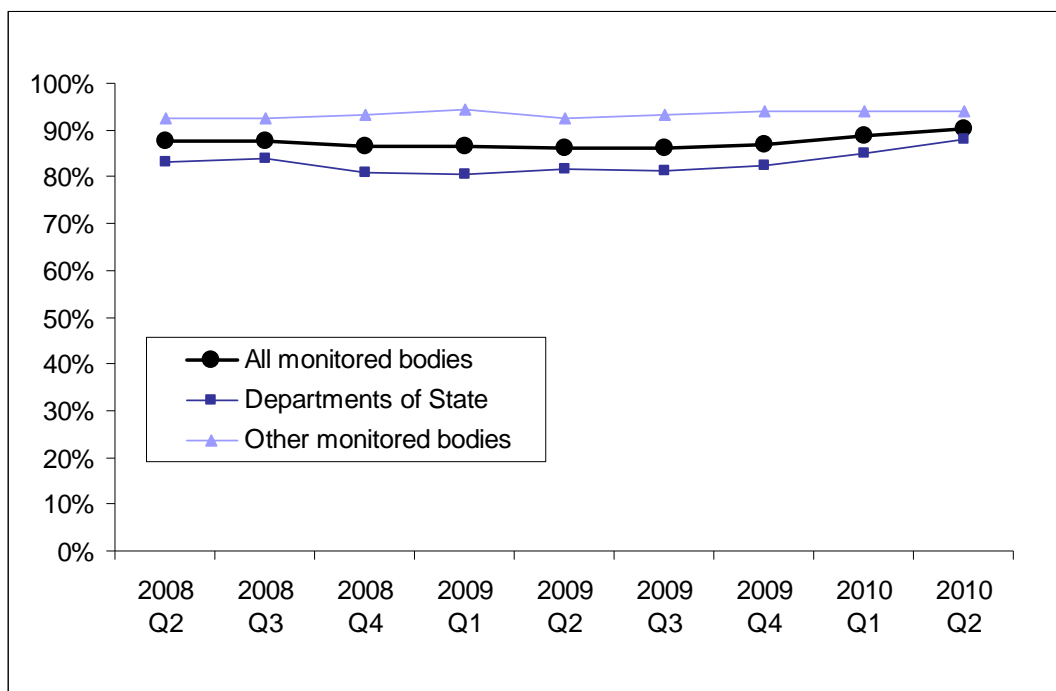


Figure 3: Percentage of FoI requests processed “in time” by Departments of State and other monitored bodies, quarterly from Q2 2008



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

Of the 10,286 requests reported during Q2 of 2010 across all monitored bodies,

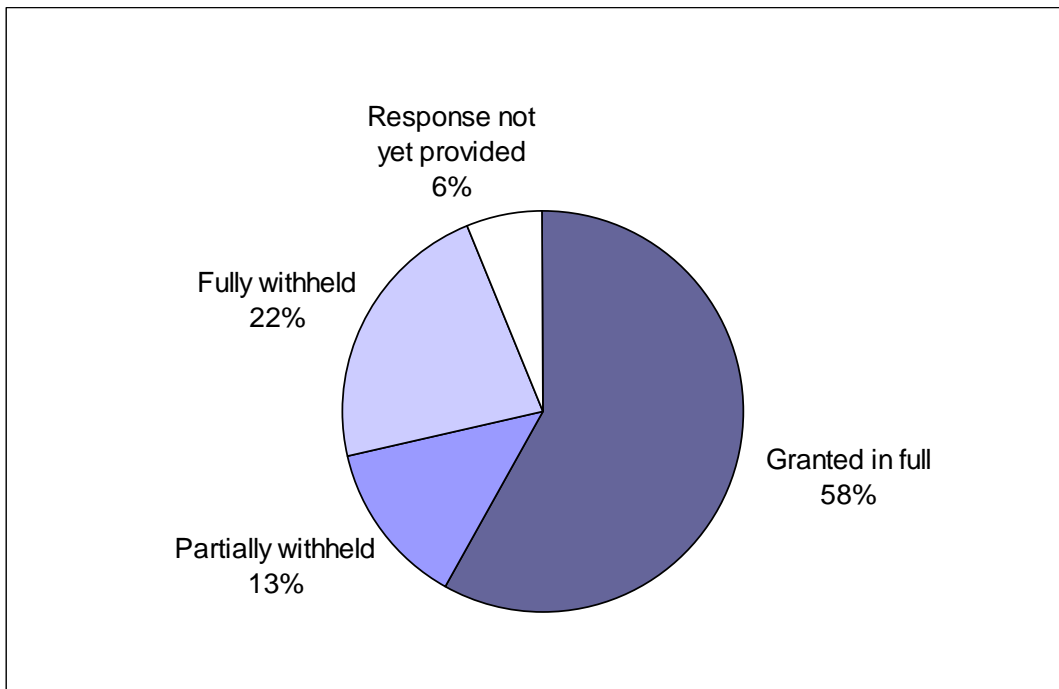
- 76 were “on hold” awaiting a fee payment.
- 2,036 requests sought information that was not held,
- and 701 were responded to with “advice and assistance” because the body handling the request needed further information in order to identify the information being sought.

