



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Statistics for Audio Recorded Face-to-face WCAs

December 2012 to February 2014

January 2015

Contents

- Background 3
 - Context 3
- Process Guide 4
- Key Statistics 5
 - Volumes 5
 - Volumes in proportion to WCAs completed 6

Background

Following a recommendation in the first Independent Review of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has made the option of having an audio recorded face-to-face WCA available to claimants. An audio recorded face-to-face WCA is one where an audio recording is made of the assessment by either the Department or in certain circumstances the claimant. Any individual attending a WCA in the UK can request that it be audio recorded.

Context

This data is being published to provide information on the demand and use of audio recording during face-to-face WCAs.

Following Professor Harrington's recommendation in the first Independent Review many stakeholder groups and individuals have called for the universal introduction of audio recorded face-to-face assessments.

The current policy for audio recording of face-to-face assessments is that DWP has asked Atos Healthcare and its successor Maximus to accommodate requests for audio recorded face-to-face assessments, where possible, when such requests are made in advance of the assessment.

There is no legal right to a recorded assessment and it should be noted that DWP has no legal obligation to provide an audio recording service or equipment.

The Department has been offering this audio recording facility since September 2011 but only holds monthly request data from December 2012.

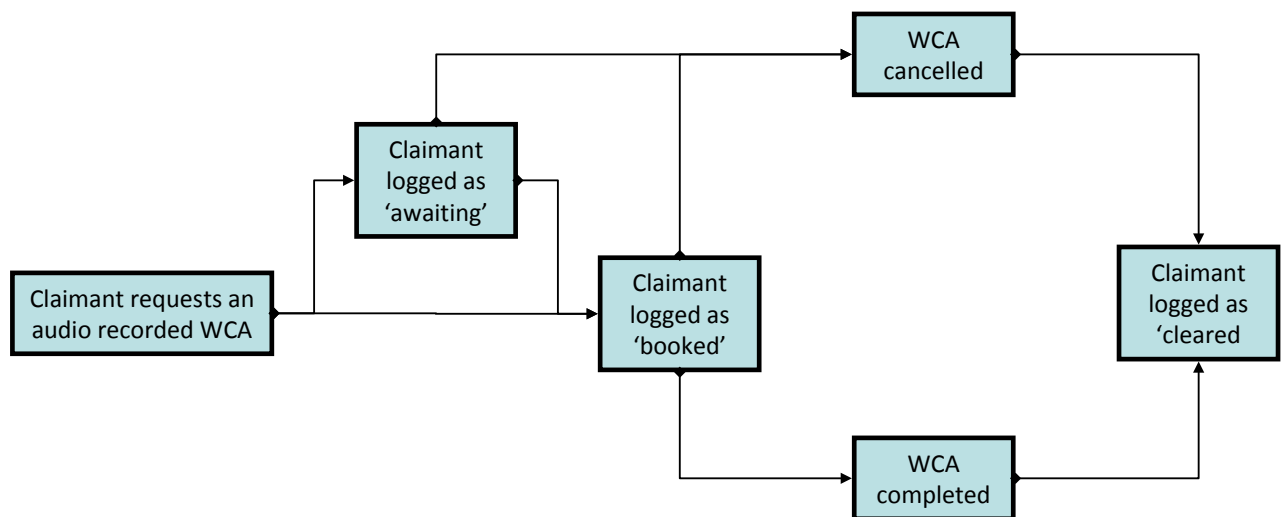
On 15 July 2013 the form which is sent to claimants providing them with information about their upcoming WCA (WCA AL1C) was updated to inform claimants that they could request an audio recorded face-to-face WCA if they wished.

Since the original Harrington pilot evaluation report was published on 25 April 2012 the Department has been monitoring the demand and use of audio recording within the WCA process. The Department is releasing this information as a contribution to the debate on audio-recording face-to-face WCAs.

Process Guide

Outlined below is the process by which an individual requests an audio recorded face-to-face WCAs. This explains how the data in the statistical release is organised and what the terminology used means in practice.

Completed	The number of audio recorded WCAs which have been completed.
Cancelled	The number of audio recorded WCAs which were arranged but were cancelled and another assessment has not been booked.
Cleared	The total number of assessments cancelled and completed.
Awaiting appointments	The number of individuals who are awaiting an audio recorded WCA.
Appointments booked	The number of individuals who have booked an audio recorded WCA.



Notes:

- If an individual makes an appointment for an audio recorded face-to-face WCA but subsequently fails to attend the assessment the case is treated as cleared. This explains why the total monthly cleared figures are slightly higher than the monthly completed figures
- If the individual's appointment does not go ahead, and this is determined to be due to good cause, they re-enter the process and will be treated as either awaiting or booked. In a small number of cases this **could** lead to the claim appearing as two separate requests. A single claim will in most cases only appear once in the overall request figures.
- An individual could appear twice in the request figures if they make a new claim for ESA or are called for a reassessment of their current claim and request an audio recorded assessment.

Key Statistics

Note: All values are rounded; therefore addition of volumes may not sum to total.

