



Cabinet Office



# **Freedom of Information Statistics: Implementation in Central Government**

## **July to September 2015**

Cabinet Office  
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 July to September 2015 (with tables in Annex A covering the period from Q3 2013 until Q3 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:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-foi-statistics> (for 2010-2015);

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

<http://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 Act<sup>1</sup> 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 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-Folaeirs>.

Please refer to Annex C for a full list of monitored bodies.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>

## 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 3rd Quarter of 2015 (Q3) (July to September).*

### **Number of requests** [see Tables A1 & A2]

In Q3 2015, monitored central government bodies received 11,990 non-routine Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. This is 923 (8%) more requests than the same period in 2014 and 490 (4%) more than the number received in the previous quarter (Q2 2015).

Between Q1 2006 and Q3 2015 the number of FOI requests recorded by monitored bodies increased by 28%, whilst 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, 89% of requests received during Q3 2015 received a response within the statutory deadline or were responded to within a permitted deadline extension (referred to as ‘in time’). This is a fall of 1 percentage point since the previous quarter, and a fall of 2 percentage points since Q3 2014. Across all monitored bodies, timeliness ranged from 63% to 100%.

### **Initial outcomes of requests** [see Tables A5 & A6]

Of the 8,883 resolvable requests received during Q3 2015, 45% were granted in full and 34% 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 Q3 2014, and by 1 percentage point from Q2 2015.

### **Exemptions and exceptions** [see Table A7]

In Q3 2015, one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied to 2,961 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 47% of exempt requests.

### **Section 21** [See Table A8]

Section 21 is exemption due to the data requested being otherwise available. There were 564 of these exemptions used (where this was the only exemption applied). In Q3 2015, 91% of these were responded to within the 20-day deadline.

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

From July to September (Q3) 2015 the monitored central government bodies received a total of 11,990 non-routine FOI (Freedom of Information Act) requests. This is 923 (8%) more requests than were received in Q3 2014, and 490 (4%) more than the number received in Q2 2015. Whilst there is a trend for quarter-on-quarter requests rising in Q1 and falling in Q2, the number of requests received does not show any generally consistent trend from Q2 to Q3.

Overall, there has been an upwards trend in requests starting in mid-2007. Recently, requests received during 2014 fell in every quarter, followed by a sharp rise in requests in Q1 of 2015 (the largest quarter on quarter rise in number of receipts since the implementation of the Act).

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

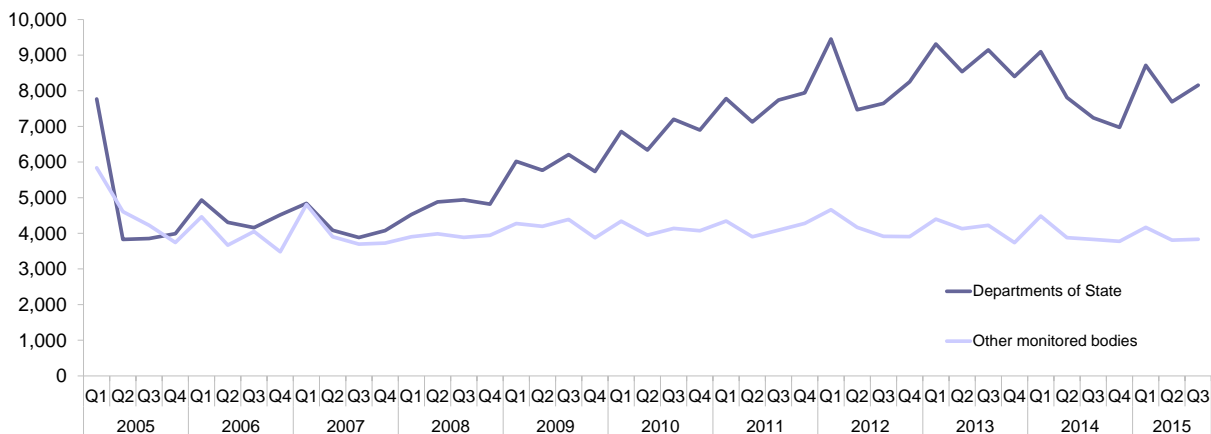


Figure 1 illustrates that the trend of requests over the past 8 years has largely been driven by requests to Departments of State, which accounted for 68% of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q3 of 2015. This is a rise of 15 percentage points since Q1 2006 (53%) and an increase of 3 percentage points from Q3 2014 (65%).

Departments of State reported receiving a total of 8,157 information requests in Q3 2015, 13% more compared with Q3 2014, and 6% more than Q2 2015. Other monitored bodies reported having received 3,833 requests, very similar to the 3,828 in Q3 2014 and an increase of 1% from Q2 2015.

The monitored bodies with the largest absolute increase in requests compared to Q2 2015 were:

- HM Revenue and Customs, by 122 requests (a 26% increase);
- Ministry of Justice, by 107 requests (an 11% increase);
- Home office, by 101 requests (a 13% increase).

