



Ministry
of Justice



Freedom of Information Statistics: Implementation in Central Government

January – March 2014

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

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Executive summary

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows individuals to request information from public bodies. This bulletin presents statistics on its use in 41 central government bodies. This comprises of 21 Departments of State and 20 'other monitored bodies' and covers the first quarter of 2014 (January - March).

Number of requests [see Tables A1 & A2]

In the first quarter of 2014, monitored central government bodies received 13,664 non-routine Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. This is 1,524 (13%) more than the number received in Q4 2013, although is 48 fewer than received in Q1 2013.

Between Q1 2006 and Q1 2014 the number of FOI requests recorded by monitored bodies increased by 45%, despite the number of monitored bodies remaining fairly constant. The increase has been driven by requests to Departments of State.

Timeliness of response to requests [see Tables A3 & A4]

92% of requests received during Q1 2014 received a response within the statutory deadline or were responded to within a permitted deadline extension. This is 1 percentage point higher than the previous quarter and a rise of 3 percentage points since Q1 2013. Across all monitored bodies in Q1 of 2014 between 68 and 100% of requests received a response 'on time'.

Initial outcomes of requests [see Tables A5 & A6]

Of all requests received during Q1 2014 where it was possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought ('resolvable requests', of which there were 9,989), 51% were granted in full and 33% were withheld in full. The remainder were either granted in part or a response had not yet been provided by the time of this bulletin.

The percentage of resolvable requests granted in full has fallen by 2 percentage points compared to Q4 2013, and 5 percentage points from Q1 2013.

Exemptions and exceptions [see Table A7]

In Q1 2014, one or more exemption or exceptions were applied to 2,976 requests, which is 30% of all resolvable requests. The most common exemption, as in previous quarters, was section 40 (personal data). Section 40 was used in 44% of exempt requests.

Section 21 [See Table A8]

There were 748 Section 21 exemptions used (where a Section 21 was the only exemption used in a response) either in full or in part in Q1 2014. 93% of these were provided within the 20-day deadline.

Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and the associated Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) came fully into force on 1 January 2005. This bulletin presents statistics on their implementation within central government for the quarterly period January to March 2014 (with tables in Annex A covering the period from Q1 2012 until Q1 2014).

The previous quarterly and annual bulletins, together covering the period from January 2005 to December 2013, are available via the links on the following pages of the Gov.uk and National Archives websites:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/government-foi-statistics (for 2010-2013);

webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/freedomofinformationquarterly-archive.htm (for 2006-2009);

webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dca.gov.uk/foi/reference/statisticsAndReports.htm (for 2005 - 2007)

The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling of written requests for information received by monitored bodies during the relevant time period¹. They also include requests for information that is already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means, which are exempted under Section 21 of the FOI Act. Annex B gives a definition of the information that is in scope of these statistics. The total number of 'routine' information requests is not known; therefore, figures in this publication should be considered a lower bound for all information requests received by the monitored bodies.

This bulletin presents monitoring statistics for a total of 41 central government bodies, which includes all major departments of state. Over 100,000 bodies are subject to the FOI Act² and a substantial number of FOI requests are sent to those which are non-monitored. The trends which apply to monitored central government bodies cannot be assumed to apply universally.

More information regarding EIRs is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-foiaeirs.

¹ Further definitions of both 'routine' and 'non routine' requests can be found in Annex B or via: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262792/25section2.pdf

² www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/vo060725/text/60725w0081.htm#06072811011026

Departmental changes

Please refer to Annex C for a full list of monitored bodies³. It details departmental changes and the inclusion and exclusion of subordinate agencies that have occurred since Q1 2012, the period covered by the tables in this bulletin.

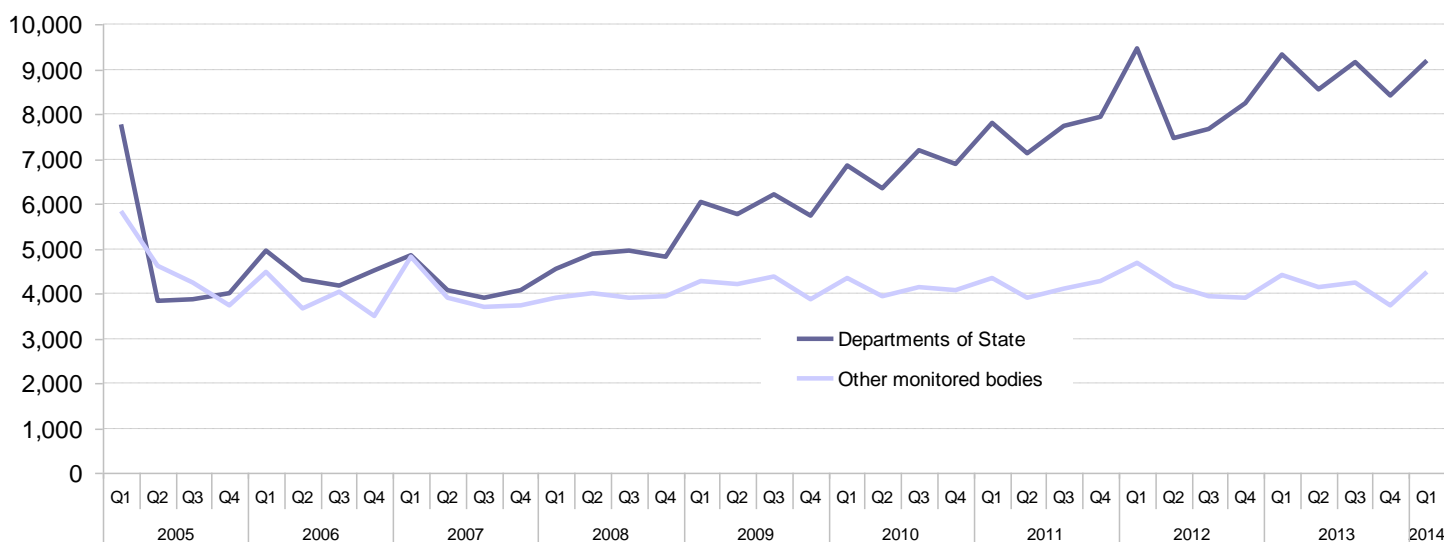
Analysis and Commentary

Number of requests [see Tables A1 & A2]

