

26 February 2014

Coverage: Great Britain

Theme: Social and Welfare

CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

Introduction

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for the child maintenance system in Great Britain. It funds information and support for separating parents and runs the statutory child maintenance schemes, currently operated through the Child Support Agency (CSA).

DWP assumed responsibility for the CSA from the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission on the 1 August 2012, following an announcement on 14 October 2010 that the Commission would become an executive agency of DWP as part of the Public Bodies Reform. The Commission had responsibility for the CSA between the 1 November 2008 and the 31 July 2012, prior to that DWP had responsibility for the CSA.

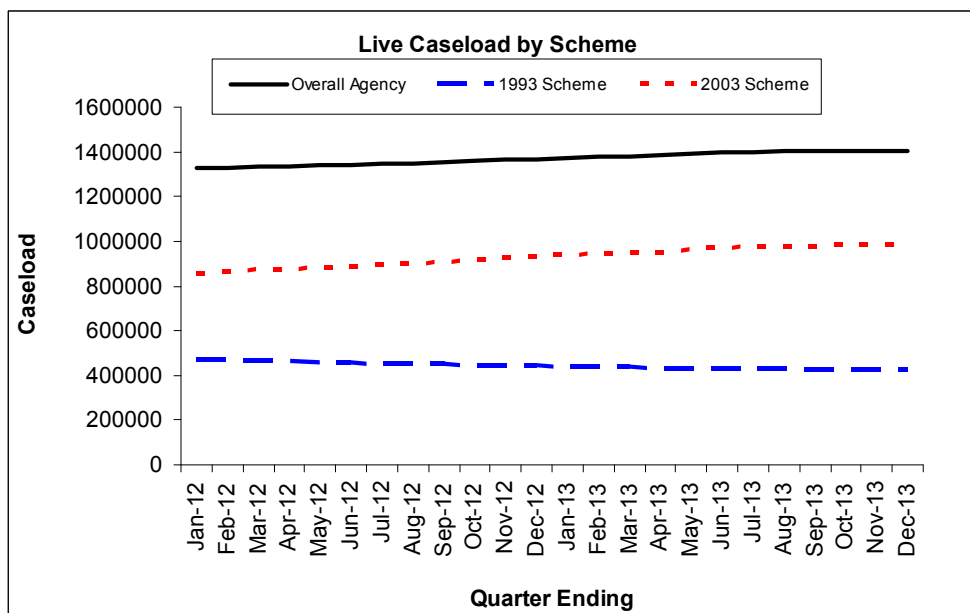
This publication has moved to a new methodology following a consultation on 15 May 2013. Please see Current and Future Changes for more details.

The figures presented include cases managed off system.

On the 10 December 2012 a new Child Maintenance Scheme was launched. The scheme was introduced on a pathfinder approach. All new applications are now being accepted onto the 2012 scheme. The CSA QSS excludes cases on the 2012 scheme.

Main Findings

- At the end of December 2013, the CSA live caseload stood at 1.4 million.



- In the quarter ending December 2013, 84.1% of all cases in which maintenance was due had either received maintenance via the CSA collection service, or had a maintenance direct arrangement in place.
- In the quarter to December 2013, maintenance had been collected or arranged by the CSA via the statutory maintenance service on behalf of 887,200 children.
- In the quarter to December 2013, the CSA collected or arranged £314.8m in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £38.2m was arrears.
- In the year to December 2013, the CSA collected or arranged £1,270.0m in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £159.1m was arrears.



