



Ministry
of Justice



Freedom of Information Statistics: Implementation in Central Government

April to June 2015

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

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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 April to June 2015 (with tables in Annex A covering the period from Q2 2013 until Q2 2015).

The previous quarterly and annual bulletins, together covering the period from January 2005 to June 2015, 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-Fol-statistics (for 2010-2015);

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/Fol/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 period. Further definitions of these requests can be found in Annex B, which defines the information that is in scope of these statistics. This bulletin also includes requests for information that is already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means, which are exempted under Section 21 of the FOI Act. 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 Act¹ and a substantial number of FOI requests are sent to those which are non-monitored. The trends that 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-Folaeirs.

Departmental changes

Please refer to Annex C for a full list of monitored bodies. It details the inclusion of subordinate agencies.

¹www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/vo060725/text/60725w0081.htm#06072811011026

Key Findings

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 – 21 Departments of State and 20 ‘other monitored bodies’ – and covers the 2nd Quarter of 2015 (Q2) (April to June).

Number of requests [see Tables A1 & A2]

In Q2 2015, monitored central government bodies received 11,500 non-routine Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. This is 189 (2%) fewer requests than same period in 2014 and 1,381 (11%) fewer than the number received in the previous quarter (Q1 2015).

Between Q1 2006 and Q2 2015 the number of FOI requests recorded by monitored bodies increased by 22%, although the number of monitored bodies has remained fairly constant. The increase has been driven by requests to Departments of State.

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

Across all monitored bodies, 90% of requests received during Q2 2015 received a response within the statutory deadline or were responded to within a permitted deadline extension (referred to as ‘in time’). This is the same as the previous quarter, but a fall of 1 percentage point since Q2 2014. Timeliness ranged from 70% to 100%.

Initial outcomes of requests [see Tables A5 & A6]

Of the 8,548 resolvable requests received during Q2 2015, 46% were granted in full and 35% 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 4 percentage points compared to Q2 2014, and by 2 percentage points from Q1 2015.

Exemptions and exceptions [see Table A7]

In Q2 2015, one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied to 2,793 requests, which is 33% of all resolvable requests. The most common exemption, as in previous quarters, was section 40 (personal data). Section 40 was used in 49% of exempt requests.

Section 21 [See Table A8]

Section 21 is exemption due to the data requested being otherwise available. There were 528 of these exemptions used (where this was the only exemption applied). In Q2 2015, and 93% of these were responded to within the 20-day deadline.

1. Number of requests [see Tables A1 & A2]

Following the annual fall in requests received in 2014 and a sharp rise in requests in Q1 (the largest quarter on quarter rise in number of receipts since the implementation of the Act), from April to June (Q2) 2015 the monitored central government bodies received a total of 11,500 non-routine FOI (Freedom of Information Act) requests. This is 189 (2%) fewer requests than were received in Q2 2014, and 1,381 (11%) fewer than the number received in Q1 2015. The number of requests received generally tends to fall from Q1 to Q2 after rising from Q4 to Q1.

Figure 1 shows that following an upwards trend starting in 2006, the number of requests peaked in Q1 2012 at 14,116 requests, which has not been exceeded since the FOI Act was first introduced.

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

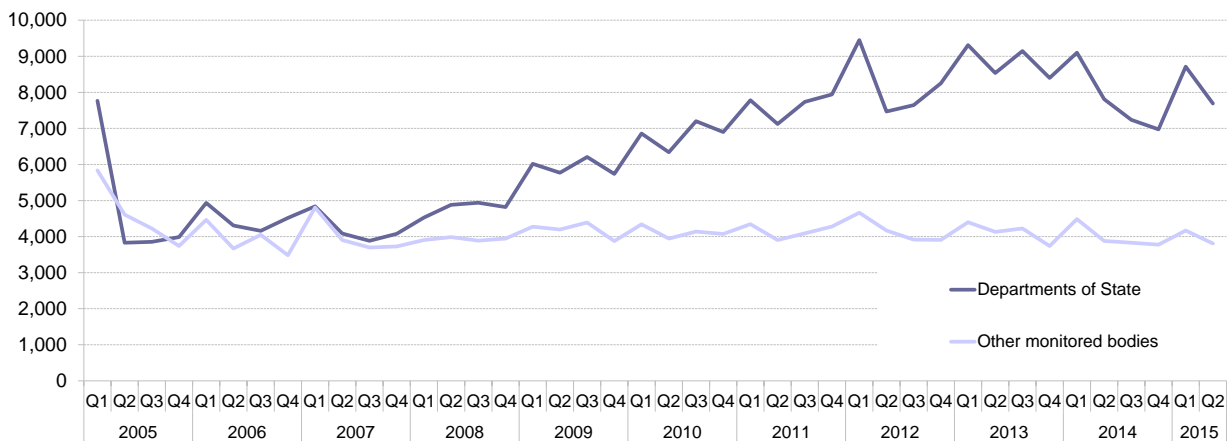


Figure 1 illustrates that the trend of requests over the past 6 years has largely been driven by requests to Departments of State, which accounted for 67% of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q2 of 2015. This is a rise of 15 percentage points since Q1 2006 (52%) and is unchanged from Q2 2014.