The Departments of State that reported the highest number of requests in Q3 2015 are as follows:

- Department for Work and Pensions – 1,322 requests;
- Ministry of Justice – 1,086 requests;
- Ministry of Defence – 973 requests.

Among other monitored bodies, those that reported the highest number of requests in Q3 included:

- Health and Safety Executive – 1,215 requests;
- The National Archives – 713 requests;
- HM Revenue and Customs – 596 requests.

These three bodies account for 66% 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 438 such requests during the 3rd quarter of 2015, accounting for 4% of all requests received. The number of requests handled under EIR is down by 49 requests on Q3 2014, but up by 59 requests on Q2 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)<sup>2</sup>. 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, 84% of requests received during Q3 2015 were sent a response within the 20 (or 30 for the National Archives) working day deadline – this is a decrease of 1 percentage point since Q2 2015, and 3 percentage points since Q3 2014. In Q3 2015, 89% 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 a decrease of 1 percentage point from the previous quarter and a fall of 2 percentage points compared to Q3 2014.

A comparison between all monitored bodies showed that between 62% and 100% of requests received during Q3 of 2015 were responded to within the 20-day deadline, and between 63% and 100% of requests received in the same period were responded to ‘in time’.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2 shows that overall timeliness (i.e. answering requests ‘in time’) for monitored bodies has been at least 86% for Departments of State and at least 92% for other monitored bodies over the last two years. It also illustrates that in Q3 2015 other monitored bodies (94% timeliness) were, on average, marginally timelier than Departments of State (86% timeliness).

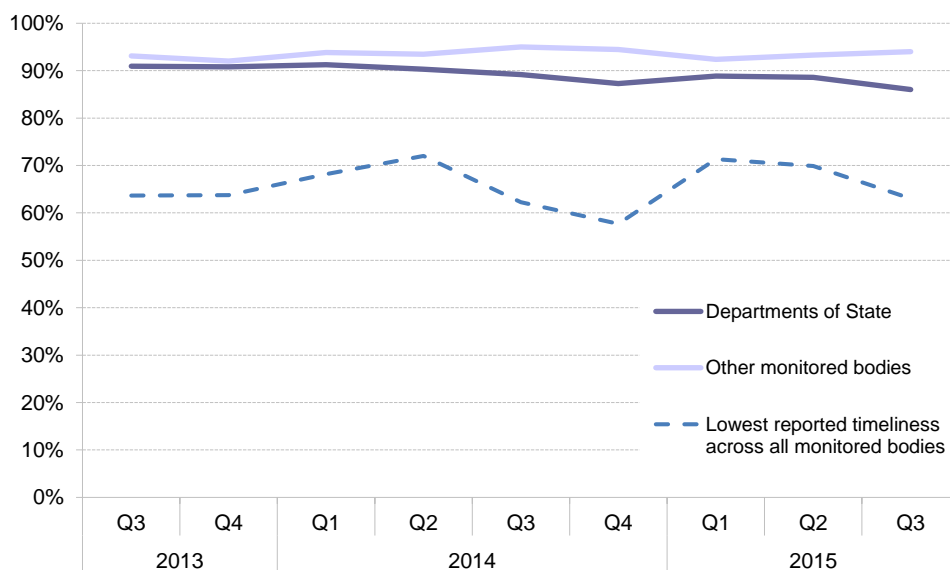
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<sup>2</sup> A 30 working day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to information transferred to the National Archives. They have therefore provided response timeliness information on this basis.

<sup>3</sup> 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.



**Figure 2: Percentage of FOI requests replied to 'in time' by Departments of State and other monitored bodies by quarter from Q3 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 11,990 requests reported during Q3 of 2015 across all monitored bodies, 3,107 were not resolvable, as follows:

- 37 were 'on hold' awaiting a fee payment;
- 2,162 requests sought information that was not held;
- 908 were responded to with 'advice and assistance' because the body handling the request needed further information<sup>4</sup> in order to identify the details being sought. If the requester has not provided any more detail, the public body will not be able to proceed with answering the request. Alternatively, if the requester provided appropriate information, the request is considered resolvable, and is not included in this figure.

The remaining 8,883 (74%) requests were assumed to be 'resolvable', in that it was possible to give a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought.