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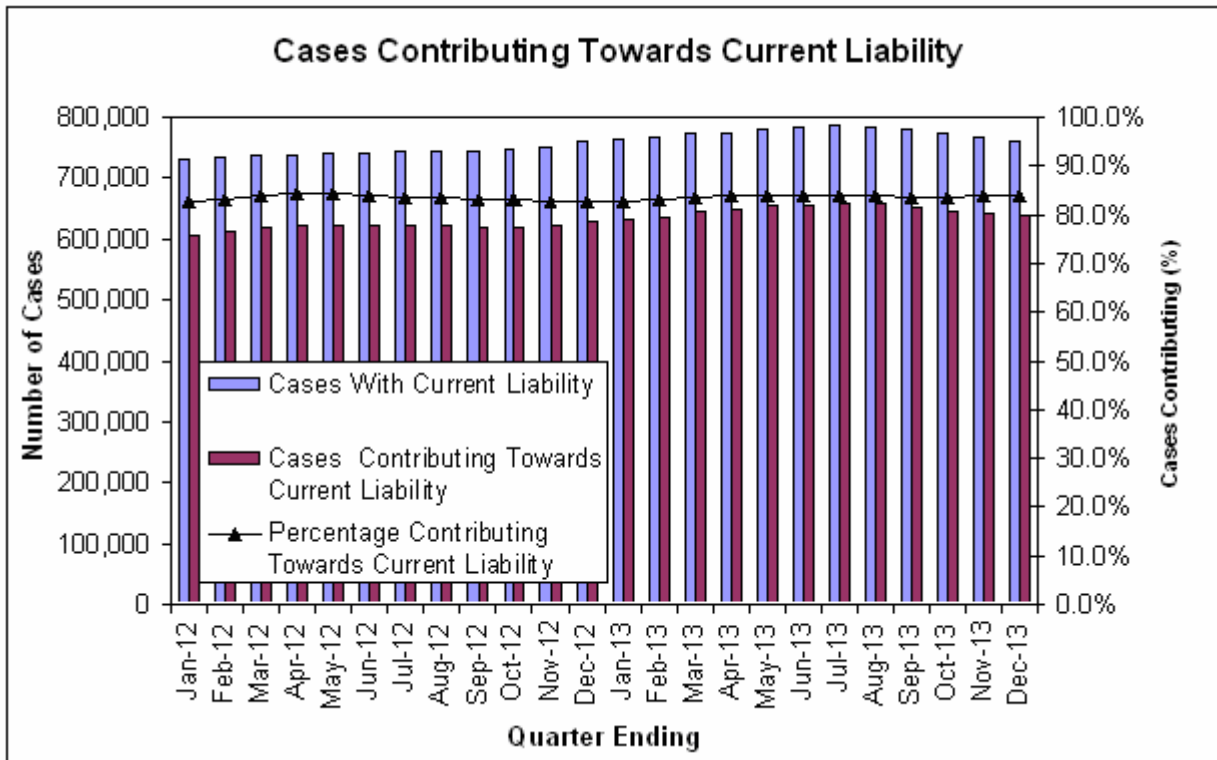
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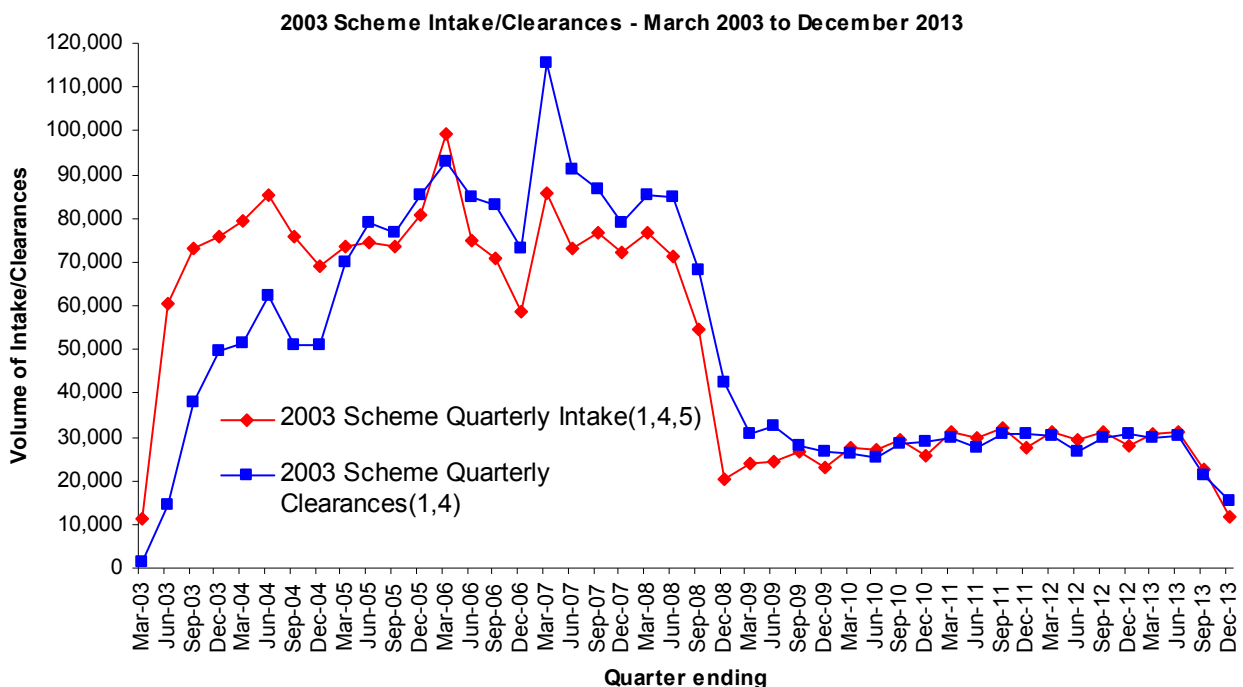
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Next Publication:

April/May 2014



- 53.7% of intake received in September 2013 was cleared within 12 weeks.
- 89.1% of intake received in July 2013 was cleared within 18 weeks.
- Uncleared work has decreased by 3,800 to 11,300. This represents a decrease of 25.2% since September 2013.