Departments of State reported receiving a total of 7,692 information requests in Q2 2015, 2% less compared with Q2 2014, and 12% less than Q1 2015. Other monitored bodies reported having received 3,808 requests, a fall of 2% from Q2 2014 and a fall of 9% from Q1 2015.

This quarter's decline in requests follows the general pattern observable since 2009, whereby the number of requests received falls from Q1 to Q2. The monitored bodies with the largest absolute decrease in requests were:

- Department for Transport, by 304 requests (a 37% decrease)²;
- Health and Safety Executive, by 138 requests (a 10% decrease);
- Ministry of Defence, by 129 requests (a 12% decrease).

Of the Departments of State, only one body reported having received over 1000 requests in Q2 2015, the Department for Work and Pensions. The departments that reported the highest number of requests are as follows:

- Department for Work and Pensions – 1,271 requests;
- Ministry of Justice – 979 requests;
- Ministry of Defence – 920 requests.

Among other monitored bodies, those that reported the highest number of requests in Q2 included:

- Health and Safety Executive – 1,200 requests;
- The National Archives – 736 requests;
- HM Revenue and Customs – 474 requests.

These bodies account for 63% of all requests received by all the other monitored bodies. Therefore, the trends for other monitored bodies are heavily dependent on the trends for these 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 379 such requests during the 2nd quarter of 2015, accounting for 3% of all requests received. The number of requests handled under EIR is down by 107 requests on Q2 2014, and down by 111 requests on Q1 2015.

² DfT estimate that the fall in requests is a result of the detachment of the Highways Agency in April 2015.

2. 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)³. 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, 85% of requests received during Q2 of 2015 were sent a response within the 20 (or 30 for the National Archives) working day deadline – this is unchanged since Q1 2015, but a decrease of 2 percentage point from Q2 2014. In Q2 2015, 90% 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 unchanged from the previous quarter and a fall of 1 percentage point compared to Q2 2014.

A comparison between all monitored bodies showed that between 68% and 100% of requests received during Q2 of 2015 were responded to within the 20-day deadline, and between 70% and 100% of requests received in the same period were responded to ‘in time’.⁴

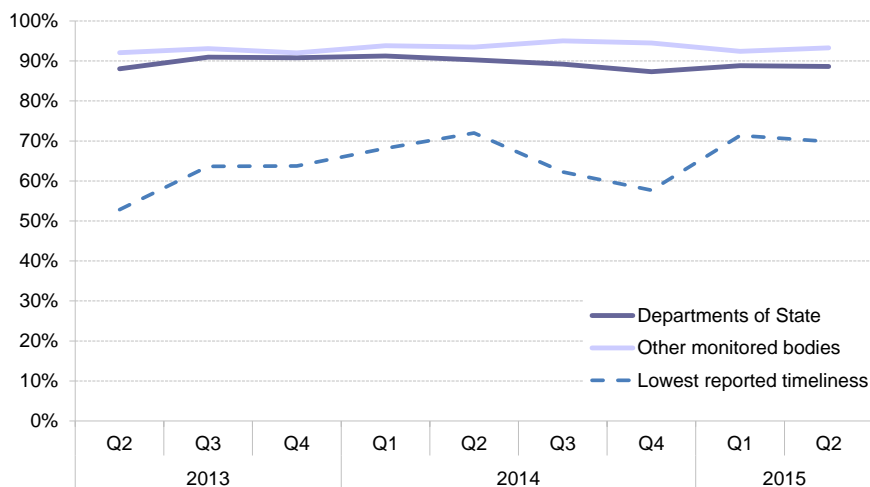
Figure 2 shows that average⁵ timeliness (i.e. answering requests ‘in time’) for monitored bodies has been at least 87% for departments of state and at least 92% for other monitored bodies over the last two years. It also illustrates that in Q2 2015 other monitored bodies (93% timeliness) were, on average, marginally timelier than Departments of State (89% timeliness).

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ Based on the mean.

Figure 2: Percentage of FOI requests replied to ‘in time’ by Departments of State and other monitored bodies by quarter from Q2 2013



3. 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 11,500 requests reported during Q2 of 2015 across all monitored bodies, 2,952 were not resolvable, as follows:

- 28 were ‘on hold’ awaiting a fee payment;
- 2,083 requests sought information that was not held;
- 841 were responded to with ‘advice and assistance’ because the body handling the request needed further information⁶ in order to identify the details being sought. If the requester provided appropriate information, the request is considered resolvable. Alternatively, if further information is needed to answer the request, and the requester has not provided any more detail, the public body will not be able to proceed with answering the request.

As a result, the remaining 8,548 (75%) requests were assumed to be ‘resolvable’, in that it was possible to give a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought.