As a result, the remaining 7,473 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 Q2 of 2010,

- 58 per cent were granted in full, up from 54 per cent in Q1 2010;
- 13 per cent were withheld in part;
- 22 per cent were withheld in full at the time of monitoring;
- 6 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 Q2 2010



Use of exemptions and exceptions [see Table 4]

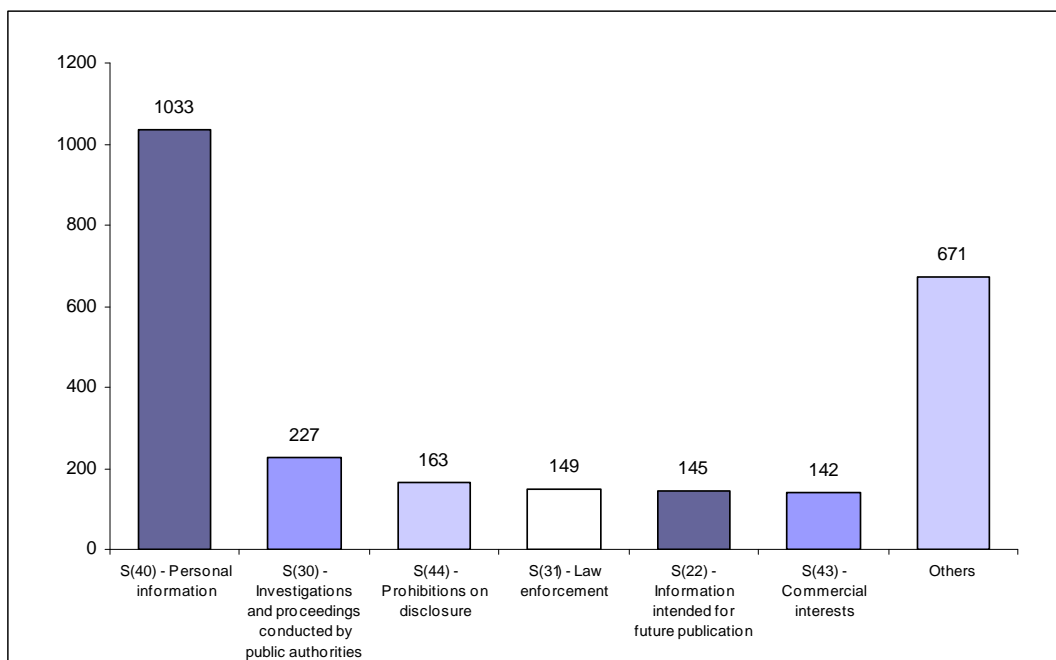
Under the FoI Act, a public authority can only refuse to provide requested information that it holds if:

- 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 2,083 requests were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q2. 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 Q2 2010



The most commonly applied exemptions or exceptions in Q2 2010 were:

- Section 40 of the FoI Act (relating to personal information), which was applied to 1,033 requests,
- Section 30 (investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities), which was applied to 227 requests,
- and Section 44 (prohibitions on disclosure), which was applied to 163 requests.