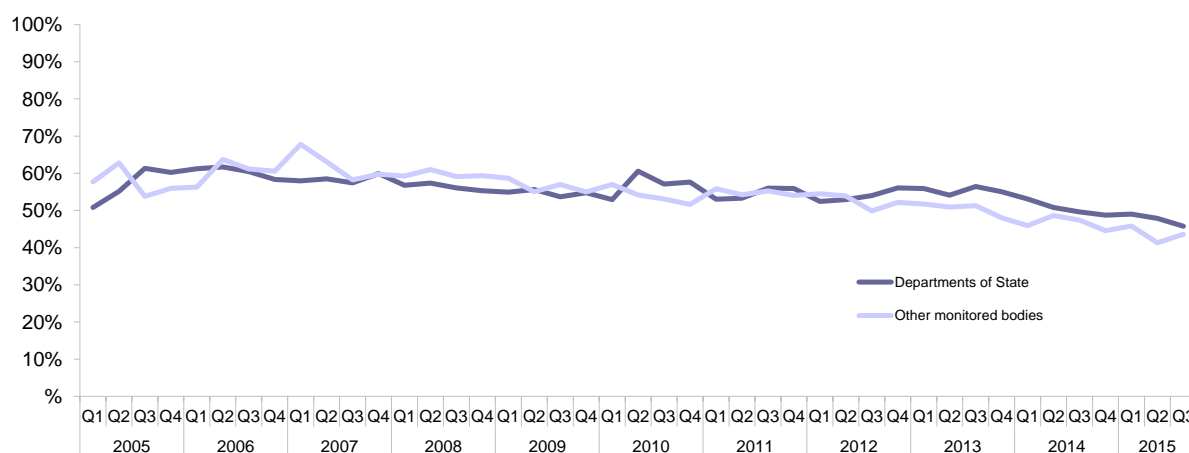
<sup>4</sup> Such as to clarify unclear requests; to help to provide the information requested in an acceptable format; or when a request is transferred to another public authority.

Of the 'resolvable' requests received during Q3 of 2015:

- 45% (4,003) were granted in full, down from 49% (4,051) in Q3 2014 and from 46% (3,909) in Q2 2015;
- 34% (3,058) were withheld in full, up from 31% (2,584) in Q3 2014, and down from 35% (2,963) in Q2 of 2015;
- 14% (1,207) were withheld in part, down from the 15% (1,225) in Q3 2014, and up from 13% (1,100) in Q2 2015;
- The remainder (7%, 615) had not been responded to 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 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, Q1 2005 – Q3 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 Act<sup>5</sup> Similar arrangements apply to certain types of information under the EIRs. Requests that have

<sup>5</sup><http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21>

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 2,961 requests (33% of resolvable requests) were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q3 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<sup>6</sup> in Q3 2015 were:

- Section 40 (Personal information), which was applied to 1,385 requests, and in 47% of all exempt requests;
- Section 31 (Law enforcement), which was applied to 301 requests, and in 10% of all exempt requests;
- Section 43 (Commercial interests), which was applied to 254 requests, and in 9% of all exempt requests;
- Section 44 (Prohibitions on disclosure), which was applied to 247 requests, and in 8% of all exempt requests;
- Section 22 (Information intended for future publication), which was applied to 228 requests, and in 8% 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 means<sup>7</sup>. 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

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<sup>6</sup> Totals will not sum to 100% as multiple exemptions or exceptions may apply to an individual request.

<sup>7</sup> <http://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 3rd quarter of 2015, there were 564 requests where a Section 21 exemption was applied<sup>8</sup> either in full or in part. Of these, 91% of requests received a response within the 20-day deadline. This is a drop of 2 percentage points from the previous quarter.

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<sup>8</sup> 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 July – 30 September 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 July 2013</i>
Table A3	<i>Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 July – 30 September 2015</i>
Table A4	<i>Proportion of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were answered ‘in time’, by quarter, since 1 July 2013</i>
Table A5	<i>Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 July – 30 September 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 July 2013</i>
Table A7	<i>Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 July – 30 September 2015</i>
Table A8	<i>Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 July – 30 September 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).

<b>TABLE A1</b>					
<b>Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 July - 30 September 2015, and their status at time of monitoring</b>					
<b>Government body</b>	<b>Total requests received</b>	<b>Request status at time of monitoring</b>			<b>Number handled under EIRs<sup>2</sup></b>
		<b>Processed</b>	<b>'On hold' or lapsed<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Still being processed</b>	
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>11,990</b>	<b>11,338</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>438</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>7,687</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>3,833</b>	<b>3,651</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>164</b>
<b><i>Departments of State</i><sup>4</sup></b>					
Attorney General's Office	49	49	0	0	0
Cabinet Office	497	466	0	31	0
Communities and Local Government	210	201	0	9	56
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	220	213	0	7	2
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	137	136	0	1	5
Department for Education	484	473	0	11	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	183	163	0	20	63
Department for International Development	148	145	0	3	5
Department for Transport	621	618	0	3	17
Department for Work and Pensions	1,322	1,258	0	64	1
Department of Energy and Climate Change	183	175	0	8	110
Department of Health	383	383	0	0	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	324	263	0	61	1
HM Treasury	285	270	0	15	7
Home Office	899	809	0	90	0
Ministry of Defence	973	931	0	42	4
Ministry of Justice	1,086	983	0	103	3
Northern Ireland Office	58	58	0	0	0
Scotland Office	37	37	0	0	0
UK Export Finance <sup>3</sup>	17	15	0	2	0
Wales Office	41	41	0	0	0

**TABLE A1 continued**

**Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 July - 30 September 2015 and their status at time of monitoring**

