



The Insolvency
Service

Insolvency statistics: changes to the publication schedule for statistics on Enforcement Outcomes

Consultation

May 2016

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1 Background

The Insolvency Service's statistics team is committed to continuous improvement of statistics on insolvencies, in collaboration with users of these statistics. To this end, we are consulting on changes to the *Insolvency Service Enforcement Outcomes* publication.

The *Insolvency Service Enforcement Outcomes* publication cover outcomes obtained as a result of enforcement activities of the Insolvency Service. They include:

- disqualifications of company directors;
- companies wound up in the public interest;
- bankruptcy restrictions; and
- suspensions of discharge from bankruptcy (though SoDs are not technically a form of enforcement).

The statistics are produced from administrative records of the Insolvency Service and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. They are released quarterly, around six weeks after the end of the relevant quarter. Each release includes a PDF with charts and supporting commentary, accompanied by supporting Excel tables.

Key users of this publication include: the Insolvency Service itself, other government departments, parliament, the insolvency profession, debt advice agencies, media organisations, academics, the financial sector, the business community and the general public. Uses for this publication include policy formulation, business intelligence and general keeping up with trends in the industry.

This consultation is likely to be relevant to ALL users of this publication

2 Proposed changes

Proposal 1: Change the frequency of the publication

The statistical releases to date have tended to focus on enforcement outcomes for the latest quarter, and comparisons with the same quarter in the previous year. Given that there tend to be small numbers of outcomes in any one quarter, any fairly small fluctuations can result in large percentage changes when making year-on-year comparisons. Such changes can be influenced by a number of factors, and it is difficult to identify what factors have influenced change in any one quarter and thus we are at risk of misleading users as we attempt to draw out conclusions.

Some users from the Insolvency Service have also told us that releasing the statistics every three months does not meet their needs, and the lag between the end of the reporting period and the publication of statistics is too long. These users would like to be able to use more up to date statistics, in particular when engaging with stakeholders.

To address these issues **we propose** that we:

1. change the frequency of the main publication, from quarterly to annually, to be released in April/May and will cover the previous April to March period.
2. release monthly data tables (without commentary) around 2 weeks after the reporting period which allows users to have access to the latest data.

Producing statistical commentary on an annual basis will enable us to assess the data in line with the way the Insolvency Service operates, and draw out more in-depth and meaningful descriptions of changes to the statistics. Release of monthly datasets would benefit those users requiring more frequent statistics, while users who prefer to use quarterly data would not be disadvantaged. Contextual information about the statistics would continue to be available to users in the [Guide to Enforcement Outcomes](#).

Proposal 2: Changes to data series

We are also consulting on changes to what we report, in particular, **we propose** to:

- remove Suspension of Discharge orders (SoDs) statistics (from both the monthly and annual statistics); and
- remove statistics by allegation type for director disqualifications and bankruptcy restriction orders (from the monthly statistics only).

SoDs are dissimilar to other statistics in this release as they do not come as the result of an investigation. SoD statistics would still be available on request.

Statistics by allegation type are currently compiled from manual records, which we link to data extracted from our databases. By not including allegation types in the monthly tables, we would be able to release this publication in a more timely manner and meet user needs for prompt releases.

A summary of the proposed changes is in Table 1 overleaf.

3 Questions for users

- 1) Which statistics do you currently use?
 - a. Director disqualifications
 - b. Winding up orders in the public interest
 - c. Bankruptcy restriction / debt relief restriction orders
 - d. Suspension of discharge orders
- 2) Would the proposed changes to the frequency and timeliness of statistics (annual commentary and monthly datasets) meet your needs?
- 3) Would the proposed removal of statistics on SODs (from all releases) and allegations (from monthly releases) affect you?

Table 1: Proposed changes to statistics available in each release

Table	Series	Current	Proposed	
		Quarterly	Monthly	Annual
Table 1.	Total Disqualifications	✓	✓	✓
	Orders	✓	✓	✓
	Undertakings	✓	✓	✓
Table 1a.	Section 2	✓	✓	✓
	Section 6	✓	✓	✓
	Section 8	✓	✓	✓
Table 1b.	[DQs average length of orders and undertakings, number of orders/undertakings in each band (2-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-15 years)]	✓	✓	✓
Table 1c.	[DQs by Allegations]	✓	✗	✓
Table 2.	Companies Wound up in the Public interest	✓	✓	✓
Table 3.	Total Bankruptcy Restrictions	✓	✓	✓
	Bankruptcy Restriction Orders/Debt relief restriction orders	✓	✓	✓
	Bankruptcy Restriction Undertakings/Debt relief restriction Undertakings	✓	✓	✓
Table 3a.	[Restrictions average length of orders and undertakings, number of orders/undertakings in each band (2-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-15 years)]	✓	✓	✓
Table 3b.	[Restrictions by Allegations]	✓	✗	✓
Table 4.	Total Suspension of Discharge Orders	✓	✗	✗
	Creditor's Petitions	✓	✗	✗
	Creditor's %	✓	✗	✗
	Debtor's Petitions	✓	✗	✗
	Debtor's %	✓	✗	✗

4 How to respond

When responding please state whether you are doing so as an individual or whether you are representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

This consultation was published on **25 May 2016** and will close on **17 June 2016**. We encourage responses as early as possible to assist us in accelerating the process of considering replies.

A response can be submitted by email or letter to:

Email: statistics@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk

Post: Statistics Team, The Insolvency Service, 4th floor, 4 Abbey Orchard Street, London, SW1P 2HT

Telephone: 020 7637 6314

This consultation is relevant to insolvency practitioners, government officials, academics and anyone with an interest in data on the Insolvency Service's enforcement activities.

Additional copies

This consultation can be found at: www.gov.uk/insolvency-service. You may make additional copies without seeking permission. Under Cabinet Office guidelines consultations are digital by default but if required printed copies of the consultation document can be obtained using the contact details above.

Confidentiality and data protection

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If you would like information, including personal data that you provide, to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidentiality.

In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic disclaimer generated by your IT system, will not, of itself, be binding on The Insolvency Service.

Help with queries

Questions about the proposals outlined in the document can be addressed to the Statistics Team at The Insolvency Service (contact details as above).

What happens next?

The Statistics Team will consider the responses received in deciding how to best meet the needs of users. A response will be published on The Insolvency Service website at www.gov.uk/insolvency-service.