

Freedom of Information request 2013-4153

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Information request

I have some questions about the interpretation of the statistics available from your Tabulation Tool about ESA on-flows and off-flows, broken down by benefit combination. These figures (latest available, February 2013) show that about 33% of on-flows and 14% of off-flows (nationally) have the benefit combination "ESA and DLA".

Ideally I'd like to know how many of the current caseload receive both ESA and DLA, but that breakdown is not available from the Tabulation Tool.

So my questions are as follows.

1. Does "on-flow" here mean the start of the application and assessment process for ESA?
2. Do "on-flow" figures include people being reassessed for ESA after previously receiving IB?
3. Does the combination "ESA and DLA" apply to an on-flow if the person is also at the start of the application and assessment process for DLA?
4. Should either the on-flow or the off-flow figure be taken as a reasonable estimate of the proportion of the current caseload who receive this combination of benefits?
5. What is the reason for making these breakdowns by benefit combination available for on-flows and off-flows - how are they typically used?

DWP response

In response your question as a whole it is worth noting that the published combination of "ESA and DLA" refers to those claimants who are only a) in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and b) are eligible for Disability Living Allowance (DLA), including those who are also in receipt. These figures will therefore not include those who are claiming ESA, DLA and another benefit.

In response to question 1, an 'on-flow' for Employment Support Allowance (ESA) is counted when a live claim is accepted and either payments or national insurance credits are made. When a new customer applies for ESA they will initially enter an assessment phase lasting 13 weeks. During this

phase the customer will have their ability to work assessed to determine their entitlement, this is called the Work Capability Assessment (WCA).

In response to question 2, the ESA on-flow figures do include Incapacity Benefit Reassessment cases.

In response to question 3, the on-flow part applies to the ESA claim only and the benefit combination variable shows the combination of benefits for which the person has a live claim at the start of the ESA claim. So for those with a benefit combination of ESA and Disability living Allowance (DLA) on the ESA on flows, the entitlement to DLA will already have been determined.

In response to question 4, the proportion of the current caseload claiming ESA and DLA only is published via the Benefit Caseloads 100% data tabulation tool at <http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/100pc/tabtool.html>. For 'Benefit/Scheme' select **Client Group Analysis of Claimants of All Ages**, then select **Benefit Combination** for the row variable and select the other variables as you require. However, as noted above, this will not include all claimants claiming ESA and DLA. This information is shown in the table below.

Number¹ of claimants in receipt of ESA² and who are eligible or in receipt³ of DLA: February 2013

Benefit combination	Total
Total	729,530
ESA, DLA (eligible) and another benefit	50
ESA, DLA (in payment) and another benefit	21,430
ESA, DLA (eligible) only	6,700
ESA, DLA (in payment) only	701,350

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten; some additional disclosure control has also been applied.
2. ESA replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims from 27th October 2008.
3. In payment figures for DLA show the number of people in receipt of an allowance, and exclude people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.

In response to question 5; claimants, depending on their personal circumstances, may be eligible to claim a number of different benefits simultaneously. Information on the number of claimants by benefit combination has been provided to show the range of a customer's interaction with the Department. This information is used both internally and externally for

example to assess the impact of Welfare Reform on different customer groups.