Departmental name changes

Please refer to note 1 in Appendix B for full details of departmental name changes that have occurred since Q2 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 April - 30 June 2010, and their status at time of monitoring
- Table 2. Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 2010
- Table 3. Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 2010
- Table 4. Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 April - 30 June 2010

In-year performance and volume tables

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

TABLE 1

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 April - 30 June 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	10,286	9,746	76	464	296
TOTAL for Departments of State only	6,339	6,009	1	329	161
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,947	3,737	75	135	135
Departments of State					
Attorney General's Office	33	31	0	2	0
Cabinet Office	235	204	0	31	0
Communities and Local Government	218	209	1	8	41
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	231	213	0	18	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	119	113	0	6	6
Department for Education	220	217	0	3	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	127	121	0	6	34
Department for International Development	104	101	0	3	1
Department for Transport #	605	595	0	10	52
Department for Work and Pensions #	748	728	0	20	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	138	136	0	2	23
Department of Health	465	465	0	0	0
Export Credits Guarantee Department	10	9	0	1	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	250	233	0	17	0
Government Equalities Office	15	15	0	0	0
HM Treasury #	523	518	0	5	1
Home Office #	699	655	0	44	0
Ministry of Defence #	693	564	0	129	0
Ministry of Justice #	805	783	0	22	3
Northern Ireland Office	42	41	0	1	0
Scotland Office	28	27	0	1	0
Wales Office	31	31	0	0	0

TABLE 1 continued

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 April - 30 June 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	12	12	0	0	0
Charity Commission	185	183	0	2	0
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	47	47	0	0	0
Crown Prosecution Service	103	102	0	1	0
Debt Management Office	9	9	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	29	29	0	0	2
Health and Safety Executive	1,656	1,604	0	52	54
HM Land Registry	36	36	0	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	369	362	0	7	2
National Archives	733	589	75	69	1
National Savings and Investments	20	20	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	52	52	0	0	0
Office for Standards in Education	273	273	0	0	0
Office of Fair Trading	118	118	0	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	36	34	0	2	0
Office of Rail Regulation	43	43	0	0	0
Ordnance Survey	17	17	0	0	1
Royal Mint	5	5	0	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	86	86	0	0	73
Serious Fraud Office	20	19	0	1	0
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	79	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	19	18	0	1	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 August 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 April - 30 June 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	10,210	8,793	422	995	86%	90%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	6,338	5,279	293	766	83%	88%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,872	3,514	129	229	91%	94%
Departments of State						
Attorney General's Office	33	29	2	2	88%	94%
Cabinet Office	235	184	23	28	78%	88%
Communities and Local Government	217	200	8	9	92%	96%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	231	190	29	12	82%	95%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	119	105	14	0	88%	100%
Department for Education	220	192	3	25	87%	89%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	127	105	6	16	83%	87%
Department for International Development	104	84	17	3	81%	97%
Department for Transport #	605	557	26	22	92%	96%
Department for Work and Pensions #	748	611	3	134	82%	82%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	138	125	8	5	91%	96%
Department of Health	465	456	9	0	98%	100%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	10	7	0	3	*	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	250	212	32	6	85%	98%
Government Equalities Office	15	10	0	5	*	*
HM Treasury #	523	505	13	5	97%	99%
Home Office #	699	510	48	141	73%	80%
Ministry of Defence #	693	443	32	218	64%	69%
Ministry of Justice #	805	667	13	125	83%	84%
Northern Ireland Office	42	38	2	2	90%	95%
Scotland Office	28	23	1	4	82%	86%
Wales Office	31	26	4	1	84%	97%

TABLE 2 continued

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 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	12	12	0	0	*	*
Charity Commission	185	177	0	8	96%	96%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	47	46	0	1	98%	98%
Crown Prosecution Service	103	94	1	8	91%	92%
Debt Management Office	9	9	0	0	*	*
Food Standards Agency	29	27	2	0	93%	100%
Health and Safety Executive	1,656	1,516	25	115	92%	93%
HM Land Registry	36	33	0	3	92%	92%
HM Revenue and Customs	369	339	1	29	92%	92%
National Archives ^	658	550	85	23	84%	97%
National Savings and Investments	20	17	0	3	*	*
Office for National Statistics	52	52	0	0	100%	100%
Office for Standards in Education	273	270	1	2	99%	99%
Office of Fair Trading	118	108	0	10	92%	92%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	36	29	3	4	81%	89%
Office of Rail Regulation	43	29	9	5	67%	88%
Ordnance Survey	17	17	0	0	*	*
Royal Mint	5	3	0	2	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	86	72	1	13	84%	85%
Serious Fraud Office	20	19	0	1	*	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	77	1	1	97%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	19	18	0	1	*	*

