

Freedom of Information request 1430/2013

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Information request

1. *How many assessments have taken place in Kent and Medway to see if people, many who used to claim incapacity benefit, are well-enough to get a job?*
2. *Can you please supply me with the information for each of the last financial years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13*
3. *For each of the financial years above, how many people who were told they were fit-to-work, later had that decision reversed?*
4. *How many appeals were made against the assessment findings for each of the financial years above?*

DWP response

The Department regularly publishes official statistics on work capability assessment (WCA) outcomes for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and incapacity benefits reassessment (IBR). They are available here:

ESA:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/index.php?page=esa_wca

IBR:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/index.php?page=esa_ibr

Questions 1 and 2

For IBR claims, table 2 in the second (IBR) link above provides WCA outcomes for IBR claimants referred for reassessment between Autumn 2010 (when IBR first began in some areas) and May 2012 broken down by local authority area.

Table 1 below provides all initial and repeat WCA outcomes for new ESA claims that started between April 2010 and May 2012 in Kent and Medway (the latest data available). Note that Kent and Medway has been defined as the local authority areas of: Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Gravesham, Maidstone, Medway, Sevenoaks, Shepway, Swale, Thanet, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells.

Table 1: Initial and repeat WCA outcomes for Kent & Medway						
Claim Start Date	Support Group	Work Related Activity Group	Fit for Work	Claim closed before assessment complete	Assessment still in progress	Total
2010/11	3,130	6,430	6,230	6,070	610	22,480
2011/12	3,420	3,460	4,600	6,740	2,840	21,060
Apr-12 to May-12	370	320	530	860	870	2,940
Total	6,920	10,200	11,360	13,670	4,320	46,470

Source: Department for Work and Pensions benefit administration datasets.

Rounding: All volumes are rounded to the nearest 10. Hence totals may not sum exactly.

Question 3

Decisions may be reversed under the reconsideration process. Under reconsideration, a decision maker may choose to revise the final outcome of the WCA. This process is separate from the appeals process. Information on reconsiderations requested and the outcomes of these is not available.

Question 4

Appeals outcome information is only available for ESA claimants appealing a Fit for Work outcome at the initial WCA, for claims starting between October 2008 and November 2011. Table 2 below provides this information for claims that started between April 2010 and November 2011 in Kent and Medway. Information on appeals for repeat & IBR WCAs is not available.

Table 2: Outcomes of appeals against Fit for Work outcomes - Kent & Medway				
Claim Start Date	Initial Decision Upheld	Initial Decision Overturned	Either Outcome	Total Fit for Work Decisions
2010/11	1,000	680	1,680	4,500
Apr-11 to Nov-11	410	290	700	2,950
Total	1,410	970	2,380	7,450

Source: Department for Work and Pensions benefit administration datasets.

Rounding: All volumes are rounded to the nearest 10. Hence totals may not sum exactly.