

Freedom of Information request 2014-4028

Date received 18 September 2014

Date of response 16 October 2014

Information request

I would like to know the number of people claiming Employment and Support Allowance (formerly Incapacity Benefit) deemed "fit to work" by Atos for the years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, for the smallest administrative area which contains the local authority area of Portsmouth.

I would like to know, of these deemed fit to work, how many decision were made by Department of Work and Pension Decision Makers which were (a) the same or in line with the recommendation by ATOS (b) different to the recommendation made by ATOS

I would also like to know separate from the above request whether the Department for Work and Pensions holds information of all cases which had gone to the ESA tribunal which allows the number of cases to be broken down by administrative area of the (UK main) residence of the appellant. I am simply looking in response for an affirmation or a statement that the Department does not hold this information.

DWP response

Anyone claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) will undergo the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). The WCA is based on the premise that eligibility should not be based on a person's condition, but rather on the way that condition limits their functional capability. Following the WCA, Atos Healthcare's Healthcare Professional (HCP) provides a recommendation of the claimant's eligibility for ESA. The final decision on ESA benefit entitlement is made by a DWP Decision Maker (DM) informed by advice from the Atos Healthcare's HCP and other available evidence.

In response to your query, the table below shows the number of ESA DM's decisions compared to the recommendation made by Atos Healthcare's HCP, for claimants in Portsmouth local authority, for claims made in the period January 2009 to December 2013, which is the latest information available.

Please note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Number of Employment and Support Allowance new claims and repeat assessment decisions compared with the Atos recommendation in Portsmouth Local Authority: each year January 2009 to December 2013

Year	Total Fit for Work Atos HCP recommendations	Of which:	
		DM decision is the same	DM decision is different
2009	500	500	-
2010	900	900	-
2011	900	800	100
2012	900	800	100
2013	1,200	900	300
Total	4,400	3,900	400

Source: Data in the above table is derived from administrative data held by the DWP and assessment data provided by Atos Healthcare.

Notes:

1. Data is rounded to nearest 100 therefore totals may not sum.
2. “- “ Denotes nil or negligible
3. Data is tabled by the decision made date for January to December each year. December 2013 is the latest data available.
4. Figures include initial and repeat assessments for ESA new claims and exclude clerical decisions, clerical cases, and Incapacity Benefits Reassessment cases.

In response to the final part of your query, I can confirm the Department does hold some information on ESA cases which have gone to tribunal by administrative area, but only for cases on which the tribunal has completed.