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 April - 30 June 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	10,210	701	2,036	7,473	4,341	991	1,677	464	58%	22%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	6,338	497	1,259	4,582	2,775	532	946	329	61%	21%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,872	204	777	2,891	1,566	459	731	135	54%	25%
Departments of State										
Attorney General's Office	33	0	26	7	4	0	1	2	*	*
Cabinet Office	235	30	56	149	56	7	55	31	38%	37%
Communities and Local Government	217	0	25	192	140	29	15	8	73%	8%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	231	9	59	163	82	28	35	18	50%	21%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	119	16	17	86	60	14	6	6	70%	7%
Department for Education	220	15	19	186	152	12	19	3	82%	10%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	127	6	18	103	69	12	16	6	67%	16%
Department for International Development	104	1	5	98	51	21	23	3	52%	23%
Department for Transport #	605	10	156	439	313	59	57	10	71%	13%
Department for Work and Pensions #	748	13	58	677	490	54	113	20	72%	17%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	138	8	45	85	45	18	20	2	53%	24%
Department of Health	465	14	135	316	222	45	49	0	70%	16%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	10	0	0	10	6	1	2	1	*	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	250	17	41	192	63	65	47	17	33%	24%
Government Equalities Office	15	0	0	15	14	0	1	0	*	*
HM Treasury #	523	90	167	266	187	10	64	5	70%	24%
Home Office #	699	116	150	433	235	55	99	44	54%	23%
Ministry of Defence #	693	16	78	599	387	36	47	129	65%	8%
Ministry of Justice #	805	135	172	498	152	57	267	22	31%	54%
Northern Ireland Office	42	0	13	29	20	1	7	1	69%	24%
Scotland Office	28	0	8	20	13	3	3	1	*	*
Wales Office	31	1	11	19	14	5	0	0	*	*

TABLE 3 continued
Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 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	12	0	4	8	8	0	0	0	*	*
Charity Commission	185	9	20	156	100	33	21	2	64%	13%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	47	4	2	41	23	1	17	0	56%	41%
Crown Prosecution Service	103	6	18	79	39	5	34	1	49%	43%
Debt Management Office	9	0	1	8	7	1	0	0	*	*
Food Standards Agency	29	0	5	24	9	10	5	0	38%	21%
Health and Safety Executive	1,656	58	551	1,047	556	195	244	52	53%	23%
HM Land Registry	36	2	5	29	27	0	2	0	93%	7%
HM Revenue and Customs	369	20	29	320	158	25	130	7	49%	41%
National Archives	658	59	65	534	258	52	155	69	48%	29%
National Savings and Investments	20	0	0	20	11	0	9	0	*	*
Office for National Statistics	52	3	7	42	31	0	11	0	74%	26%
Office for Standards in Education	273	0	40	233	144	51	38	0	62%	16%
Office of Fair Trading	118	17	6	95	29	23	43	0	31%	45%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	36	3	5	28	19	5	2	2	68%	7%
Office of Rail Regulation	43	8	1	34	20	5	9	0	59%	26%
Ordnance Survey	17	3	3	11	6	4	1	0	*	*
Royal Mint	5	0	0	5	3	2	0	0	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	86	9	4	73	66	4	3	0	90%	4%
Serious Fraud Office	20	0	3	17	7	4	5	1	*	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	1	7	71	31	39	1	0	44%	1%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	19	2	1	16	14	0	1	1	*	*

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 April - 30 June 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	973	1,110	2,083
Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of FoI Act²) was applied			
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	119	26	145
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	39	2	41
S(24) - National security	26	0	26
S(26) - Defence	15	2	17
S(27) - International relations	52	1	53
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	8	0	8
S(29) - The economy	2	1	3
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	11	216	227
S(31) - Law enforcement	72	77	149
S(32) - Court records, etc	52	9	61
S(33) - Audit functions	0	4	4
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	1	0	1
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc	125	13	138
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	23	4	27
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc and honours	14	0	14
S(38) - Health and Safety	20	19	39
S(39) - Environmental information	_3	_3	_3
S(40) - Personal information	413	620	1,033
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	37	82	119
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	27	13	40
S(43) - Commercial interests	114	28	142
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	16	147	163
Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	15	4	19
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	5	2	7
4(c) - Too general	2	0	2
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	10	0	10
4(e) - Internal communications	20	0	20
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	5	1	6
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	4	0	4
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	0	0	0
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	1	0	1
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	4	4	8
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	3	0	3
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	0	0	0

