

Freedom of Information request 2689/2014

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Information request

On June 20th was published a response to the work and pensions select committees report.

'1st Special Report - Monitoring the performance of the Department for Work and Pensions in 2012-13: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2013-14'

In this, one of the reason for PIP delays is given as 'For example, claimants are required to complete and return a PIP2 form, within one month which asks them to explain how their condition affects their daily life. More claimants than expected are taking much longer to return this form'.

As this statement has been made, it must be based on some data.

This level of detail is not typically published in statistics.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-independence-payment-official-statistics-june-2014>

Therefore, it does not come under the 'will be published in future' exemption.

As this data has already been collected and verified to the level it is appropriate to report to a select committee as a partial justification for a delay, it does not come under the 'over 600 pounds' exemption.

There is a clear public interest in these figures.

Can you please provide the details of delays in customers returning PIP2 forms, and the amount of delay.

If possible, could you also supply details on how much extra work (man-hours or other accounting details) it takes, per claimant if the PIP2 form is not returned.

DWP response

In respect of your first request, the Department intends to publish average claimant journey times information. As the statistics are intended for future publication this information is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 22 (Information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of

Information Act. This exemption is qualified, and is therefore subject to a public interest test.

Arguments in favour of disclosure: There are public interest arguments in favour of disclosure of this information at the present time. Disclosure would for example improve transparency in the operations of the Department.

Arguments against disclosure: There are public interest arguments against disclosure of this information at the present time. These arguments include that it is in the public interest to adhere to the existing publication process for official statistics, which includes time for the data to be collated and properly verified.

It is clearly in the public interest to ensure that publication of PIP statistics is a properly planned and managed process to ensure that the statistics are accurate, robust and comprehensive. It is also in the public interest to ensure that this information is available to all members of the public at the same time, and premature publication could undermine the principle of making the information available to all at the same time through the official publication process.

On this occasion, the balance of the public interest test falls in favour of withholding this information. As explained above, statistics on this issue will be published in due course. Details of content and timing will be pre-announced on the following website;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

Your second question regarding the additional man-hours concerning the delays, we do not readily hold this level of detail. We estimate that the cost of complying with this request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing this part of your request further.