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring			Number handled under EIRs <sup>2</sup>
		Processed	'On hold' or lapsed <sup>1</sup>	Still being processed	
<b><i>Other bodies included in monitoring</i></b>					
Charity Commission	163	162	0	1	0
Competition and Markets Authority	38	38	0	0	1
Crown Prosecution Service	166	164	0	2	0
Debt Management Office	20	20	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	34	33	0	1	1
Health and Safety Executive	1,215	1,187	0	28	74
HM Land Registry	112	110	2	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	596	593	0	3	3
National Archives	713	595	35	83	1
National Savings and Investments	8	6	0	2	0
Office for National Statistics	85	79	0	6	0
Office for Standards in Education	191	182	0	9	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	102	101	0	1	0
Office of Rail and Road	40	37	0	3	0
Ordnance Survey	22	21	0	1	0
Royal Mint	5	5	0	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	107	104	0	3	84
Serious Fraud Office	29	27	0	2	0
Government Legal Department	113	113	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	74	74	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.

4 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).

**TABLE A2**
**Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 July 2013**

Government body	2013		2014				2015		
	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep
	<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>13,370</b>	<b>12,140</b>	<b>13,585</b>	<b>11,689</b>	<b>11,067</b>	<b>10,749</b>	<b>12,881</b>	<b>11,500</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>9,145</b>	<b>8,400</b>	<b>9,099</b>	<b>7,811</b>	<b>7,239</b>	<b>6,973</b>	<b>8,712</b>	<b>7,692</b>	<b>8,157</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>4,225</b>	<b>3,740</b>	<b>4,486</b>	<b>3,878</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>3,776</b>	<b>4,169</b>	<b>3,808</b>	<b>3,833</b>
<b>Departments of State <sup>1</sup></b>									
Attorney General's Office	78	64	57	41	53	45	62	69	49
Cabinet Office	405	435	528	473	346	313	436	404	497
Communities and Local Government	208	175	197	171	210	202	302	209	210
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	298	234	301	230	251	221	280	217	220
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	138	124	137	152	109	125	157	146	137
Department for Education	390	439	518	443	370	414	554	510	484
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	243	237	318	214	196	189	275	174	183
Department for International Development	127	123	134	111	85	96	143	115	148
Department for Transport	1,074	1,008	684	673	602	694	828	524	621
Department for Work and Pensions	1,513	1,257	1,408	1,065	1,104	1,082	1,248	1,271	1,322
Department of Energy and Climate Change	207	212	240	153	141	158	189	155	183
Department of Health	514	398	469	490	451	293	443	407	383
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	293	309	369	275	271	235	334	323	324
HM Treasury	642	522	388	449	330	285	275	248	285
Home Office	893	768	872	741	736	692	906	798	899
Ministry of Defence	904	903	1,022	856	781	831	1,049	920	973
Ministry of Justice	1,038	1,068	1,308	1,133	1,062	992	1,036	979	1,086
Northern Ireland Office	60	46	60	58	40	33	65	61	58
Scotland Office	41	30	38	39	37	33	61	76	37
UK Export Finance	32	22	16	21	31	16	18	32	17
Wales Office	47	26	35	23	33	24	51	54	41



**TABLE A2 continued**  
**Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 July 2013**

Government body	2014						2015		
	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Charity Commission	158	142	167	156	126	162	162	163	<b>163</b>
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	20	32	40	50	34	<b>38</b>
Crown Prosecution Service	165	160	220	182	173	165	173	181	<b>166</b>
Debt Management Office	15	9	14	15	17	9	18	23	<b>20</b>
Food Standards Agency	40	35	53	41	38	41	54	38	<b>34</b>
Health and Safety Executive	1,417	1,246	1,378	1,246	1,243	1,236	1,338	1,200	<b>1,215</b>
HM Land Registry	93	72	100	96	87	104	83	111	<b>112</b>
HM Revenue and Customs	554	576	622	565	515	592	545	474	<b>596</b>
National Archives	902	713	909	830	783	716	825	736	<b>713</b>
National Savings and Investments	43	29	38	32	41	23	36	37	<b>8</b>
Office for National Statistics	84	48	82	65	71	75	106	86	<b>85</b>
Office for Standards in Education	186	209	309	184	159	176	216	255	<b>191</b>
Office of Fair Trading	87	83	69	-	-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	74	94	97	90	115	106	126	103	<b>102</b>
Office of Rail and Road	62	42	46	37	41	33	52	39	<b>40</b>
Ordnance Survey	35	20	13	11	25	15	28	24	<b>22</b>
Royal Mint	5	7	15	8	6	4	5	8	<b>5</b>
Rural Payments Agency	136	112	137	126	141	116	173	91	<b>107</b>
Serious Fraud Office	37	23	22	25	28	17	35	26	<b>29</b>
Government Legal Department	56	69	110	94	99	66	108	147	<b>113</b>
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	76	51	85	55	88	80	36	32	<b>74</b>
<b>Notes</b>									
1 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).									
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 July - 30 September 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	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 <sup>2</sup> to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>11,953</b>	<b>10,011</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>6,621</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>3,796</b>	<b>3,390</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Departments of State <sup>4</sup></b>						
Attorney General's Office	49	47	0	2	96%	96%
Cabinet Office	497	387	50	60	78%	88%
Communities and Local Government	210	187	23	0	89%	100%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	220	174	18	28	79%	87%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	137	123	3	11	90%	92%
Department for Education	484	424	18	42	88%	91%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	183	114	22	47	62%	74%
Department for International Development	148	140	6	2	95%	99%
Department for Transport	621	595	14	12	96%	98%
Department for Work and Pensions	1322	1,104	10	208	84%	84%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	183	144	24	15	79%	92%
Department of Health	383	378	2	3	99%	99%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	324	221	67	36	68%	89%
HM Treasury	285	241	23	21	85%	93%
Home Office	899	666	93	140	74%	84%
Ministry of Defence	973	828	53	92	85%	91%
Ministry of Justice	1086	706	3	377	65%	65%
Northern Ireland Office	58	55	2	1	95%	98%
Scotland Office	37	31	0	6	84%	84%
UK Export Finance	17	15	0	2	88%	88%
Wales Office	41	41	0	0	100%	100%