Volumes

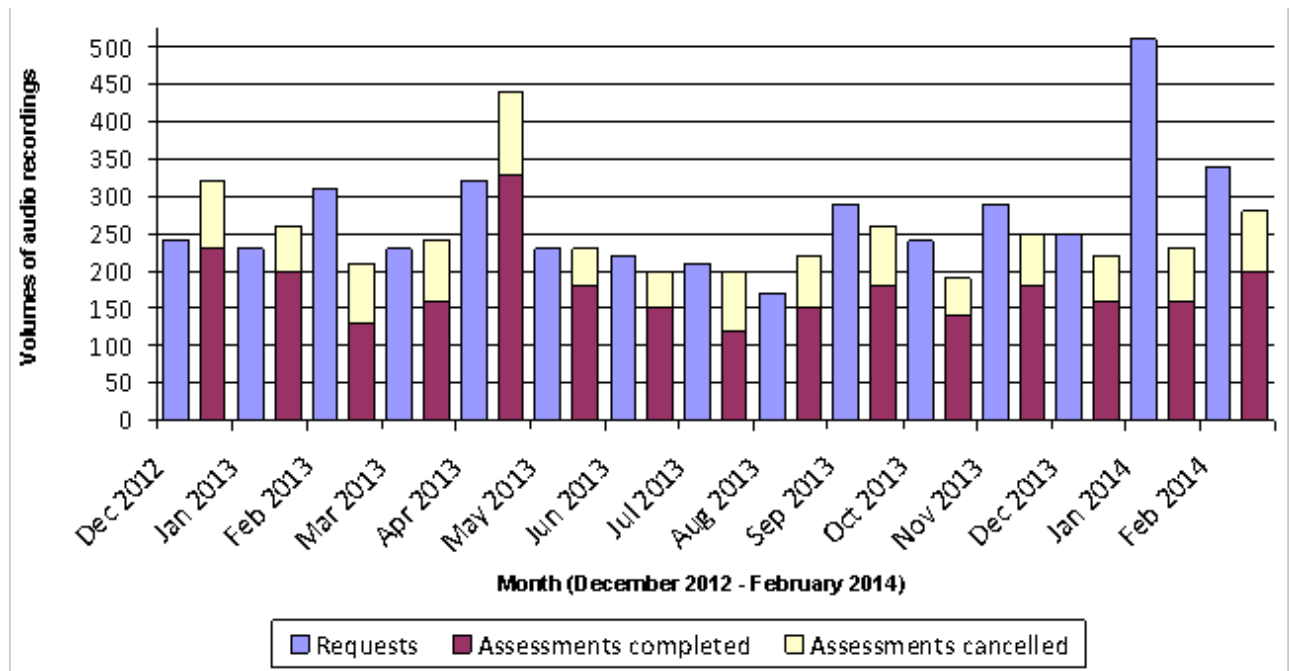


Figure 1: Total number of audio recordings requested, completed and cancelled by month

Requests

Between December 2012 and February 2014 on average 270 audio-recorded face-to-face WCAs were requested each month, with the highest number (510) in January 2014 and the lowest (170) in August 2013. Between December 2012 and February 2014 there were in total 4,060 audio-recorded face-to-face WCAs requested.

Completed

The number of audio-recorded face-to-face WCAs completed was fairly stable at around 150 to 200 per month: the highest number completed in a month was 330 in April 2013, and the lowest 120 in July 2013. Between December 2012 and February 2014 there were in total 2,670 audio-recorded face-to-face WCAs completed.

Cancelled

On average, approximately 70 assessments were cancelled each month: April 2013 had the highest number of assessments cancelled (110), while May, June and October 2013 had the lowest (50). Between December 2012 and February 2014 there were in total 1,080 audio-recorded face-to-face WCAs cancelled.

Cleared

The number of assessments cleared was fairly stable and was on average around 200 to 250. The highest number of assessments cleared was 450 in April 2013 and the lowest was 190 in October 2013. These months correspond to the highest and lowest months for the number of assessments cancelled. Between December 2012 and February 2014 there were, in total 3,750 audio-recorded face-to-face WCAs cleared.

Awaiting

In February 2014 there were 330 individuals awaiting an audio recorded face-to-face WCA. Between December 2012 and February 2014 the number of awaiting appointments was very variable, fluctuating between 70 and 350 per month.

Booked

Similarly the number of booked appointments fluctuated between 150 and 570.

Volumes in proportion to WCAs completed

Between December 2012 and April 2013 the number of face-to-face WCAs completed remained fairly stable and was on average 65,000 per month; it then reduced significantly between April 2013 and February 2014 to on average 35,000 completed per month.

For every 10,000 WCAs completed, the DWP received an average of 66 requests for audio recordings (0.66%).

The ratio of recordings requested to all assessments completed was highest in January 2014 (1.14%) and lowest in January 2013 (0.36%).

The ratio of completed audio recording to all assessments completed was on average 0.42% and the ratio of cleared (completed + cancelled) audio recordings to all assessments was on average 0.59%.