In January to March (Q1) 2014 the monitored central government bodies received a total of 13,664 non-routine FOI (Freedom of Information Act) requests. This is 1,524 (13%) more than the number received in Q4 2013, and 48 fewer requests than were received in Q1 2013.

Figure 1 shows that, despite considerable quarter-on-quarter variation, there has been a generally increasing trend in the number of requests received over the past six years. This follows the initial surge in requests in 2005, when the FOI Act was first introduced.

Figure 1: Number of requests received since the FOI Act's introduction in January 2005



³ The statistics reflect the management and implementation of the FOI Act by each monitored body and comparisons between departments can be made on this 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 – please see Annex B for further information.

Figure 1 illustrates that the increase in requests over the past 6 years has been driven by an increase in those received by Departments of State. These reported receiving a total of 9,178 information requests in Q1 2014, 9% more than Q4 2013, but a decrease of 1% compared with Q1 2013. Other monitored bodies reported having received 4,486 requests, an increase of 20% from Q4 2013 and a rise of 2% from Q1 2013.

Departments of State accounted for 67% of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q1 of 2014. This is a fall of 1 percentage point since Q1 2013 (68%) but a rise of 15 percentage points since Q1 2006 (52%).

Of the Departments of State, the bodies that reported having received over 1,000 requests in Q1 2014 were:

- The Department for Work and Pensions – 1,408;
- The Ministry of Justice – 1,308;
- The Ministry of Defence – 1,022.

The Departments of State that reported the biggest increases in requests compared to Q1 2013 were:

- The Ministry of Justice, by 225 requests (a 21% increase);
- The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, by 142 requests (a 81% increase);
- The Ministry of Defence, by 82 requests (a 9% increase).

Among other monitored bodies, the Health and Safety Executive reported having received 1,378 requests during Q1, while the National Archives received 909. These two bodies combined account for 51% of all requests received by all the other monitored bodies. Therefore, the trends for the other monitored bodies group as a whole are heavily dependant on the trends for these two particular bodies.

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. This is partly due to the nature of requests it receives: a large percentage are from solicitors representing an injured party, seeking disclosure of information collected during an investigation of a workplace incident.

Environmental Information Regulations

Monitoring statistics also show the number of non-routine information requests that fell fully or mostly under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). There were 561 such requests during the first quarter of 2014, accounting for 4% of all requests received. The number of requests handled under EIR is up 5% on the previous quarter and 44% on Q1 2013.

Timeliness of response to requests [see Tables A3 & A4]

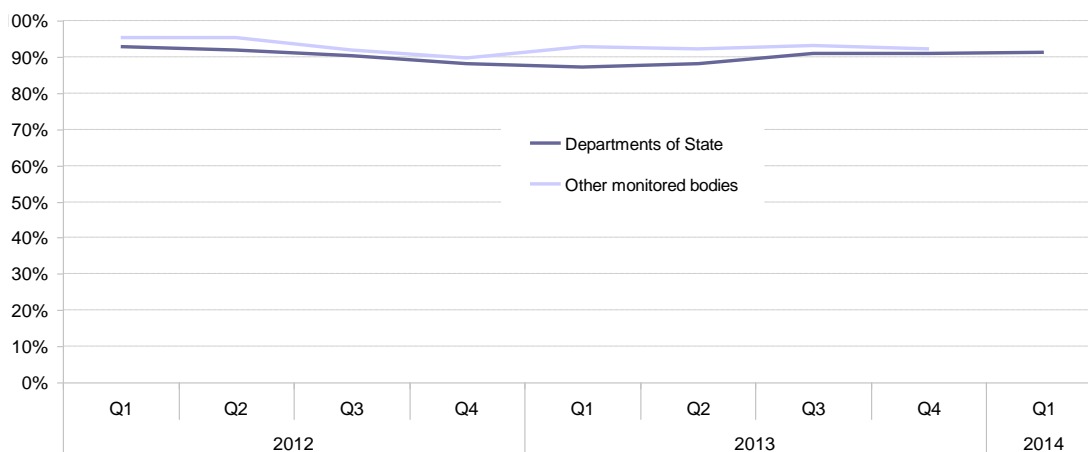
The FOI Act requires public bodies to respond to written requests for information within 20 working days of receipt (the standard deadline)⁴. In limited circumstances, additional time is allowed for the consideration of public interest. Requests answered within this extended time period are classed as “in time”. These timeliness statistics give a measure of how well monitored bodies are complying with the Act.

Across all monitored bodies, 88% of requests received during Q1 of 2014 were sent a response within the 20 (or 30 for the National Archives) working day deadline – this is a very small increase of 1 percentage point since Q4 2013 and almost identical compared to Q1 2013. In Q1 2014, 92% of the requests received were handled ‘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 1 percentage point from the previous quarter, and a rise of 3 percentage points compared to Q1 2013.

Comparing across all monitored bodies, between 68% and 100% of requests received during Q1 of 2014 were responded to within the 20-day deadline, and between 68% and 100% of requests received in the same period, were responded to ‘in time’.