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 April 2008

Government body	2008			2009				2010	
	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	8,865	8,825	8,764	10,294	9,964	10,597	9,612	11,199	10,286
TOTAL for Departments of State only	4,879	4,938	4,818	6,019	5,769	6,208	5,736	6,857	6,339
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,986	3,887	3,946	4,275	4,195	4,389	3,876	4,342	3,947
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	19	24	23	19	28	27	28	28	33
Cabinet Office	212	237	228	274	253	261	193	236	235
Communities and Local Government	191	183	174	204	200	237	198	243	218
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ¹	184	223	195	216	269	244	182	279	231
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	131	119	110	176	142	164	122	165	119
Department for Education ²	162	141	112	217	213	251	173	180	220
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	116	121	108	131	145	159	142	143	127
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	39	71	59	74	-	-	-	-	-
Department for International Development	101	60	71	80	70	88	91	92	104
Department for Transport #	518	485	423	586	560	707	629	794	605
Department for Work and Pensions #	368	367	436	533	596	617	600	797	748
Department of Energy and Climate Change	-	-	45	55	54	88	89	171	138
Department of Health	343	345	332	423	485	503	486	510	465
Export Credits Guarantee Department	14	13	20	9	17	12	11	23	10
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	248	275	210	281	231	321	304	311	250
Government Equalities Office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	15
HM Treasury #	447	324	350	446	399	315	291	438	523
Home Office #	510	509	508	643	638	577	637	763	699
Ministry of Defence #	635	685	654	758	670	766	724	738	693
Ministry of Justice #	542	676	670	757	679	732	731	808	805
Northern Ireland Office	50	45	41	65	49	82	59	66	42
Scotland Office	38	23	31	58	52	39	30	30	28
Wales Office	11	12	18	14	19	18	16	12	31

TABLE A continued

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

Government body	2008			2009				2010	
	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Central Office of Information	12	9	10	20	8	14	8	13	12
Charity Commission	114	128	142	142	133	149	133	202	185
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	-	-	-	33	41	59	62	55	47
Crown Prosecution Service	107	116	111	125	139	119	136	135	103
Debt Management Office ³	76	98	92	4	6	6	4	10	9
Food Standards Agency	27	20	29	28	29	36	36	57	29
Health and Safety Executive	1,742	1,559	1,574	1,711	1,669	1,589	1,523	1,562	1,656
HM Land Registry	29	25	24	33	41	29	47	49	36
HM Revenue and Customs	354	316	316	323	355	409	339	391	369
National Archives	823	1,002	950	1,056	885	1,010	787	927	733
National Savings and Investments	36	14	11	33	36	44	18	23	20
Office for National Statistics	17	30	27	32	29	33	37	62	52
Office for Standards in Education	259	225	332	318	317	292	272	314	273
Office of Fair Trading	86	82	61	79	128	162	139	123	118
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	41	31	28	53	39	42	45	60	36
Office of Rail Regulation	56	50	50	63	52	59	61	67	43
Ordnance Survey	53	53	44	37	60	67	41	42	17
Royal Mint	5	4	4	5	9	11	4	8	5
Rural Payments Agency	35	25	38	73	83	84	75	91	86
Serious Fraud Office	25	10	27	27	32	24	23	33	20
Treasury Solicitor's Department	66	69	61	55	69	106	64	98	79
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	23	21	15	25	35	45	22	20	19

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 - Figures up to and including Q1 2010 are for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Please see Appendix B for more information.