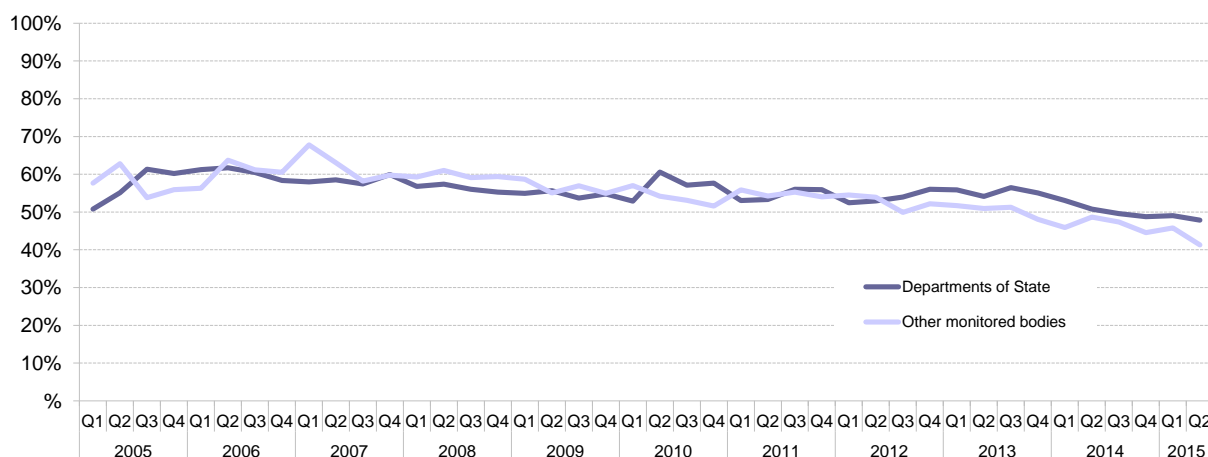
Of the ‘resolvable’ requests received during Q2 of 2015:

⁶ Such as to clarify unclear requests; to help to provide the information requested in an acceptable format; or when a request is transferred to another public authority.

- 46% (3,909) were granted in full, down from 50% (4,307) in Q2 2014 and from 48% (4,573) in Q1 2015;
- 35% (2,963) were withheld in full, up from 31% (2,636) in Q2 2014, and from 31% (3,001) in Q1 of 2015;
- 13% (1,100) were withheld in part, unchanged from the 13% (1,102) in Q2 2014 but down from 14% (1,305) in Q1 2015;
- The remainder (7%⁷, 576) 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 stayed fairly constant since the Act was introduced, although a slight downward trend has been emerging since the end of 2013. This may reflect a changing nature of requests as the monitored bodies have made more routine information available to the public in the form of regular quarterly and annual statistical publications.

Figure 3: Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full, Q2 2005 – Q2 2015



4. 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 under one or more of the categories of exempt information ('exemptions') listed in Part II of the Act⁸. Similar

⁷ Total does not sum due to rounding.

⁸ A summary of all exemptions can be found at: www.justice.gov.uk/information-access-rights/FoI-guidance-for-practitioners/exemptions-guidance

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 Section 5 of this bulletin.

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 2,793 requests (33% of resolvable requests) were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q2 2015. 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 Q2 2015 were:

- Section 40 (Personal information), which was applied to 1,363 requests, and in 49% of all exempt requests;
- Section 31 (Law enforcement), which was applied to 373 requests, and in 13% of all exempt requests;
- Section 22 (Information intended for future publication), which was applied to 258 requests, and in 9% of all exempt requests;
- Section 30 (Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities), which was applied to 229 requests, and in 8% of all exempt requests;
- Section 43 (Commercial interests), which was applied to 194 requests, and in 7% of all exempt requests.

These five exemptions are typically among the most frequent exemptions used since the FoI Act came into force.

5. Use of the Section 21 Exemption [See table A8]

A Section 21 exemption can be used under the FoI Act when information is reasonably available by other means⁹. Section 21 has been reported individually in this bulletin since Q1 2013; 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 the effort by the monitored bodies 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. Including Section 21 requests within the other parts of this bulletin could

⁹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21

artificially inflate both volume and timeliness figures since the requests are relatively straightforward to answer.

In the 2nd quarter of 2015, there were 528 requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied¹⁰ either in full or in part. Of these, 93% of requests received a response within the 20-day deadline. This is unchanged from the previous quarter.

¹⁰ 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 quarter to quarter (A2, A4, A6) tables

Table A1	<i>Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April – 30 June 2015, 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 April 2013</i>
Table A3	<i>Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April – 30 June 2015</i>
Table A4	<i>Proportion of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were answered ‘in time’, by quarter, since 1 April 2013</i>
Table A5	<i>Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April – 30 June 2015</i>
Table A6	<i>Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 April 2013</i>
Table A7	<i>Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 April – 30 June 2015</i>
Table A8	<i>Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 April – 30 June 2015</i>