Figure 2 shows that despite the rise in requests, average timeliness for monitored bodies has been at least 87% for the last three years. It also illustrates that other monitored bodies are, on average⁵, marginally timelier than Departments of State.

Figure 2: Percentage of FOI requests replied to ‘in time’ by Departments of State and other monitored bodies by quarter from Q1 2012



⁴ A 30 working deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to information transferred to the National Archives. They have therefore provided response timeliness information on this basis.

⁵ Based on the mean

Initial outcomes of requests [see Tables A5 & A6]

It may not be possible for a monitored body to resolve a request in full if the information sought is not held, further information is needed to be able to answer a request, or because a fee has been requested but has not been paid. Of the 13,664 requests reported during Q1 of 2014 across all monitored bodies, the following were not resolvable:

- 47 were 'on hold' awaiting a fee payment;
- 2,596 requests sought information that was not held;
- 1,032 were responded to with 'advice and assistance' because the body handling the request needed further information in order to identify the information being sought. If the requester provided appropriate information, the request is considered resolvable.

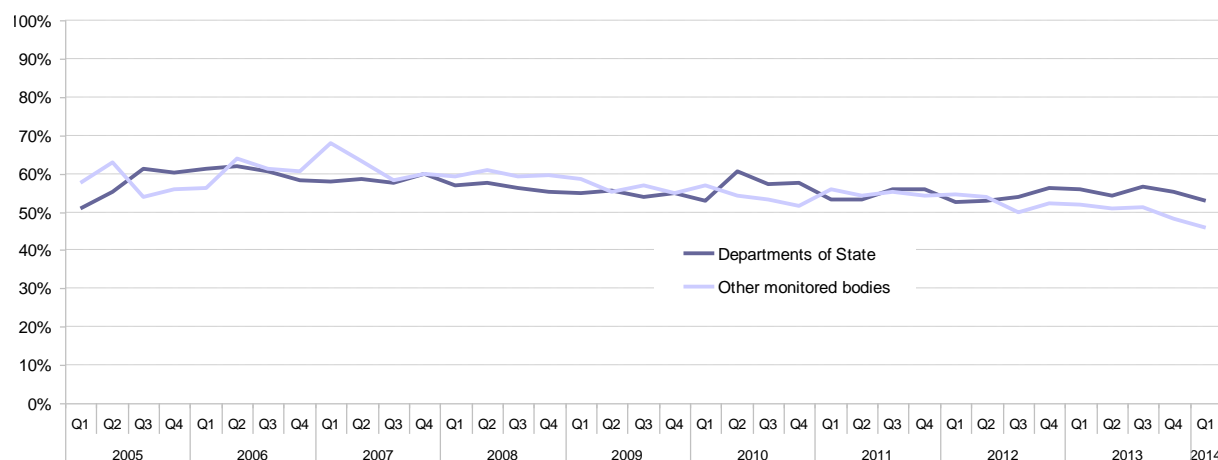
As a result, the remaining 9,989 (73%) requests were assumed to be 'resolvable', in that it would have been possible to give a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought.

Of the 'resolvable' requests received during Q1 of 2014:

- 51% (5,062) were granted in full, down from 55% (5,555) in Q1 2013 and 53% (4,629) in Q4 2013;
- 33% (3,265) were withheld in full, up from 27% (2,705) in Q1 2013, and 31% (2,677) in Q4 of 2013;
- 12% (1,238) were withheld in part, down from 15% (1,257) in Q1 2013 and 13% (1,180) in Q4 of 2013;
- The remainder (4%, 424) had not been answered by the end of the quarter.

Figure 3 illustrates the outcome of resolvable requests since 2005. It shows that the proportion of requests granted in full has stayed fairly constant since the act was introduced; although a slight downward trend is starting to emerge. This may reflect a changing nature of requests as the monitored bodies have made more routine information available to the public.

Figure 3: Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full, Q1 2005 – Q1 2014



Use of exemptions and exceptions [see Table A7]

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, or if the information falls in one or more of the categories of exempt information ('exemptions') listed in Part II of the Act⁶. Similar arrangements apply to certain types of information under the EIRs. Requests that have been exempted under Section 21 (information available by other means) are recorded separately in this bulletin, as they relate to routine requests for information.

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 2,976 requests (30% of resolvable requests) were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q1 2014. This means that government has the requested information, but withheld some or all of it under an exemption listed in the Act.

The most commonly applied exemptions or exceptions in Q1 2014 were:

- Section 40 of the FOI Act (relating to personal information), which was applied to 1,306 requests, and in 44% of all exempt requests;
- Section 31 (Law Enforcement), which was applied to 371 requests and in 12% of all exempt requests;
- Section 22 (Information intended for future publication), which was applied to 259 requests and in 9% of all exempt requests;

⁶ A summary of all exemptions can be found at: www.justice.gov.uk/information-access-rights/foi-guidance-for-practitioners/exemptions-guidance

- Section 30 (Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities), which was applied to 238 requests and in 8% of all exempt requests;
- Section 43 (Commercial interests), which was applied to 217 requests and in 7% of all exempt requests.

These exemptions are typically among the most frequent exemptions used since The Act came into force. Some exemptions were not used at all by any of the 41 monitored bodies, for example section 34 (parliamentary privilege).

Use of Section 21 Exemptions *[See table A8]*

A Section 21 exemption can be used under the FOI Act when information is reasonably available by other means⁷. This is the first bulletin to report statistics on the use of Section 21; previous publications have excluded FOI requests exempt under Section 21 because the FOI Act is not designed to provide a new access route to information already available.

