



Civil Justice Statistics Quarterly, England and Wales, April to June 2018 (provisional)

Main points

In April to June 2018, the number of County Court claims and judgments decreased against the same quarter of 2017. Other stages of county court activity (defences, allocations, trials) increased across this period, continuing the overall increasing trend seen since April to June 2015.

Decrease in County Court claims driven by specified money claims	↓	In April to June 2018, County Court claims decreased by 13% to 493,000. Of these, 392,000 were specified money claims (down 14% on the same period in 2017).
Unspecified money claims were down 3% to 33,900	↓	The decrease in unspecified money claims was driven by a decrease in Personal Injury (down 5% to 31,700).
The number of claims defended and gone to trial have increased	↑	There were 74,200 claims defended and 15,400 claims that had gone to trial in April to June 2018, up 1% and 10% respectively.
Average time taken from claim to hearing has increased	↑	Average time taken for small claims to go to trial took 33.9 weeks and for multi/fast track claims 56.2 weeks, up 3 and less than 1 weeks compared to the same period in 2017 respectively. However, average time taken remains in line with range seen since 2011.
Judgments decreased 8% compared to same quarter in 2017	↓	Judgments decreased in April to June 2018 to 301,000 when compared to the same period in 2017; the proportion that were default judgments increased by 2 percentage points to 89%.
20,300 enforcement orders and 108,300 warrants were issued	↓	Enforcement orders fell by 12%, driven by a fall in charging orders (down 14%) as well as a drop in attachment of earning orders (down 3%). Warrants issued increased by 32%, driven by warrants of control (up 48%).
The Home Office had the largest number of Judicial Reviews lodged against them in 2017	↓	There were 1,800 Judicial Reviews in the first half of 2018. Of the 1,100 cases in 2018 that reached the permission stage, 120 (11%) were found to be 'totally without merit'.

This publication gives civil county court statistics for the latest quarter (April to June 2018), compared to the same quarter the previous year. The judicial review figures cover the period April to June 2018. For more details, please see the supporting document.

Statistics on the Business and Property Court for England and Wales have also been published alongside this quarterly edition as Official Statistics. For technical detail, please refer to the accompanying support document.

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1. Claims Summary

County court claims decreased 13% on the same quarter of 2017, with the decrease driven by money claims



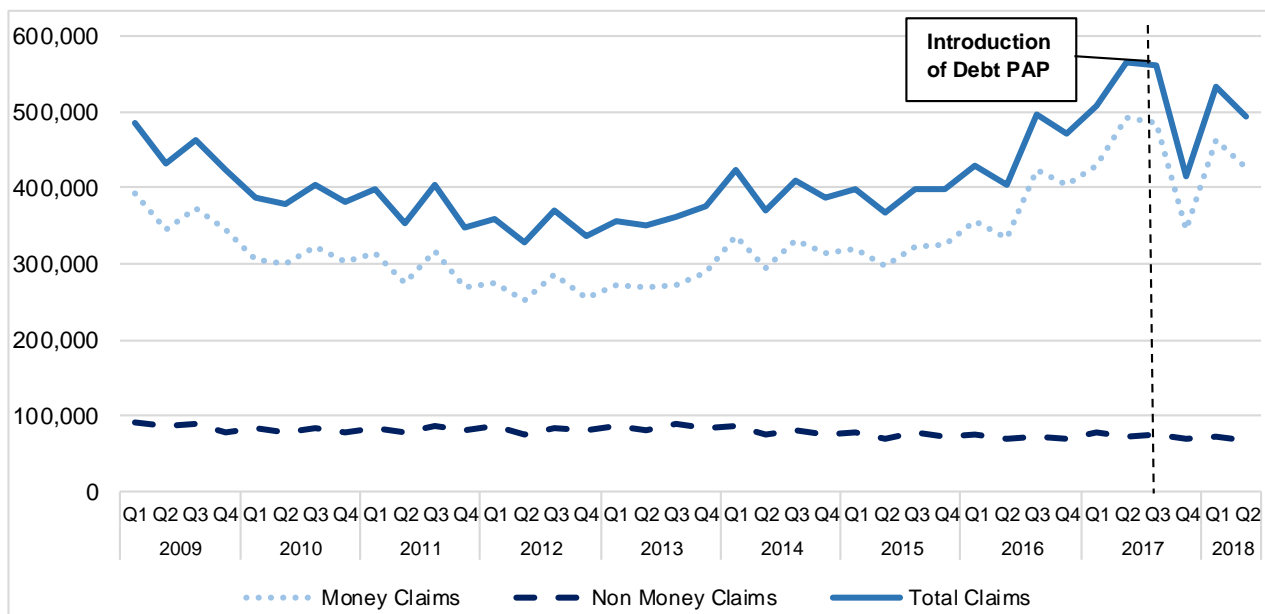
There were 493,000 County Court claims lodged in April to June 2018. Of these, 426,000 were money claims (down 14% from in April to June 2017).