Symbols and conventions

- Not applicable.
- 0 Nil.
- * Percentage not supplied because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer (only applicable to pre 2014 publications).
- # 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 April - 30 June 2015, 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	11,500	10,896	28	576	379
TOTAL for Departments of State only	7,692	7,275	0	417	251
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,808	3,621	28	159	128
<i>Departments of State</i>					
Attorney General's Office	69	68	0	1	1
Cabinet Office #	404	380	0	24	1
Communities and Local Government	209	203	0	6	63
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	217	209	0	8	5
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	146	144	0	2	7
Department for Education	510	494	0	16	1
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	174	163	0	11	45
Department for International Development	115	104	0	11	6
Department for Transport #†	524	520	0	4	16
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,271	1,239	0	32	1
Department of Energy and Climate Change	155	144	0	11	86
Department of Health	407	407	0	0	2
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	323	281	0	42	11
HM Treasury #	248	240	0	8	3
Home Office #	798	757	0	41	0
Ministry of Defence #	920	876	0	44	2
Ministry of Justice #	979	831	0	148	1
Northern Ireland Office	61	60	0	1	0
Scotland Office	76	71	0	5	0
UK Export Finance ³	32	30	0	2	0
Wales Office	54	54	0	0	0

TABLE A1 continued

Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 April - 30 June 2015 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	163	161	0	2	0
Competition and Markets Authority	34	34	0	0	0
Crown Prosecution Service	181	179	0	2	0
Debt Management Office	23	23	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	38	38	0	0	0
Health and Safety Executive	1,200	1,155	1	44	54
HM Land Registry	111	106	5	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	474	452	0	22	0
National Archives	736	633	22	81	2
National Savings and Investments	37	37	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	86	86	0	0	0
Office for Standards in Education	255	253	0	2	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	103	102	0	1	41
Office of Rail and Road †	39	38	0	1	0
Ordnance Survey	24	23	0	1	0
Royal Mint	8	8	0	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	91	90	0	1	30
Serious Fraud Office	26	24	0	2	0
Government Legal Department †	147	147	0	0	1
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	32	32	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 April 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 April 2013

Government body	2013			2014				2015	
	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	12,667	13,370	12,140	13,585	11,689	11,067	10,749	12,881	11,500
TOTAL for Departments of State only	8,536	9,145	8,400	9,099	7,811	7,239	6,973	8,712	7,692
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	4,131	4,225	3,740	4,486	3,878	3,828	3,776	4,169	3,808
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	64	78	64	57	41	53	45	62	69
Cabinet Office #	466	405	435	528	473	346	313	436	404
Communities and Local Government	212	208	175	197	171	210	202	302	209
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	238	298	234	301	230	251	221	280	217
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	134	138	124	137	152	109	125	157	146
Department for Education	454	390	439	518	443	370	414	554	510
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	170	243	237	318	214	196	189	275	174
Department for International Development	114	127	123	134	111	85	96	143	115
Department for Transport #†	693	1,074	1,008	684	673	602	694	828	524
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,356	1,513	1,257	1,408	1,065	1,104	1,082	1,248	1,271
Department of Energy and Climate Change	154	207	212	240	153	141	158	189	155
Department of Health	524	514	398	469	490	451	293	443	407
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	338	293	309	369	275	271	235	334	323
HM Treasury #	689	642	522	388	449	330	285	275	248
Home Office #	884	893	768	872	741	736	692	906	798
Ministry of Defence #	816	904	903	1,022	856	781	831	1,049	920
Ministry of Justice #	1,103	1,038	1,068	1,308	1,133	1,062	992	1,036	979
Northern Ireland Office	41	60	46	60	58	40	33	65	61
Scotland Office	34	41	30	38	39	37	33	61	76
UK Export Finance	29	32	22	16	21	31	16	18	32
Wales Office	23	47	26	35	23	33	24	51	54

TABLE A2 continued

Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 April 2013

Government body	2013			2014				2015	
	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									
Charity Commission	151	158	142	167	156	126	162	162	163
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	-	20	32	40	50	34
Crown Prosecution Service	160	165	160	220	182	173	165	173	181
Debt Management Office	25	15	9	14	15	17	9	18	23
Food Standards Agency	44	40	35	53	41	38	41	54	38
Health and Safety Executive	1,447	1,417	1,246	1,378	1,246	1,243	1,236	1,338	1,200
HM Land Registry	133	93	72	100	96	87	104	83	111
HM Revenue and Customs	518	554	576	622	565	515	592	545	474
National Archives	861	902	713	909	830	783	716	825	736
National Savings and Investments	16	43	29	38	32	41	23	36	37
Office for National Statistics	61	84	48	82	65	71	75	106	86
Office for Standards in Education	172	186	209	309	184	159	176	216	255
Office of Fair Trading	85	87	83	69	-	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	67	74	94	97	90	115	106	126	103
Office of Rail and Road †	58	62	42	46	37	41	33	52	39
Ordnance Survey	16	35	20	13	11	25	15	28	24
Royal Mint	1	5	7	15	8	6	4	5	8
Rural Payments Agency	131	136	112	137	126	141	116	173	91
Serious Fraud Office	46	37	23	22	25	28	17	35	26
Government Legal Department †	85	56	69	110	94	99	66	108	147
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	54	76	51	85	55	88	80	36	32

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.