However, Section 21 is a legitimate part of the use of the FOI Act and is subject to the relevant handling timescales. Inclusion of these statistics presents a more accurate picture of departmental effort in relation to the Act.

Government has decided to report this exemption separately as Section 21s are difficult to classify by outcome: the request is refused but only because the information is already published. Additionally, including Section 21 requests within the other parts of this bulletin would artificially inflate both volume and timeliness figures since they are relatively straightforward to answer.

In the first quarter of 2014, there were 748 requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied⁸ either in full or in part. Of these, 93% of requests received a response within the 20-day deadline.

⁷ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21

⁸ These only include requests where a Section 21 was the only exemption used.

Annex A: Statistical Tables

Latest quarterly (A1, A3, A5, A7, A8) and in-year (A2, A4, A6) tables

Table A1	<i>Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2014, and their status at time of monitoring</i>
Table A2	<i>Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2012</i>
Table A3	<i>Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2014</i>
Table A4	<i>Proportion of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were answered 'in time', by quarter, since 1 January 2012</i>
Table A5	<i>Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2014</i>
Table A6	<i>Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2012</i>
Table A7	<i>Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January – 31 March 2014</i>
Table A8	<i>Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2014</i>

Symbols and conventions

- Not applicable
- 0 Nil
- * Percentage not supplied 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 as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C gives full details
- † Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C

TABLE A1

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2014, and their status at time of monitoring

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring			Number handled under EIRs ²
		Processed	'On hold' or lapsed ¹	Still being processed	
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	13,664	13,193	47	424	561
TOTAL for Departments of State only	9,178	8,888	0	290	326
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,486	4,305	47	134	235
<i>Departments of State</i>					
Attorney General's Office	57	57	0	0	0
Cabinet Office #	528	506	0	22	1
Communities and Local Government	197	193	0	4	18
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	301	295	0	6	7
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	137	134	0	3	7
Department for Education	518	515	0	3	2
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	318	308	0	10	150
Department for International Development	134	132	0	2	3
Department for Transport #	684	676	0	8	45
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,408	1,380	0	28	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	240	240	0	0	81
Department of Health	469	467	0	2	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	369	325	0	44	1
HM Treasury #	467	423	0	44	2
Home Office #	872	850	0	22	0
Ministry of Defence #	1,022	977	0	45	9
Ministry of Justice #	1,308	1,265	0	43	0
Northern Ireland Office	60	57	0	3	0
Scotland Office	38	37	0	1	0
UK Export Finance ³	16	16	0	0	0
Wales Office	35	35	0	0	0

TABLE A1 continued

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2014 and their status at time of monitoring

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring			Number handled under EIRs ²
		Processed	'On hold' or lapsed ¹	Still being processed	
<i>Other bodies included in monitoring</i>					
Charity Commission	167	164	0	3	1
Crown Prosecution Service	220	217	0	3	0
Debt Management Office	14	14	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	53	53	0	0	3
Health and Safety Executive	1,378	1,353	0	25	75
HM Land Registry	100	100	0	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	622	608	0	14	1
National Archives	909	779	47	83	1
National Savings and Investments	38	38	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	82	82	0	0	0
Office for Standards in Education	309	307	0	2	0
Office of Fair Trading	69	69	0	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	97	96	0	1	36
Office of Rail Regulation	46	44	0	2	0
Ordnance Survey	13	13	0	0	0
Royal Mint	15	15	0	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	137	137	0	0	118
Serious Fraud Office	22	21	0	1	0
Treasury Solicitor's Department	110	110	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	85	85	0	0	0

Notes

1 - 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.

2 - 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.

3 - UK Export Finance is the operating name of the Export Credits Guarantee Department.

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

TABLE A2

Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2012

Government body	Number of non-routine information requests received								
	2012				2013				2014
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	14,116	11,634	11,563	12,159	13,712	12,668	13,370	12,140	13,664
TOTAL for Departments of State only	9,452	7,468	7,646	8,251	9,312	8,537	9,145	8,400	9,178
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,664	4,166	3,917	3,908	4,400	4,131	4,225	3,740	4,486
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	49	48	21	43	53	65	78	64	57
Cabinet Office #	492	378	357	378	452	466	405	435	528
Communities and Local Government	179	168	241	193	247	212	208	175	197
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	299	231	247	232	227	238	298	234	301
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	184	185	128	122	136	134	138	124	137
Department for Education	349	313	332	315	476	454	390	439	518
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	200	179	147	170	176	170	243	237	318
Department for International Development	117	106	80	105	106	114	127	123	134
Department for Transport #	892	713	701	836	873	693	1,074	1,008	684
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,326	1,005	1,156	1,282	1,457	1,356	1,513	1,257	1,408
Department of Energy and Climate Change	216	144	147	197	168	154	207	212	240
Department of Health	1,077	417	430	483	567	524	514	398	469
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	390	336	279	332	285	338	293	309	369
HM Treasury #	759	624	713	679	779	689	642	522	467
Home Office #	923	900	973	1,110	1,129	884	893	768	872
Ministry of Defence #	914	844	817	853	940	816	904	903	1,022
Ministry of Justice #	910	757	757	781	1,083	1,103	1,038	1,068	1,308
Northern Ireland Office	58	46	49	53	56	41	60	46	60
Scotland Office	43	30	25	40	41	34	41	30	38
UK Export Finance	27	18	9	10	27	29	32	22	16
Wales Office	48	26	37	37	34	23	47	26	35