Non-money claim volumes were at 67,200, down 8% on the same quarter last year



Return of goods increased by 25% to 2,900 when compared to April to June 2017, whereas 'Other non-money' and Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims have decreased over this period (to 30,400 and 33,900 claims respectively).

Figure 1: County Court claims by type, Q2 (April to June) 2009 to Q2 (April to June) 2018 (source: table 1.2)



County Court claims had been generally increasing since a low of 328,000 in April to June 2012, reaching a peak of 565,000 claims in April to June 2017. This increase was driven by a rise in money claims, which make up the majority of claims received. In this most recent quarter, claims have decreased by 13% to 493,000, compared to the same period in 2017. Of these, 426,000 were money claims (down 14% from in April to June 2017). The number of claims have increased from the decline seen in October to December 2017, and trends following the Debt PAP will continue to be monitored.

Non-money claims have been generally decreasing since the peak of 89,300 claims in July to September 2013, to 67,200 in the current quarter in April to June 2018, the lowest value of the time series (down 8% when compared to the same period in 2017.)

Within non-money claims, return of goods have been generally increasing since July to September 2015. In April to June 2018, these types of claim increased by 25% to 2,900, when compared to the same period in 2017. Despite an overall increase in other non-money claims since a low of 25,900 in April to June 2014, in the most recent quarter, they decreased by 8% to 30,400 when compared to the same period in 2017.

The overall trend in Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims has been decreasing since a peak of 59,900 in January to March 2014. This claim type saw a drop of 9% in in April to June 2018 to 33,900 claims, when compared to the same quarter last year.

2. Money Claims

Specified money claims decreased by 14% to 392,000 claims in April to June 2018, driving the decrease seen in money claims.

Specified money claims up to (and including) £15,000 decreased over this period, and accounted for almost all (98%) specified money claims.



Unspecified claims have decreased by 3% to 33,900 when compared to the same quarter in 2017

Unspecified money claims have decreased for Personal Injury (down 5% to 31,700) and increased (up 22% to 2,270) for other unspecified money claims.



The majority (85%) of specified money claims are processed and issued at the County Court Business Centre (CCBC). There were 332,700 such claims at the CCBC in January to March 2018 (down 19% on the same quarter in the previous year).

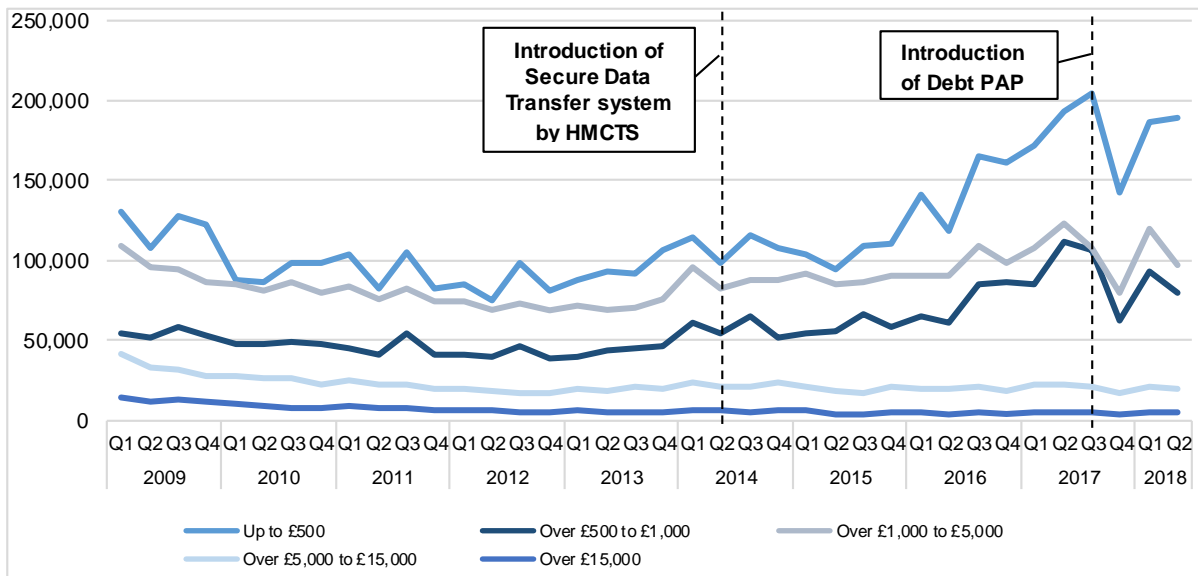
Specified money claims had been following a generally increasing trend from a low in April to June 2012 (210,000 claims), until October to December 2017 where volumes fell, following the implementation of the Pre-Action Protocol for Debt claims. In the most recent quarter, there was a decrease of 14% to 392,000 claims in April to June 2018, compared to the same quarter the previous year.