Note: The Competition and Markets Authority took over the functions of the Office of Fair Trading on 1st April 2014

TABLE A3

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 2015

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	11,472	9,772	570	1,130	85%	90%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	7,692	6,440	376	876	84%	89%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,780	3,332	194	254	88%	93%
<i>Departments of State</i>						
Attorney General's Office	69	67	2	0	97%	100%
Cabinet Office #	404	319	44	41	79%	90%
Communities and Local Government	209	186	23	0	89%	100%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	217	172	16	29	79%	87%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	146	121	2	23	83%	84%
Department for Education	510	411	10	89	81%	83%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	174	134	10	30	77%	83%
Department for International Development	115	98	16	1	85%	99%
Department for Transport #†	524	500	13	11	95%	98%
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,271	1,176	6	89	93%	93%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	155	128	16	11	83%	93%
Department of Health	407	403	4	0	99%	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	323	229	62	32	71%	90%
HM Treasury #	248	220	18	10	89%	96%
Home Office #	798	607	87	104	76%	87%
Ministry of Defence #	920	800	34	86	87%	91%
Ministry of Justice #	979	679	5	295	69%	70%
Northern Ireland Office	61	52	0	9	85%	85%
Scotland Office	76	57	8	11	75%	86%
UK Export Finance	32	27	0	5	84%	84%
Wales Office	54	54	0	0	100%	100%

TABLE A3 continued

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 2015

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	163	152	0	11	93%	93%
Competition and Markets Authority	34	31	0	3	91%	91%
Crown Prosecution Service	181	161	9	11	89%	94%
Debt Management Office	23	23	0	0	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	38	35	2	1	92%	97%
Health and Safety Executive	1,199	1,114	25	60	93%	95%
HM Land Registry	106	105	0	1	99%	99%
HM Revenue and Customs	474	394	0	80	83%	83%
National Archives ³	714	544	135	35	76%	95%
National Savings and Investments	37	36	1	0	97%	100%
Office for National Statistics	86	83	0	3	97%	97%
Office for Standards in Education	255	245	2	8	96%	97%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	103	70	7	26	68%	75%
Office of Rail and Road †	39	36	2	1	92%	97%
Ordnance Survey	24	21	3	0	88%	100%
Royal Mint	8	6	1	1	75%	88%
Rural Payments Agency	91	83	2	6	91%	93%
Serious Fraud Office	26	19	5	2	73%	92%
Government Legal Department †	147	142	0	5	97%	97%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	32	32	0	0	100%	100%

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 April 2013 that were answered 'in time', by quarter

Government body	2013			2014				2015	
	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	89%	92%	91%	92%	91%	91%	90%	90%	90%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	88%	91%	91%	91%	90%	89%	87%	89%	89%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	92%	93%	92%	94%	93%	95%	94%	92%	93%
Departments of State									
Attorney General's Office	97%	95%	97%	98%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Cabinet Office #	83%	85%	86%	95%	90%	94%	88%	88%	90%
Communities and Local Government	92%	89%	82%	80%	82%	72%	73%	94%	100%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	99%	96%	98%	98%	97%	96%	96%	99%	87%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	97%	96%	95%	98%	96%	96%	93%	71%	84%
Department for Education	87%	87%	85%	87%	91%	91%	92%	86%	83%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	89%	100%	97%	99%	92%	62%	58%	79%	83%
Department for International Development	99%	98%	99%	98%	98%	99%	98%	100%	99%
Department for Transport #†	96%	96%	97%	95%	96%	97%	96%	96%	98%
Department for Work and Pensions #	95%	94%	94%	92%	91%	90%	91%	94%	93%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	96%	99%	97%	98%	92%	93%	94%	93%	93%
Department of Health	99%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	88%	88%	82%	88%	93%	90%	90%	88%	90%
HM Treasury #	96%	96%	96%	91%	96%	92%	93%	92%	96%
Home Office #	53%	72%	81%	87%	84%	87%	90%	86%	87%
Ministry of Defence #	87%	89%	88%	85%	87%	88%	84%	87%	91%
Ministry of Justice #	88%	89%	87%	89%	83%	81%	73%	76%	70%
Northern Ireland Office	98%	97%	93%	88%	88%	95%	91%	89%	85%
Scotland Office	100%	98%	93%	92%	95%	92%	94%	90%	86%
UK Export Finance	66%	94%	77%	100%	90%	90%	88%	100%	84%
Wales Office	100%	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	94%	100%

TABLE A4 continued

Percentage of non-routine information requests received since 1 April 2013 that were answered 'in time', by quarter