TABLE A2 continued

Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2012

Government body	Number of non-routine information requests received								
	2012				2013				2013
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Charity Commission	322	219	146	127	173	151	158	142	167
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission †	75	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crown Prosecution Service	162	141	171	142	181	160	165	160	220
Debt Management Office	17	15	9	6	13	25	15	9	14
Food Standards Agency	36	49	25	34	98	44	40	35	53
Health and Safety Executive	1,795	1,599	1,617	1,641	1,657	1,447	1,417	1,246	1,378
HM Land Registry	72	79	55	88	98	133	93	72	100
HM Revenue and Customs	611	501	447	524	518	518	554	576	622
National Archives	750	743	720	643	864	861	902	713	909
National Savings and Investments	30	25	17	21	30	16	43	29	38
Office for National Statistics	43	46	67	71	73	61	84	48	82
Office for Standards in Education	212	183	140	162	166	172	186	209	309
Office of Fair Trading	111	72	92	105	96	85	87	83	69
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	45	41	52	64	56	67	74	94	97
Office of Rail Regulation	44	39	39	31	45	58	62	42	46
Ordnance Survey	29	22	23	17	15	16	35	20	13
Royal Mint	5	16	4	4	5	1	5	7	15
Rural Payments Agency	118	121	117	99	109	131	136	112	137
Serious Fraud Office	25	36	21	37	28	46	37	23	22
Treasury Solicitor's Department	131	135	133	66	141	85	56	69	110
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	31	19	22	26	34	54	76	51	85

Notes

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

TABLE A3

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2014

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	13,617	11,999	546	1,072	88%	92%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	9,178	7,997	383	798	87%	91%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,439	4,002	163	274	90%	94%
<i>Departments of State</i>						
Attorney General's Office	57	56	0	1	98%	98%
Cabinet Office #	528	453	51	24	86%	95%
Communities and Local Government	197	145	12	40	74%	80%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	301	280	16	5	93%	98%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	137	128	6	3	93%	98%
Department for Education	518	440	9	69	85%	87%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	318	274	40	4	86%	99%
Department for International Development	134	127	4	3	95%	98%
Department for Transport #	684	632	18	34	92%	95%
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,408	1,284	10	114	91%	92%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	240	222	14	4	93%	98%
Department of Health	469	465	4	0	99%	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	369	251	73	45	68%	88%
HM Treasury #	467	396	36	35	85%	93%
Home Office #	872	702	58	112	81%	87%
Ministry of Defence #	1,022	845	24	153	83%	85%
Ministry of Justice #	1,308	1,161	6	141	89%	89%
Northern Ireland Office	60	52	1	7	87%	88%
Scotland Office	38	34	1	3	89%	92%
UK Export Finance	16	16	0	0	100%	100%
Wales Office	35	34	0	1	97%	97%

TABLE A3 continued

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2014

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						
Charity Commission	167	163	0	4	98%	98%
Crown Prosecution Service	220	207	2	11	94%	95%
Debt Management Office	14	14	0	0	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	53	47	5	1	89%	98%
Health and Safety Executive	1,378	1,234	20	124	90%	91%
HM Land Registry	100	100	0	0	100%	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	622	545	4	73	88%	88%
National Archives ³	862	730	107	25	85%	97%
National Savings and Investments	38	36	0	2	95%	95%
Office for National Statistics	82	81	1	0	99%	100%
Office for Standards in Education	309	291	9	9	94%	97%
Office of Fair Trading	69	67	0	2	97%	97%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	97	79	6	12	81%	88%
Office of Rail Regulation	46	38	7	1	83%	98%
Ordnance Survey	13	13	0	0	100%	100%
Royal Mint	15	13	1	1	87%	93%
Rural Payments Agency	137	136	1	0	99%	100%
Serious Fraud Office	22	15	0	7	68%	68%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	110	109	0	1	99%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	85	84	0	1	99%	99%

Notes

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: extensions under the FOI Act to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest, and extensions under the EIR because of the complexity or volume of the request.

3 - 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.

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

TABLE A4

Percentage of non-routine information requests received since 1 January 2012 that were answered 'in time', by quarter

Government body	Percentage of non-routine information requests that were answered 'in time' ¹								
	2012				2013				2014
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	94%	93%	92%	90%	89%	89%	92%	91%	92%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	93%	92%	90%	88%	87%	88%	91%	91%	91%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	95%	95%	92%	90%	93%	92%	93%	92%	94%
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	96%	100%	95%	98%	100%	95%	95%	97%	98%
Cabinet Office #	93%	92%	93%	95%	86%	83%	85%	86%	95%
Communities and Local Government	94%	96%	92%	91%	87%	92%	89%	82%	80%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	93%	98%	99%	96%	96%	99%	96%	98%	98%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	98%	100%	100%	100%	99%	97%	96%	95%	98%
Department for Education	78%	84%	74%	82%	89%	87%	87%	85%	87%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	91%	92%	93%	96%	89%	89%	100%	97%	99%
Department for International Development	100%	99%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%	99%	98%
Department for Transport #	95%	96%	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%	97%	95%
Department for Work and Pensions #	89%	85%	83%	79%	92%	95%	94%	94%	92%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	95%	97%	96%	96%	97%	96%	99%	97%	98%
Department of Health	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	91%	91%	96%	93%	95%	88%	88%	82%	88%
HM Treasury #	99%	95%	99%	96%	98%	96%	96%	96%	93%
Home Office #	93%	89%	84%	72%	50%	53%	72%	81%	87%
Ministry of Defence #	89%	90%	86%	87%	84%	87%	89%	88%	85%
Ministry of Justice #	92%	92%	92%	90%	90%	88%	89%	87%	89%
Northern Ireland Office	67%	87%	96%	98%	96%	98%	97%	93%	88%
Scotland Office	98%	93%	100%	90%	95%	100%	98%	93%	92%
UK Export Finance	93%	*	*	*	78%	66%	94%	77%	100%
Wales Office	96%	85%	59%	86%	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%