**TABLE A3 continued**  
**Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 July - 30 September 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	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 <sup>2</sup> to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>						
Charity Commission	163	154	0	9	94%	94%
Competition and Markets Authority	38	34	0	4	89%	89%
Crown Prosecution Service	166	156	4	6	94%	96%
Debt Management Office	20	20	0	0	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	34	33	1	0	97%	100%
Health and Safety Executive	1215	1,125	35	55	93%	95%
HM Land Registry	110	109	0	1	99%	99%
HM Revenue and Customs	596	540	0	56	91%	91%
National Archives <sup>3</sup>	678	548	106	24	81%	96%
National Savings and Investments	8	5	0	3	63%	63%
Office for National Statistics	85	67	0	18	79%	79%
Office for Standards in Education	191	175	3	13	92%	93%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	102	89	4	9	87%	91%
Office of Rail and Road	40	29	6	5	73%	88%
Ordnance Survey	22	21	1	0	95%	100%
Royal Mint	5	4	1	0	80%	100%
Rural Payments Agency	107	93	4	10	87%	91%
Serious Fraud Office	29	22	6	1	76%	97%
Government Legal Department	113	113	0	0	100%	100%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	74	53	0	21	72%	72%
<b>Notes</b>						

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.

4 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).

TABLE A4

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

Government body	2013		2014				2015		
	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep
	<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Departments of State <sup>3</sup></b>									
Attorney General's Office	95%	97%	98%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%
Cabinet Office	85%	86%	95%	90%	94%	88%	88%	90%	88%
Communities and Local Government	89%	82%	80%	82%	72%	73%	94%	100%	100%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	96%	98%	98%	97%	96%	96%	99%	87%	87%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	96%	95%	98%	96%	96%	93%	71%	84%	92%
Department for Education	87%	85%	87%	91%	91%	92%	86%	83%	91%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	100%	97%	99%	92%	62%	58%	79%	83%	74%
Department for International Development	98%	99%	98%	98%	99%	98%	100%	99%	99%
Department for Transport	96%	97%	95%	96%	97%	96%	96%	98%	98%
Department for Work and Pensions	94%	94%	92%	91%	90%	91%	94%	93%	84%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	99%	97%	98%	92%	93%	94%	93%	93%	92%
Department of Health	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	88%	82%	88%	93%	90%	90%	88%	90%	89%
HM Treasury	96%	96%	91%	96%	92%	93%	92%	96%	93%
Home Office	72%	81%	87%	84%	87%	90%	86%	87%	84%
Ministry of Defence	89%	88%	85%	87%	88%	84%	87%	91%	91%
Ministry of Justice	89%	87%	89%	83%	81%	73%	76%	70%	65%
Northern Ireland Office	97%	93%	88%	88%	95%	91%	89%	85%	98%
Scotland Office	98%	93%	92%	95%	92%	94%	90%	86%	84%
UK Export Finance	94%	77%	100%	90%	90%	88%	100%	84%	88%
Wales Office	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%

**TABLE A4 continued**  
**Percentage of non-routine information requests received since 1 July 2013 that were answered 'in time', by quarter**