- Outstanding child maintenance arrears have increased from £3.847bn in September 2013 to £3.859bn in December 2013¹.
- At the end of December 2013, the average maintenance calculation was £17.90 per week (including zero calculations).
- In the 9 months to December 2013, 86.8% of the telephone calls received were answered within 60 seconds.
- In December 2013, there were 7,300 full time equivalent people working to support the Child Maintenance system.

Latest statistical data available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-statistics--2>

¹Due to different sources, figures may differ slightly from CSA's Annual Report and Accounts.

Notes to Editors

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for the child maintenance system in Great Britain. It funds information and support for separating parents and runs the statutory child maintenance schemes, currently operated through the Child Support Agency (CSA).

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This publication, produced in conjunction with DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate, contains the most up-to-date tables and breakdowns on the CSA's 1993 and 2003 statutory child maintenance schemes. It does not include information on the 2012 statutory scheme which was launched with a pathfinder approach on 10 December 2012.

The data covers the periods when DWP had responsibility for the CSA, and when the Commission had responsibility. The data also covers the period both before and after the removal of the compulsion on parents with care who are claiming income based benefits to use the CSA to collect or arrange maintenance payments. The change, which came into force on 27th October 2008, affects CSA clients who can now choose to make private maintenance arrangements with the non resident parent.

After this date, some parents with care have opted to end their child support claim with CSA. This can be seen as a fall in overall caseload after October 2008.

Current and Future Changes

Changes in this QSS

On 15 May 2013 a consultation was launched seeking views on changes to existing tables and proposed new tables, which would incorporate new methodologies and data sources.

A copy of the consultation document can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/207393/csa_qss_consultation_2013.pdf

A response to this consultation was published on 19 September 2013 which can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243678/csa-qss-changes-consultation-response.pdf

The changes detailed in the response have now been made. As proposed we have now moved to a new methodology which allows us to compare receipts with Accrued Liability. Accrued Liability is the amount of maintenance which is required to be collected, regardless of the amount of maintenance requested.

Changing the methodology in this way gives a more accurate, accounting based approach to case compliance, where we can track whether an arrears balance increases or decreases, and reflects more closely the experience of clients.

We have also taken this opportunity to develop the use of 100% CSCS data, rather than the existing 5% sample, aligning all data sources to 100%, thus giving more accurate performance data.

As well as reporting against key performance measures using the new methodology, we have also introduced a number of new tables which provide users with more detailed breakdowns around the average liability of cases, the number of qualifying children, liabilities and credits, and outstanding arrears. Much of this new information is split between Collection Service and Maintenance Direct cases, to show how case characteristics differ between these types of cases.

Due to the development time required, new tables will only report back to January 2012.

With reference to the Maintenance Direct cases in the Consultation Response, we are still currently investigating the potential to produce data on the number of cases transferring between the Collection Service and Maintenance Direct each quarter. Analysis on Age of Arrears for CS2 which was proposed in the initial Consultation is still undergoing development and will not be included in this release.

2012 scheme

The Government is reforming the child maintenance system so that it provides support to enable parents to work together after a separation, not only on child maintenance arrangements, but on the whole range of issues faced following separation. Incentives are being introduced to encourage parents to think twice about whether they could set up a family-based child maintenance arrangement without automatically turning to the statutory child maintenance scheme.

For those parents who are not able to make their own family-based arrangement, the 2012 statutory maintenance scheme will be available.

The 2012 child maintenance scheme was introduced on 10 December 2012, using a pathfinder approach to new applicants with at least four qualifying children with the same two parents named in the application. On 29 July 2013 the 2012 scheme opened to new applicants with at least two qualifying children with the same two parents named in the application. On 25 November 2013, the scheme opened up to all new applicants.

The 1993 and 2003 statutory schemes will continue to be delivered by the Child Support Agency (CSA). Once the 2012 scheme is seen to be working well, cases on the 1993 and 2003 schemes will close. This process is expected to take around 3 years.

Performance relating to the 2012 Scheme is not included in this publication.

Experimental Statistics on the 2012 Scheme covering the period of August 2013 to September 2013 were published on 25 November 2013, and are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ad-hoc-statistical-analysis-2013-quarter-4>

Changes to the Appeals process

A DWP wide change to the way in which clients can appeal against decisions was introduced under Section 102 of the Welfare Reform Act, these changes became effective from 28 October 2013.

The main Appeal Reform changes that impact child maintenance are:

- Mandatory Reconsideration from 28 October - where all decisions will be looked at before a client can appeal against it
- Direct Lodgement from 28 October 2013 - where it is appropriate for clients to appeal, they must appeal direct to HM Courts & Tribunals Service.

The changes will be reflected in future statistics.

Upcoming Releases

The next QSS containing data on 1993/2003 Schemes up to March 2014 is due to be released in April/May 2014. The exact date will be announced at least four weeks in advance on the [UKSA Publication Hub](#).