Government body	2013			2014				2015	
	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									
Charity Commission	96%	95%	94%	98%	95%	93%	90%	91%	93%
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	-	100%	97%	98%	96%	91%
Crown Prosecution Service	71%	64%	64%	95%	97%	94%	96%	91%	94%
Debt Management Office	100%	*	*	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	100%	98%	100%	98%	98%	100%	100%	96%	97%
Health and Safety Executive	89%	92%	92%	91%	92%	95%	94%	93%	95%
HM Land Registry	98%	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%	99%	100%	99%
HM Revenue and Customs	90%	92%	89%	88%	86%	90%	87%	80%	83%
National Archives ²	99%	98%	98%	97%	97%	98%	98%	98%	95%
National Savings and Investments	*	95%	93%	95%	97%	100%	100%	94%	100%
Office for National Statistics	77%	98%	96%	100%	100%	99%	95%	96%	97%
Office for Standards in Education	97%	97%	98%	97%	99%	99%	97%	95%	97%
Office of Fair Trading	96%	92%	89%	97%	-	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	94%	86%	90%	88%	91%	90%	95%	83%	75%
Office of Rail and Road †	95%	95%	98%	98%	92%	95%	100%	96%	97%
Ordnance Survey	*	100%	*	100%	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	93%	100%	67%	100%	80%	88%
Rural Payments Agency	97%	94%	87%	100%	100%	94%	99%	96%	93%
Serious Fraud Office	80%	92%	96%	68%	72%	93%	76%	89%	92%
Government Legal Department †	98%	100%	99%	99%	99%	98%	100%	95%	97%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	96%	96%	96%	99%	100%	99%	96%	94%	100%

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.

Note: The Competition and Markets Authority took over the functions of the Office of Fair Trading on 1st April 2014

TABLE A5
Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 2015

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	11,472	841	2,083	8,548	3,909	1,100	2,963	576	46%	35%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	7,692	565	1,365	5,762	2,758	653	1,934	417	48%	34%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	3,780	276	718	2,786	1,151	447	1,029	159	41%	37%
Departments of State										
Attorney General's Office	69	1	30	38	26	6	5	1	68%	13%
Cabinet Office #	404	45	119	240	41	20	155	24	17%	65%
Communities and Local Government	209	7	54	148	84	27	31	6	57%	21%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	217	6	53	158	51	25	74	8	32%	47%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	146	19	26	101	53	13	33	2	52%	33%
Department for Education	510	53	76	381	216	71	78	16	57%	20%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	174	27	44	103	47	25	20	11	46%	19%
Department for International Development	115	0	15	100	49	14	26	11	49%	26%
Department for Transport #†	524	0	98	426	291	43	88	4	68%	21%
Department for Work and Pensions #	1,271	82	89	1,100	685	35	348	32	62%	32%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	155	5	27	123	44	20	48	11	36%	39%
Department of Health	407	14	101	292	152	11	129	0	52%	44%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	323	19	69	235	61	70	62	42	26%	26%
HM Treasury #	248	24	80	144	35	27	74	8	24%	51%
Home Office #	798	86	168	544	189	73	241	41	35%	44%
Ministry of Defence #	920	67	160	693	368	78	203	44	53%	29%
Ministry of Justice #	979	75	114	790	252	83	307	148	32%	39%
Northern Ireland Office	61	0	21	40	34	3	2	1	85%	5%
Scotland Office	76	34	8	34	21	1	7	5	62%	21%
UK Export Finance	32	1	2	29	18	6	3	2	62%	10%
Wales Office	54	0	11	43	41	2	0	0	95%	0%

TABLE A5 continued

Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 April - 30 June 2015

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	163	16	22	125	50	33	40	2	40%	32%
Competition and Markets Authority	34	2	2	30	15	1	14	0	50%	47%
Crown Prosecution Service	181	24	10	147	42	14	89	2	29%	61%
Debt Management Office	23	0	3	20	10	10	0	0	50%	0%
Food Standards Agency	38	4	4	30	21	9	0	0	70%	0%
Health and Safety Executive	1,199	14	430	755	311	191	209	44	41%	28%
HM Land Registry	106	6	7	93	79	10	4	0	85%	4%
HM Revenue and Customs	474	22	49	403	128	17	236	22	32%	59%
National Archives	714	98	58	558	247	51	179	81	44%	32%
National Savings and Investments	37	3	6	28	17	6	5	0	61%	18%
Office for National Statistics	86	0	19	67	53	0	14	0	79%	21%
Office for Standards in Education	255	26	15	214	36	27	149	2	17%	70%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	103	12	3	88	45	32	10	1	51%	11%
Office of Rail and Road †	39	2	10	27	8	13	5	1	30%	19%
Ordnance Survey	24	3	4	17	9	5	2	1	53%	12%
Royal Mint	8	0	1	7	2	5	0	0	29%	0%
Rural Payments Agency	91	32	9	50	35	3	11	1	70%	22%
Serious Fraud Office	26	4	1	21	9	2	8	2	43%	38%
Government Legal Department †	147	3	51	93	25	18	50	0	27%	54%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	32	5	14	13	9	0	4	0	69%	31%