TABLE A4 continued

Percentage of non-routine information requests received since 1 January 2012 that were answered 'in time', by quarter

Government body	Percentage of non-routine information requests that were answered 'in time' ¹								
	2012				2013				2014
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar
Other bodies included in monitoring									
Charity Commission	97%	95%	90%	96%	90%	96%	95%	94%	98%
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission †	97%	98%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crown Prosecution Service	97%	93%	90%	85%	77%	71%	64%	64%	95%
Debt Management Office	*	*	*	*	*	100%	*	*	100%
Food Standards Agency	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%	98%
Health and Safety Executive	94%	94%	95%	93%	91%	89%	92%	92%	91%
HM Land Registry	99%	97%	100%	98%	99%	98%	100%	100%	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	92%	92%	90%	90%	92%	90%	92%	89%	88%
National Archives ²	99%	99%	98%	98%	0%	99%	98%	98%	97%
National Savings and Investments	100%	96%	*	95%	97%	*	95%	93%	95%
Office for National Statistics	95%	83%	93%	80%	88%	77%	98%	96%	100%
Office for Standards in Education	100%	99%	97%	96%	96%	97%	97%	98%	97%
Office of Fair Trading	98%	100%	99%	92%	97%	96%	92%	89%	97%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	91%	88%	92%	97%	88%	94%	78%	90%	88%
Office of Rail Regulation	86%	92%	95%	97%	96%	95%	95%	98%	98%
Ordnance Survey	100%	100%	100%	*	*	*	100%	*	100%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	93%
Rural Payments Agency	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	97%	94%	87%	100%
Serious Fraud Office	92%	86%	76%	76%	79%	80%	92%	96%	68%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	98%	99%	95%	100%	98%	98%	100%	99%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	94%	*	100%	69%	94%	96%	96%	96%	99%

Notes

1 - 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 extensions under the FOI Act to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest, and extensions under the EIR because of the complexity or volume of the request. Requests 'on hold' or 'lapsed' are excluded from the calculation of timeliness measures. These requests are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received and so public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made.

2 - 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.

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

* - Percentage not supplied because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

TABLE A5
Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2014

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	13,617	1,032	2,596	9,989	5,062	1,238	3,265	424	51%	33%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	9,178	700	1,775	6,703	3,553	699	2,161	290	53%	32%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,439	332	821	3,286	1,509	539	1,104	134	46%	34%
Departments of State										
Attorney General's Office	57	0	42	15	11	0	4	0	73%	27%
Cabinet Office #	528	71	149	308	65	29	192	22	21%	62%
Communities and Local Government	197	0	61	136	88	18	26	4	65%	19%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	301	10	107	184	63	57	58	6	34%	32%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	137	19	30	88	51	10	24	3	58%	27%
Department for Education	518	69	74	375	200	26	146	3	53%	39%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	318	28	57	233	167	30	26	10	72%	11%
Department for International Development	134	1	28	105	65	9	29	2	62%	28%
Department for Transport #	684	10	110	564	427	51	78	8	76%	14%
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,408	14	82	1,312	903	45	336	28	69%	26%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	240	7	84	149	72	30	47	0	48%	32%
Department of Health	469	27	162	280	162	39	77	2	58%	28%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	369	41	76	252	65	72	71	44	26%	28%
HM Treasury #	467	77	153	237	86	25	82	44	36%	35%
Home Office #	872	102	153	617	261	86	248	22	42%	40%
Ministry of Defence #	1,022	71	182	769	475	66	183	45	62%	24%
Ministry of Justice #	1,308	132	180	996	337	103	513	43	34%	52%
Northern Ireland Office	60	6	24	30	13	1	13	3	43%	43%
Scotland Office	38	15	2	21	16	0	4	1	76%	19%
UK Export Finance	16	0	0	16	13	0	3	0	81%	19%
Wales Office	35	0	19	16	13	2	1	0	81%	6%

TABLE A5 continued
Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2014

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										
Charity Commission	167	19	26	122	58	38	23	3	48%	19%
Crown Prosecution Service	220	15	23	182	63	14	102	3	35%	56%
Debt Management Office	14	0	5	9	7	2	0	0	78%	0%
Food Standards Agency	53	1	15	37	18	11	8	0	49%	22%
Health and Safety Executive	1,378	48	440	890	393	236	236	25	44%	27%
HM Land Registry	100	3	9	88	77	9	2	0	88%	2%
HM Revenue and Customs	622	29	60	533	183	17	319	14	34%	60%
National Archives	862	128	78	656	327	97	149	83	50%	23%
National Savings and Investments	38	0	0	38	38	0	0	0	100%	0%
Office for National Statistics	82	1	32	49	38	4	7	0	78%	14%
Office for Standards in Education	309	15	24	270	50	32	186	2	19%	69%
Office of Fair Trading	69	6	8	55	37	11	7	0	67%	13%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	97	11	18	68	49	9	9	1	72%	13%
Office of Rail Regulation	46	10	9	27	11	12	2	2	41%	7%
Ordnance Survey	13	0	4	9	6	3	0	0	67%	0%
Royal Mint	15	0	2	13	6	0	7	0	46%	54%
Rural Payments Agency	137	45	13	79	47	17	15	0	59%	19%
Serious Fraud Office	22	0	3	19	7	9	2	1	37%	11%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	110	1	29	80	39	15	26	0	49%	33%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	85	0	23	62	55	3	4	0	89%	6%

Notes

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 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.