3 - 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 April 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008			2009				2010	
	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:
	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	87%	88%	87%	86%	86%	86%	87%	89%	90%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	83%	84%	81%	81%	82%	81%	82%	85%	88%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	92%	93%	93%	95%	93%	93%	94%	94%	94%
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	*	92%	100%	*	96%	96%	96%	96%	94%
Cabinet Office	92%	96%	95%	96%	95%	91%	86%	90%	88%
Communities and Local Government	92%	93%	92%	94%	95%	95%	95%	94%	96%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ¹	88%	90%	77%	77%	76%	79%	85%	95%	95%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	92%	95%	97%	100%	99%	98%	98%	98%	100%
Department for Education ²	92%	92%	91%	87%	87%	80%	77%	91%	89%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	80%	84%	99%	91%	85%	85%	88%	93%	87%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	64%	69%	58%	66%	-	-	-	-	-
Department for International Development	92%	93%	99%	96%	97%	98%	93%	96%	97%
Department for Transport #	87%	88%	92%	90%	90%	94%	95%	94%	96%
Department for Work and Pensions #	56%	62%	75%	77%	75%	79%	79%	77%	82%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	-	-	71%	84%	72%	80%	87%	95%	96%
Department of Health	89%	91%	83%	89%	96%	96%	100%	100%	100%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	96%	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	98%	99%	94%	96%	97%	96%	93%	94%	98%
Government Equalities Office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77%	*
HM Treasury #	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%	98%	99%	99%	99%
Home Office #	83%	82%	78%	73%	65%	67%	68%	81%	80%
Ministry of Defence #	82%	86%	82%	66%	69%	49%	53%	55%	69%
Ministry of Justice #	65%	63%	51%	60%	71%	77%	81%	81%	84%
Northern Ireland Office	84%	93%	95%	97%	84%	99%	90%	95%	95%
Scotland Office	89%	96%	68%	53%	67%	56%	80%	73%	86%
Wales Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	97%

TABLE B continued

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

Government body	2008			2009				2010	
	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Central Office of Information	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Charity Commission	97%	98%	95%	99%	89%	91%	95%	93%	96%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	-	-	-	36%	59%	71%	85%	64%	98%
Crown Prosecution Service	100%	97%	100%	99%	98%	96%	99%	96%	92%
Debt Management Office ³	100%	100%	100%	*	*	*	*	*	*
Food Standards Agency	100%	*	100%	100%	97%	100%	97%	91%	100%
Health and Safety Executive	92%	91%	91%	94%	93%	92%	92%	93%	93%
HM Land Registry	97%	96%	88%	94%	80%	97%	94%	96%	92%
HM Revenue and Customs	77%	79%	87%	88%	83%	85%	88%	89%	92%
National Archives [^]	97%	95%	96%	98%	98%	97%	99%	98%	97%
National Savings and Investments	94%	*	*	94%	100%	100%	*	96%	*
Office for National Statistics	*	97%	96%	91%	93%	94%	100%	100%	100%
Office for Standards in Education	95%	96%	96%	98%	97%	99%	95%	97%	99%
Office of Fair Trading	97%	100%	98%	96%	95%	96%	94%	98%	92%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	100%	97%	86%	91%	77%	95%	87%	97%	89%
Office of Rail Regulation	96%	100%	98%	97%	92%	100%	98%	94%	88%
Ordnance Survey	85%	83%	93%	95%	98%	97%	98%	100%	*
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	77%	92%	84%	97%	88%	90%	92%	75%	85%
Serious Fraud Office	92%	*	100%	85%	63%	38%	96%	88%	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	100%	99%	100%	98%	100%	99%	97%	99%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	87%	100%	*	56%	74%	100%	77%	*	*

- Figures supplied by these departments count requests received by one or more of their agencies, and 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.

2 - Figures up to and including Q1 2010 are for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Please see Appendix B for more information.

3 - 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.