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 April 2013 ¹

Government body	2014								2015	
	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	53%	55%	53%	51%	50%	49%	47%	48%	46%	
TOTAL for Departments of State only	54%	56%	55%	53%	51%	50%	49%	49%	48%	
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	51%	51%	48%	46%	49%	47%	45%	46%	41%	
Departments of State										
Attorney General's Office	*	36%	57%	73%	50%	29%	7%	21%	68%	
Cabinet Office #	24%	25%	20%	21%	22%	29%	16%	22%	17%	
Communities and Local Government	69%	63%	64%	65%	58%	53%	48%	56%	57%	
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	35%	37%	39%	34%	31%	31%	29%	32%	32%	
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	64%	68%	59%	58%	60%	71%	47%	51%	52%	
Department for Education	65%	71%	67%	53%	59%	68%	66%	64%	57%	
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	69%	58%	58%	72%	68%	48%	34%	41%	46%	
Department for International Development	58%	69%	60%	62%	60%	60%	56%	52%	49%	
Department for Transport #†	74%	78%	75%	76%	77%	77%	77%	77%	68%	
Department for Work and Pensions #	71%	66%	69%	69%	65%	65%	63%	64%	62%	
Department of Energy and Climate Change	37%	49%	55%	48%	44%	38%	24%	35%	36%	
Department of Health	54%	59%	44%	58%	42%	19%	37%	53%	52%	
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	26%	29%	37%	26%	31%	27%	30%	27%	26%	
HM Treasury #	46%	50%	41%	38%	54%	47%	42%	30%	24%	
Home Office #	40%	42%	43%	42%	37%	38%	38%	34%	35%	
Ministry of Defence #	64%	61%	63%	62%	52%	52%	52%	50%	53%	
Ministry of Justice #	34%	39%	41%	34%	36%	37%	34%	29%	32%	
Northern Ireland Office	*	74%	*	43%	40%	56%	50%	74%	85%	
Scotland Office	77%	86%	*	76%	74%	88%	94%	82%	62%	
UK Export Finance	52%	79%	*	81%	50%	60%	38%	69%	62%	
Wales Office	95%	73%	*	81%	57%	50%	100%	86%	95%	

TABLE A6 continued

Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 April 2013

Government body	2014								2015	
	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										
Charity Commission	45%	39%	50%	48%	45%	47%	50%	39%	40%	
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	-	19%	48%	48%	61%	50%	
Crown Prosecution Service	47%	46%	43%	35%	36%	34%	38%	38%	29%	
Debt Management Office	*	*	*	78%	69%	50%	63%	44%	50%	
Food Standards Agency	39%	62%	33%	49%	67%	68%	55%	57%	70%	
Health and Safety Executive	51%	50%	47%	44%	53%	52%	52%	47%	41%	
HM Land Registry	91%	95%	86%	88%	67%	75%	91%	94%	85%	
HM Revenue and Customs	29%	36%	37%	34%	27%	31%	18%	31%	32%	
National Archives	56%	56%	51%	50%	59%	45%	51%	45%	44%	
National Savings and Investments	*	95%	90%	100%	83%	90%	75%	87%	61%	
Office for National Statistics	89%	87%	83%	78%	84%	82%	83%	80%	79%	
Office for Standards in Education	30%	27%	25%	19%	22%	30%	20%	27%	17%	
Office of Fair Trading	35%	30%	44%	67%	-	-	-	-	-	
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	81%	81%	75%	72%	59%	43%	49%	54%	51%	
Office of Rail and Road †	42%	28%	38%	41%	35%	48%	50%	57%	30%	
Ordnance Survey	*	67%	*	67%	60%	78%	50%	81%	53%	
Royal Mint	*	*	*	46%	14%	17%	75%	60%	29%	
Rural Payments Agency	78%	61%	61%	59%	68%	51%	46%	48%	70%	
Serious Fraud Office	31%	44%	*	37%	44%	36%	43%	70%	43%	
Government Legal Department †	38%	50%	53%	49%	50%	48%	41%	36%	27%	
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	86%	89%	80%	89%	68%	86%	48%	69%	69%	

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.

Note: The Competition and Markets Authority took over the functions of the Office of Fair Trading on 1st April 2014

TABLE A7

Exemptions and exceptions¹ applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 April - 30 June 2015

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	1,491	1,302	2,793
Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of FoI Act ²) was applied			
S(21) - Information available by other means	-	-	-
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	210	48	258
S(22A) - Research intended for future publication	0	0	0
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	69	4	73
S(24) - National security	67	3	70
S(26) - Defence	26	0	26
S(27) - International relations	83	7	90
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	2	0	2
S(29) - The economy	4	0	4
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	11	218	229
S(31) - Law enforcement	174	199	373
S(32) - Court records, etc.	58	17	75
S(33) - Audit functions	1	11	12
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	0	0	0
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc.	104	4	108
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	76	3	79
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc. and honours	14	3	17
S(38) - Health and Safety	34	45	79
S(39) - Environmental information	- ³	- ³	- ³
S(40) - Personal information	729	634	1,363
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	66	79	145
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	31	17	48
S(43) - Commercial interests	170	24	194
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	35	151	186
Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	32	29	61
4(a) - Information not available	5	2	7
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	20	1	21
4(c) - Too general	2	0	2
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	10	0	10
4(e) - Internal communications	17	0	17
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	7	0	7
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	9	7	16
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	2	1	3
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	2	1	3
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	9	8	17
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	3	2	5
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	0	0	0
Environmental Exceptions	118	51	169

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 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. Figures for Section 21 exemptions can be found in Table A8.