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

TABLE A6

Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2012¹

Government body	Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests that were granted in full									
	2012				2013				2014	
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	53%	53%	53%	55%	56%	53%	55%	53%	51%	
TOTAL for Departments of State only	52%	53%	54%	56%	56%	54%	56%	55%	53%	
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	54%	54%	50%	52%	52%	51%	51%	48%	46%	
Departments of State										
Attorney General's Office	*	29%	*	*	53%	*	36%	57%	73%	
Cabinet Office #	28%	19%	29%	33%	23%	24%	25%	20%	21%	
Communities and Local Government	70%	71%	62%	72%	61%	69%	63%	64%	65%	
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	42%	42%	46%	38%	43%	35%	37%	39%	34%	
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	72%	82%	62%	66%	44%	64%	68%	59%	58%	
Department for Education	66%	67%	63%	63%	67%	65%	71%	67%	53%	
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	62%	59%	59%	76%	53%	69%	58%	58%	72%	
Department for International Development	75%	67%	69%	74%	74%	58%	69%	60%	62%	
Department for Transport #	77%	69%	75%	74%	75%	74%	78%	75%	76%	
Department for Work and Pensions #	65%	65%	69%	68%	76%	71%	66%	69%	69%	
Department of Energy and Climate Change	36%	40%	33%	41%	42%	37%	49%	55%	48%	
Department of Health	30%	42%	46%	58%	57%	54%	59%	44%	58%	
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	26%	20%	34%	32%	23%	26%	29%	37%	26%	
HM Treasury #	37%	36%	26%	46%	44%	46%	50%	41%	36%	
Home Office #	49%	44%	47%	47%	*	40%	42%	43%	42%	
Ministry of Defence #	65%	66%	65%	60%	62%	64%	61%	63%	62%	
Ministry of Justice #	37%	40%	38%	39%	38%	34%	39%	41%	34%	
Northern Ireland Office	52%	50%	60%	59%	48%	*	74%	*	43%	
Scotland Office	77%	78%	*	72%	70%	77%	86%	*	76%	
UK Export Finance	68%	*	*	*	56%	52%	79%	*	81%	
Wales Office	*	*	42%	*	96%	95%	73%	*	81%	

TABLE A6 continued

Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2012¹

Government body	Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests that were granted in full									
	2012				2013				2014	
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	
Other bodies included in monitoring										
Charity Commission	71%	61%	49%	49%	52%	45%	39%	50%	48%	
Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission †	77%	72%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Crown Prosecution Service	44%	55%	46%	43%	46%	47%	46%	43%	35%	
Debt Management Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	78%	
Food Standards Agency	48%	50%	55%	48%	38%	39%	62%	33%	49%	
Health and Safety Executive	56%	52%	49%	50%	48%	51%	50%	47%	44%	
HM Land Registry	92%	97%	96%	95%	86%	91%	95%	86%	88%	
HM Revenue and Customs	40%	45%	35%	36%	38%	29%	36%	37%	34%	
National Archives	61%	54%	57%	68%	*	56%	56%	51%	50%	
National Savings and Investments	70%	91%	*	*	86%	*	95%	90%	100%	
Office for National Statistics	72%	97%	83%	94%	92%	89%	87%	83%	78%	
Office for Standards in Education	46%	42%	37%	40%	32%	30%	27%	25%	19%	
Office of Fair Trading	25%	27%	29%	28%	32%	35%	30%	44%	67%	
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	61%	51%	59%	79%	68%	81%	71%	75%	72%	
Office of Rail Regulation	54%	59%	50%	*	50%	42%	28%	38%	41%	
Ordnance Survey	*	*	*	*	*	*	67%	*	67%	
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	46%	
Rural Payments Agency	73%	78%	75%	56%	74%	78%	61%	61%	59%	
Serious Fraud Office	*	66%	*	50%	57%	31%	44%	*	37%	
Treasury Solicitor's Department	46%	33%	43%	34%	32%	38%	50%	53%	49%	
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	12%	*	*	59%	73%	86%	89%	80%	89%	

Note

1 - '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.

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

† - Government body changed during monitoring period. See Annex C of Bulletin.

* - Percentage not supplied because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

TABLE A7

Exemptions and exceptions¹ applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2014

Exemption / Exception ¹	Number of requests where exemption used		
	Departments of State only	Other monitored bodies	TOTAL
Total number of requests where one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied	1,590	1,386	2,976
Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of FoI Act²) was applied			
S(21) - Information available by other means	-	-	-
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	222	37	259
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	88	12	100
S(24) - National security	58	0	58
S(26) - Defence	24	2	26
S(27) - International relations	86	7	93
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	1	0	1
S(29) - The economy	10	0	10
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	13	225	238
S(31) - Law enforcement	151	220	371
S(32) - Court records, etc.	43	16	59
S(33) - Audit functions	2	101	103
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	0	0	0
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc.	108	10	118
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	109	8	117
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc. and honours	14	2	16
S(38) - Health and Safety	23	18	41
S(39) - Environmental information	- ³	- ³	- ³
S(40) - Personal information	674	632	1,306
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	62	79	141
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	47	28	75
S(43) - Commercial interests	151	66	217
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	37	155	192
Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	47	25	72
4(a) - Information not available	10	0	10
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	14	4	18
4(c) - Too general	4	0	4
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	12	1	13
4(e) - Internal communications	30	3	33
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	6	2	8
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	2	1	3
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	0	0	0
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	2	0	2
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	17	5	22
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	4	0	4
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	0	0	0
Environmental Exceptions	148	41	189

Notes

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.