Government body	2013		2014				2015		
	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:
	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Charity Commission	95%	94%	98%	95%	93%	90%	91%	93%	94%
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	100%	97%	98%	96%	91%	89%
Crown Prosecution Service	64%	64%	95%	97%	94%	96%	91%	94%	96%
Debt Management Office	*	*	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	98%	100%	98%	98%	100%	100%	96%	97%	100%
Health and Safety Executive	92%	92%	91%	92%	95%	94%	93%	95%	95%
HM Land Registry	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%	99%	100%	99%	99%
HM Revenue and Customs	92%	89%	88%	86%	90%	87%	80%	83%	91%
National Archives <sup>2</sup>	98%	98%	97%	97%	98%	98%	98%	95%	96%
National Savings and Investments	95%	93%	95%	97%	100%	100%	94%	100%	63%
Office for National Statistics	98%	96%	100%	100%	99%	95%	96%	97%	79%
Office for Standards in Education	97%	98%	97%	99%	99%	97%	95%	97%	93%
Office of Fair Trading	92%	89%	97%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	86%	90%	88%	91%	90%	95%	83%	75%	91%
Office of Rail and Road	95%	98%	98%	92%	95%	100%	96%	97%	88%
Ordnance Survey	100%	*	100%	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Royal Mint	*	*	93%	100%	67%	100%	80%	88%	100%
Rural Payments Agency	94%	87%	100%	100%	94%	99%	96%	93%	91%
Serious Fraud Office	92%	96%	68%	72%	93%	76%	89%	92%	97%
Government Legal Department	100%	99%	99%	99%	98%	100%	95%	97%	100%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	96%	96%	99%	100%	99%	96%	94%	100%	72%

**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.

3 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).

\* - 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 July 2015 - 30 September 2015

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Requests where advice and assistance <sup>2</sup> provided	Requests where information not held	Total 'resolvable' requests <sup>3</sup>	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 <sup>4</sup>	Response not yet provided <sup>5</sup>		
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>11,953</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>2,162</b>	<b>8,883</b>	<b>4,003</b>	<b>1,207</b>	<b>3,058</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>6,037</b>	<b>2,762</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>2,067</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>3,796</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>2,846</b>	<b>1,241</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Departments of State <sup>6</sup></b>										
Attorney General's Office	49	0	17	32	10	6	16	0	31%	50%
Cabinet Office	497	51	156	290	55	39	165	31	19%	57%
Communities and Local Government	210	6	37	167	79	35	44	9	47%	26%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	220	9	43	168	47	37	77	7	28%	46%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	137	30	25	82	45	16	20	1	55%	24%
Department for Education	484	53	98	333	196	65	61	11	59%	18%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	183	24	30	129	42	29	38	20	33%	29%
Department for International Development	148	4	11	133	76	6	48	3	57%	36%
Department for Transport	621	0	120	501	347	51	100	3	69%	20%
Department for Work and Pensions	1,322	90	91	1,141	664	38	375	64	58%	33%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	183	8	32	143	54	40	41	8	38%	29%
Department of Health	383	9	104	270	150	7	113	0	56%	42%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	324	23	60	241	53	70	57	61	22%	24%
HM Treasury	285	17	80	188	43	24	106	15	23%	56%
Home Office	899	166	155	578	180	83	225	90	31%	39%
Ministry of Defence	973	88	192	693	384	79	188	42	55%	27%
Ministry of Justice	1,086	90	146	850	279	97	371	103	33%	44%
Northern Ireland Office	58	0	22	36	21	3	12	0	58%	33%
Scotland Office	37	8	7	22	12	3	7	0	55%	32%
UK Export Finance	17	0	0	17	6	8	1	2	35%	6%
Wales Office	41	0	18	23	19	2	2	0	83%	9%

**TABLE A5 continued**  
**Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 July - 30 September 2015**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Requests where advice and assistance <sup>2</sup> provided	Requests where information not held	Total 'resolvable' requests <sup>3</sup>	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 <sup>4</sup>	Response not yet provided <sup>5</sup>		
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>										
Charity Commission	163	10	27	126	51	33	41	1	40%	33%
Competition and Markets Authority	38	3	6	29	17	4	8	0	59%	28%
Crown Prosecution Service	166	18	10	138	41	22	73	2	30%	53%
Debt Management Office	20	0	9	11	5	6	0	0	45%	0%
Food Standards Agency	34	0	4	30	16	7	6	1	53%	20%
Health and Safety Executive	1,215	11	422	782	349	222	183	28	45%	23%
HM Land Registry	110	1	11	98	81	12	5	0	83%	5%
HM Revenue and Customs	596	24	65	507	130	20	354	3	26%	70%
National Archives	678	78	78	522	235	53	151	83	45%	29%
National Savings and Investments	8	0	0	8	5	0	1	2	63%	13%
Office for National Statistics	85	0	14	71	58	2	5	6	82%	7%
Office for Standards in Education	191	28	10	153	51	19	74	9	33%	48%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	102	0	28	74	57	16	0	1	77%	0%
Office of Rail and Road	40	4	9	27	11	11	2	3	41%	7%
Ordnance Survey	22	4	3	15	5	4	5	1	33%	33%
Royal Mint	5	0	0	5	3	1	1	0	60%	20%
Rural Payments Agency	107	46	10	51	26	6	16	3	51%	31%
Serious Fraud Office	29	3	2	24	12	4	6	2	50%	25%
Government Legal Department	113	2	4	107	21	27	59	0	20%	55%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	74	0	6	68	67	0	1	0	99%	1%

**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.

6 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).