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 April 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008			2009				2010	
	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	59%	57%	57%	56%	55%	55%	55%	54%	58%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	57%	56%	55%	54%	55%	53%	54%	52%	61%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	61%	59%	59%	59%	55%	57%	55%	57%	54%
<i>Departments of State</i>									
Attorney General's Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Cabinet Office	25%	31%	23%	27%	23%	29%	39%	24%	38%
Communities and Local Government	57%	64%	78%	68%	72%	69%	78%	77%	73%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ¹	40%	39%	25%	31%	40%	46%	47%	51%	50%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	55%	60%	56%	60%	68%	66%	66%	64%	70%
Department for Education ²	76%	63%	72%	69%	60%	70%	75%	72%	82%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	60%	65%	75%	66%	71%	69%	65%	62%	67%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	66%	62%	75%	65%	-	-	-	-	-
Department for International Development	67%	72%	89%	66%	64%	66%	51%	52%	52%
Department for Transport #	71%	69%	73%	76%	65%	70%	73%	74%	71%
Department for Work and Pensions #	73%	68%	77%	67%	64%	64%	63%	55%	72%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	-	-	39%	36%	48%	50%	46%	46%	53%
Department of Health	74%	73%	65%	68%	69%	75%	76%	70%	70%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	52%	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	31%	35%	25%	28%	33%	30%	33%	26%	33%
Government Equalities Office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77%	*
HM Treasury #	46%	46%	48%	41%	60%	52%	56%	50%	70%
Home Office #	51%	44%	47%	40%	41%	40%	50%	47%	54%
Ministry of Defence #	66%	67%	59%	59%	61%	44%	45%	46%	65%
Ministry of Justice #	33%	37%	33%	40%	36%	31%	26%	28%	31%
Northern Ireland Office	41%	57%	48%	65%	53%	56%	43%	45%	69%
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 April 2008 (see footnote)

Government body	2008			2009				2010	
	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:
	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Oct–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Central Office of Information	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Charity Commission	44%	51%	60%	65%	56%	66%	64%	66%	64%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission	-	-	-	69%	58%	77%	44%	66%	56%
Crown Prosecution Service	36%	33%	48%	56%	48%	62%	66%	60%	49%
Debt Management Office ³	100%	100%	100%	*	*	*	*	*	*
Food Standards Agency	52%	*	19%	36%	40%	38%	15%	39%	38%
Health and Safety Executive	50%	54%	55%	51%	55%	52%	50%	53%	53%
HM Land Registry	93%	96%	95%	97%	95%	97%	88%	91%	93%
HM Revenue and Customs	53%	56%	63%	67%	50%	45%	49%	53%	49%
National Archives	85%	67%	64%	71%	60%	63%	59%	56%	48%
National Savings and Investments	81%	*	*	94%	74%	84%	*	64%	*
Office for National Statistics	*	64%	*	63%	*	70%	60%	77%	74%
Office for Standards in Education	60%	44%	48%	45%	46%	65%	64%	61%	62%
Office of Fair Trading	27%	17%	20%	22%	21%	34%	35%	41%	31%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	77%	*	*	62%	54%	77%	70%	67%	68%
Office of Rail Regulation	75%	68%	69%	78%	87%	74%	78%	82%	59%
Ordnance Survey	80%	84%	72%	63%	66%	71%	76%	100%	*
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	53%	*	72%	68%	67%	77%	80%	72%	90%
Serious Fraud Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	48%	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	74%	75%	67%	29%	63%	23%	30%	37%	44%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	*	*	*	73%	68%	80%	*	*	*

- Figures supplied by these departments count 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.

2 - Figures up to and including Q1 2010 are for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Please see Appendix B for more information.

3 - 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.

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 effectively count those requests which have been dealt with by each monitored body formally under the FOI Act. As such, the statistics report on how many such requests for information each monitored body has received and how they have implemented the Act’s requirements in providing responses. Direct comparisons between the statistics for different monitored bodies can therefore be made on this basis.

In summary, 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 August 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 Culture, Media and Sport
- Department for Education
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department for International Development
- Department for Transport

Department for Work and Pensions
Department of Energy and Climate Change
Department of Health
Export Credits Guarantee Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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 April 2008 and the end of June 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 were included in the statistics for the first time in Q1 2010. 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 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.

The **Department for Education (DFE)** was formed on 12 May 2010 and is responsible for education and children's services. This wholly replaced the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The figures in Tables A, B and C for earlier quarters relate to requests received by DCSF.

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.

HM Treasury

Figures include requests received by the Office for Budget Responsibility.

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 Courts 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:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/foi-step-by-step.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:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/policy/opengov/eir/index.htm>
4. These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to MoJ in August 2010. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 April to 30 June 2010. The collection of monitoring data began on the 21st working day after the last day of this period (i.e. on 29 July 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 Q2 2010 is shown in **Appendix B**.

7. This is the twenty-second 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:

Information Directorate
Ministry of Justice
6th Floor
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ
Tel: 020 3334 3911
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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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