4 - Figures for Section 21 exemptions can be found in Table A8

TABLE A8

Section 21 exemptions¹ applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2014

Government body	Number of requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied	Timeliness of response		Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline
		20-day deadline met	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)	
TOTAL for all monitored bodies	748	682	51	93%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	605	560	45	93%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	143	122	6	95%
<i>Departments of State</i>				
Attorney General's Office	3	3	0	100%
Cabinet Office #	66	58	8	88%
Communities and Local Government	10	10	0	100%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	17	16	1	94%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	3	3	0	100%
Department for Education	12	12	0	100%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	3	3	0	100%
Department for International Development	6	6	0	100%
Department for Transport #	34	34	0	100%
Department for Work and Pensions #	47	46	1	98%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	12	12	0	100%
Department of Health	58	57	1	98%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	19	12	7	63%
HM Treasury #	93	93	0	100%
Home Office #	93	83	10	89%
Ministry of Defence #	31	26	5	84%
Ministry of Justice #	94	82	12	87%
Northern Ireland Office	2	2	0	100%
Scotland Office	0	0	0	-
UK Export Finance	0	0	0	-
Wales Office	2	2	0	100%

TABLE A8 Continued

Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2014

Government body	Number of requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied	Timeliness of response		Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline
		20-day deadline met	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)	
<i>Other bodies included in monitoring</i>				
Charity Commission	9	9	0	100%
Crown Prosecution Service	1	1	0	100%
Debt Management Office	0	0	0	-
Food Standards Agency	1	1	0	100%
Health and Safety Executive ²	15	-	-	-
HM Land Registry	11	11	0	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	36	32	4	89%
National Archives	4	3	1	75%
National Savings and Investments	0	0	0	-
Office for National Statistics	9	9	0	100%
Office for Standards in Education	7	6	1	86%
Office of Fair Trading	2	2	0	100%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	0	0	0	-
Office of Rail Regulation	2	2	0	100%
Ordnance Survey	1	1	0	100%
Royal Mint	0	0	0	-
Rural Payments Agency	0	0	0	-
Serious Fraud Office	1	1	0	100%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	44	44	0	100%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	0	0	0	-

Notes

1 - A section 21 exemption is defined as information available by other means.

2 - The HSE was unable to provide timeliness data for Section 21 exemptions. Therefore, timeliness figures may not sum.

3 - These tables cover requests that were exempted either fully or in part under Section 21, where a Section 21 was the only exemption used

4 - Section 21 is an absolute exemption, which means that no consideration of the public interest test is required to withhold information.

- Figures supplied by these bodies count requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the departments themselves. Annex C of Bulletin gives full details.

Annex B: 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 (FOI) 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 FOI 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 to **all ‘non-routine’ information requests** that government departments have received, and those routine information requests that are handled under Section 21. 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 handling of information requests.

Because 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:

- (i) These statistics cover both 'non-routine' information requests and 'routine' information requests (which are answered under a Section 21 exemption). This does 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.**

Users 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 and individuals 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 body included in the figures.

Annex C: 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 April and May 2014. This is the latest set of quarterly Freedom of Information statistics to be published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the government department that 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 41 government bodies, including all major departments of state (i.e. ministerial departments).

The monitored bodies that are not departments of state nonetheless have significant policymaking, regulatory or information-handling functions. As far as possible while maintaining consistency, 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 2014.

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
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
HM Treasury
Home Office
Ministry of Defence
Ministry of Justice
Northern Ireland Office
Scotland Office
UK Export Finance
Wales Office

Other monitored bodies

Charity Commission
Crown Prosecution Service
Debt Management Office
Food Standards Agency
Health and Safety Executive
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

The following list details:

1. Departmental changes that occurred between the beginning of January 2012 and the end of March 2014, the period covered by the tables in this bulletin; and
2. Figures which are provided by a number of Departments of State count the requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves.

Cabinet Office

Figures include requests received by the following:

Requests that were addressed to 10 Downing Street

Central Office of Information

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Met Office

Department for Education

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Standards and Testing Agency

Education Funding Agency

Teaching Agency

National College for School Leadership

Department for Transport

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Driving Standards Agency

Driver and Vehicle Licensing 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:

- Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission
- Disability and Carers' Service
- Jobcentre plus
- Pension Service

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. From 1 April 2011, the National Fraud Authority was included in requests supplied by the Home Office.

Government Equalities Office

Ministry of Defence

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- Defence Support Group (DSG),
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL)
- UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO)

Ministry of Justice

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

Annex D: Explanatory notes

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling by central government bodies of information requests received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI 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.

The FOI 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 FOI Act. Further information is available at:

www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request

The (amended) EIRs also came into force on 1 January 2005, to coincide with the FOI 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 the Gov.uk website:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-foiaeirs

These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to MoJ in April and May 2014. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 January to 31 March 2014. Thanks are due to FOI officers for their work in preparing these returns. The collection of monitoring data began on the 21st working day after the last day of this period (i.e. on 29th April 2014), since 20 working days is the statutory deadline for public authorities to respond to information requests under both the FOI Act and the EIRs.

Both 'non-routine' information requests and 'routine' information requests (that are covered under Section 21) are counted in these statistics. Important notes on the scope and consistency of these statistics are given in Annex B.

These statistics cover 41 central government bodies. At the commencement of the Act in January 2005, there were 43 bodies covered by the monitoring statistics, but the precise number can change from time to time due to 'Machinery of Government' changes. A full list of the monitored bodies in Q1 2014 is shown in Annex C.

Contacts

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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Email: Paul.Halford@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

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Ministry of Justice
7th Floor, 102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ
Tel: 020 3334 3387
Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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 3625
Email: informationrights@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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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