TABLE A6

Percentage of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 July 2013<sup>1</sup>

Government body			2014				2015		
	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Departments of State <sup>2</sup></b>									
Attorney General's Office	36%	57%	73%	50%	29%	7%	21%	68%	31%
Cabinet Office	25%	20%	21%	22%	29%	16%	22%	17%	19%
Communities and Local Government	63%	64%	65%	58%	53%	48%	56%	57%	47%
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	37%	39%	34%	31%	31%	29%	32%	32%	28%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	68%	59%	58%	60%	71%	47%	51%	52%	55%
Department for Education	71%	67%	53%	59%	68%	66%	64%	57%	59%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	58%	58%	72%	68%	48%	34%	41%	46%	33%
Department for International Development	69%	60%	62%	60%	60%	56%	52%	49%	57%
Department for Transport	78%	75%	76%	77%	77%	77%	77%	68%	69%
Department for Work and Pensions	66%	69%	69%	65%	65%	63%	64%	62%	58%
Department of Energy and Climate Change	49%	55%	48%	44%	38%	24%	35%	36%	38%
Department of Health	59%	44%	58%	42%	19%	37%	53%	52%	56%
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	29%	37%	26%	31%	27%	30%	27%	26%	22%
HM Treasury	50%	41%	38%	54%	47%	42%	30%	24%	23%
Home Office	42%	43%	42%	37%	38%	38%	34%	35%	31%
Ministry of Defence	61%	63%	62%	52%	52%	52%	50%	53%	55%
Ministry of Justice	39%	41%	34%	36%	37%	34%	29%	32%	33%
Northern Ireland Office	74%	*	43%	40%	56%	50%	74%	85%	58%
Scotland Office	86%	*	76%	74%	88%	94%	82%	62%	55%
UK Export Finance	79%	*	81%	50%	60%	38%	69%	62%	35%
Wales Office	73%	*	81%	57%	50%	100%	86%	95%	83%



**TABLE A6 continued**

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

Government body	2014				2015				
	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Charity Commission	39%	50%	48%	45%	47%	50%	39%	40%	40%
Competition and Markets Authority	-	-	-	19%	48%	48%	61%	50%	59%
Crown Prosecution Service	46%	43%	35%	36%	34%	38%	38%	29%	30%
Debt Management Office	*	*	78%	69%	50%	63%	44%	50%	45%
Food Standards Agency	62%	33%	49%	67%	68%	55%	57%	70%	53%
Health and Safety Executive	50%	47%	44%	53%	52%	52%	47%	41%	45%
HM Land Registry	95%	86%	88%	67%	75%	91%	94%	85%	83%
HM Revenue and Customs	36%	37%	34%	27%	31%	18%	31%	32%	26%
National Archives	56%	51%	50%	59%	45%	51%	45%	44%	45%
National Savings and Investments	95%	90%	100%	83%	90%	75%	87%	61%	63%
Office for National Statistics	87%	83%	78%	84%	82%	83%	80%	79%	82%
Office for Standards in Education	27%	25%	19%	22%	30%	20%	27%	17%	33%
Office of Fair Trading	30%	44%	67%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	81%	75%	72%	59%	43%	49%	54%	51%	77%
Office of Rail and Road	28%	38%	41%	35%	48%	50%	57%	30%	41%
Ordnance Survey	67%	*	67%	60%	78%	50%	81%	53%	33%
Royal Mint	*	*	46%	14%	17%	75%	60%	29%	60%
Rural Payments Agency	61%	61%	59%	68%	51%	46%	48%	70%	51%
Serious Fraud Office	44%	*	37%	44%	36%	43%	70%	43%	50%
Government Legal Department	50%	53%	49%	50%	48%	41%	36%	27%	20%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	89%	80%	89%	68%	86%	48%	69%	69%	99%

**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.

2 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).

\* - 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 exceptions<sup>1</sup> applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 July - 30 September 2015**