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 not subject to the EIRs do not apply one of the EIR exceptions listed above.

TABLE A8

Section 21 exemptions¹ applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 April - 30 June 2015

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	528	491	37	93%
TOTAL for Departments of State only	436	402	34	92%
TOTAL for other monitored bodies	92	89	3	97%
Departments of State				
Attorney General's Office	4	4	0	100%
Cabinet Office #	28	24	4	86%
Communities and Local Government	3	3	0	100%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	10	9	1	90%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	4	4	0	100%
Department for Education	30	26	4	87%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	0	0	0	-
Department for International Development	6	6	0	100%
Department for Transport #	26	26	0	100%
Department for Work and Pensions #	41	39	2	95%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	5	5	0	100%
Department of Health	54	54	0	100%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	8	8	0	100%
HM Treasury #	28	26	2	93%
Home Office #	70	65	5	93%
Ministry of Defence #	46	44	2	96%
Ministry of Justice #	66	55	11	83%
Northern Ireland Office	5	2	3	40%
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 April - 30 June 2015

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)	
Other bodies included in monitoring				
Charity Commission	1	1	0	100%
Competition and Markets Authority	2	2	0	100%
Crown Prosecution Service	0	0	0	-
Debt Management Office	0	0	0	-
Food Standards Agency	0	0	0	-
Health and Safety Executive	10	10	0	100%
HM Land Registry	14	14	0	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	28	26	2	93%
National Archives	3	2	1	67%
National Savings and Investments	0	0	0	-
Office for National Statistics	5	5	0	100%
Office for Standards in Education	8	8	0	100%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	0	0	0	-
Office of Rail and Road	0	0	0	-
Ordnance Survey	1	1	0	100%
Royal Mint	0	0	0	-
Rural Payments Agency	0	0	0	-
Serious Fraud Office	0	0	0	-
Government Legal Department	20	20	0	100%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	0	0	0	-

Notes

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

- 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.

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

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

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 (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 April 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.

More information can be found by accessing the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262792/25section2.pdf

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 February 2015. 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 41 government bodies, including all major departments of state (i.e. Ministerial departments)¹¹.

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 and excludes Executive Agencies. However, periodic “Machinery of Government” changes make it difficult to define the list precisely.

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 as outlined in Annex B.

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 fourth quarter of 2014.

Departments of State

- Attorney General’s Office
- Cabinet Office
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Department for Communities and Local Government
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- Department for Education

¹¹ The Ministerial departments excluded from this publication are the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland, the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons and the Office of the Leader of the House of Lords.

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
HM Treasury
Home Office
Ministry of Defence
Ministry of Justice
Northern Ireland Office
Scotland Office
Wales Office

Other monitored bodies

Charity 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
Office of Fair Trading
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
Office of Rail and Road¹²
Ordnance Survey
Royal Mint
Rural Payments Agency
Serious Fraud Office
Government Legal Department¹³
Water Services Regulation Authority

Notes

1. 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.

¹² On 1st April 2015, the Office of Rail Regulation changed its name to the Office of Rail and Road.

¹³ On 1st April 2015, the Treasury Solicitor's Department changed its name to the Government Legal Department.

Cabinet Office

Figures include requests received by the following:

Requests that were addressed to 10 Downing Street
Central Office of Information

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 Transport¹⁴

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
Marine and Coastguard Agency
Vehicle Certification 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 following agencies:

Office for Budget Responsibility

¹⁴ From 1st April 2015, the Highways Agency became Highways England, a new Government Owned Company. Highways England are a separate public authority from the Department for Transport, including for the purposes of the FOI Act.

Home Office

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

- Criminal Records Bureau
- Borders and Immigration Agency
- Identity and Passport Service
- National Fraud Authority
- Government Equalities Office

Ministry of Defence¹⁵

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 the following agencies:

- HM Courts and Tribunals Service
- National Offender Management Service
- National Probation Service
- Legal Aid Agency
- Official Solicitor and Public Trustee
- Judicial Office
- Office of the Public Guardian

¹⁵ From 1st April 2015, the Defence Support Group is no longer a government agency.

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 April 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-freedom-of-information-act

The (amended) EIRs also came into force on 1 April 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-Folaeirs

These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to MoJ in July and August 2015. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 April to 30 June 2015. 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 July 2015), 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 April 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 2015 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 Cabinet Office press office:

Robert Honey
Tel: 020 7276 0432
Email: robert.honey@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

Daniel Minshull
Justice Statistics Analytical Services
Ministry of Justice
7th Floor, 102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ
Tel: 020 3334 6411
Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other queries about the Freedom of Information Act 2000 should be directed to:

Freedom of Information Policy
Cabinet Office
Room 405
70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS
Tel: 020 7276 1234
Email: foi-team@cabinetoffice.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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