Exemption / Exception <sup>1</sup>	Number of requests where exemption used		
	Departments of State only	Other monitored bodies	TOTAL
<b>Total number of requests where one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied</b>	1,741	1,220	<b>2,961</b>
<b>Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of Fol Act<sup>2</sup>) was applied</b>			
S(21) - Information available by other means	-	-	-
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	205	23	<b>228</b>
S(22A) - Research intended for future publication	0	0	<b>0</b>
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	71	5	<b>76</b>
S(24) - National security	58	0	<b>58</b>
S(26) - Defence	29	1	<b>30</b>
S(27) - International relations	66	9	<b>75</b>
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	5	0	<b>5</b>
S(29) - The economy	6	0	<b>6</b>
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	12	148	<b>160</b>
S(31) - Law enforcement	172	129	<b>301</b>
S(32) - Court records, etc.	73	15	<b>88</b>
S(33) - Audit functions	1	7	<b>8</b>
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	0	0	<b>0</b>
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc.	167	13	<b>180</b>
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	85	10	<b>95</b>
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc. and honours	16	0	<b>16</b>
S(38) - Health and Safety	21	25	<b>46</b>
S(39) - Environmental information	- <sup>3</sup>	- <sup>3</sup>	- <sup>3</sup>
S(40) - Personal information	772	613	<b>1,385</b>
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	59	61	<b>120</b>
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	43	7	<b>50</b>
S(43) - Commercial interests	208	46	<b>254</b>
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	68	179	<b>247</b>
<b>Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied</b>			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	33	16	<b>49</b>
4(a) - Information not available	25	8	<b>33</b>
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	33	7	<b>40</b>
4(c) - Too general	4	0	<b>4</b>
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	15	0	<b>15</b>
4(e) - Internal communications	20	0	<b>20</b>
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	3	4	<b>7</b>
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	6	8	<b>14</b>
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	0	0	<b>0</b>
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	0	2	<b>2</b>
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	12	4	<b>16</b>
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	2	1	<b>3</b>
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	1	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Notes</b>			

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. 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 refused should apply one of the EIR exceptions listed above.

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)	
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Departments of State <sup>2</sup></b>				
Attorney General's Office	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Cabinet Office	29	26	3	<b>90%</b>
Communities and Local Government	2	2	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	16	16	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	2	2	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Education	30	28	2	<b>93%</b>
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	7	6	1	<b>86%</b>
Department for International Development	3	3	0	<b>100%</b>
Department for Transport	39	37	2	<b>95%</b>
Department for Work and Pensions	29	26	3	<b>90%</b>
Department of Energy and Climate Change	6	6	0	<b>100%</b>
Department of Health	45	45	0	<b>100%</b>
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	17	16	1	<b>94%</b>
HM Treasury	39	36	3	<b>92%</b>
Home Office	80	69	11	<b>86%</b>
Ministry of Defence	42	37	5	<b>88%</b>
Ministry of Justice	70	51	19	<b>73%</b>
Northern Ireland Office	1	1	0	<b>100%</b>
Scotland Office	0	0	0	-
UK Export Finance	0	0	0	-
Wales Office	3	3	0	<b>100%</b>

**TABLE A8 Continued**  
**Section 21 exemptions applied by monitored bodies when dealing with routine information requests received from 1 July - 30 September 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)	
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>				
Charity Commission	2	2	0	100%
Competition and Markets Authority	0	0	0	-
Crown Prosecution Service	0	0	0	-
Debt Management Office	0	0	0	-
Food Standards Agency	0	0	0	-
Health and Safety Executive	2	2	0	100%
HM Land Registry	14	14	0	100%
HM Revenue and Customs	36	36	0	100%
National Archives	1	1	0	100%
National Savings and Investments	0	0	0	-
Office for National Statistics	16	14	2	88%
Office for Standards in Education	4	4	0	100%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	0	0	0	-
Office of Rail and Road	3	3	0	100%
Ordnance Survey	0	0	0	-
Royal Mint	0	0	0	-
Rural Payments Agency	0	0	0	-
Serious Fraud Office	0	0	0	-
Government Legal Department	19	19	0	100%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	6	6	0	100%
<b>Notes</b>				
1 - A section 21 exemption is defined as information available by other means.				
2 - Figures supplied by Departments of State may include requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well as those received by the main Departments themselves (see Annex C).				
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:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/262792/25section2.pdf](https://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 Cabinet Office'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.

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 November 2015. This is the first set of quarterly Freedom of Information statistics to be published by the Cabinet Office, 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 following bulletins up until the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2015 were published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

The formal monitoring work covers a total of 41 government bodies, including all major Departments of State (i.e. Ministerial departments)<sup>9</sup>.

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 Welsh Government, 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 third quarter of 2015.

### 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

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<sup>9</sup> 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  
Competition and Markets Authority  
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 Gas and Electricity Markets  
Office of Rail and Road  
Ordnance Survey  
Royal Mint  
Rural Payments Agency  
Serious Fraud Office  
Government Legal Department  
Water Services Regulation Authority

### **Notes**

The figures provided by a number of Departments of State may count the non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Previous bulletins included a list of these agencies. We have removed this list from this bulletin whilst we undertake additional quality assurance, with the intention to include an up-to-date list in the next quarterly bulletin based on updated returns from monitored bodies.

## 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 Cabinet Office, 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 Cabinet Office is the lead department responsible for the FOI Act. Further information is available at:

<https://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:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-Folaeirs>

These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to the Cabinet Office from October to December 2015. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 July to 30 September 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 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015), since 20 working days is the statutory deadline for public authorities to respond to information requests under both the Fol 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 Q3 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:

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

Freedom of Information Policy  
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General enquiries about the statistical work of the Cabinet Office can be e-mailed to:  
[foistatistics@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:foistatistics@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

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