It appears that the trend of specified money claims is returning to previously seen levels, before the implementation of the Pre-Action Protocol for Debt Claims¹, which was introduced in October 2017. The main aim of the protocol is to encourage early engagement between parties to resolve disputes without needing to start court proceedings.

The decrease in specified money claims can be seen across small claims with value up to and including £5,000, with the greatest decrease in claims over £5,000 and up to and including £15,000. (down by 16%). These claims account for 94% of the total specified money claims in the most recent quarter. Higher value claims (above and including £5,000) decreased over this period by 11% to 25,200 claims.

¹ <http://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/civil/pdf/protocols/pre-action-protocol-for-debt-claims.pdf>

Figure 2: Specified money claims by monetary value, Q1 (Jan-Mar) 2009 to Q2 (Apr-Jun) 2018 (source: civil workload CSV)



Unspecified money claims have fluctuated between 32,900 and 40,000 claims each quarter over the last four years (since April to June 2014). In the most recent quarter, they decreased by 3% when compared to April to June 2017, to 33,900. Within this claim group, personal injury decreased by 5% to 31,700 and other unspecified money claims increased by 22% to 2,300.

Allocations (Table 1.3)

In April to June 2018, 42,000 money claims were allocated to track, 9% more than the same period in 2017. Compared to April to June 2017, of these allocations;

- 21,000 were allocated to small claims, a decrease of 1%, accounting for 50% of all allocations;
- 17,700 were allocated to fast track, an increase of 25%, accounting for 42% of all allocations;
- 3,400 were allocated to multi-track, an increase of 9%, accounting for 8% of all allocations.

3. Defences (including legal representation) and Trials

The number of claims defended decreased by 1% to 74,200

Of those claims defended, 56% had legal representation for both claimant and defendant (at the same level as reported in April to June 2017), 22% had representation for claimant only (down three percentage points over the same period last year), and 4% for defendant only.



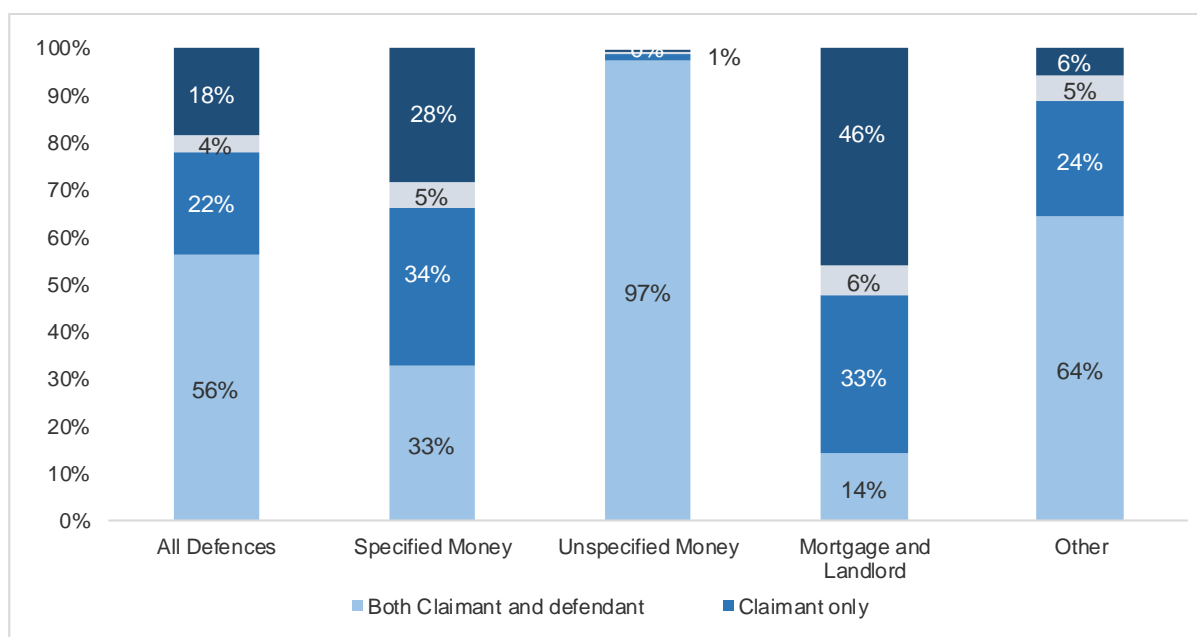
The number of trials have increased and average time taken from claim to trial has also increased

Average time taken for small claims has increased to 33.9 weeks, and for multi and fast track claims has increased to 56.2 weeks.



In April to June 2018, almost all (97%) unspecified money defences had legal representation for both the defendant respondent and claimant, compared with around a third (33%) of specified money defences.

Figure 3: Proportion of civil defences and legal representation status, April to June 2018 (Source: table 1.6)



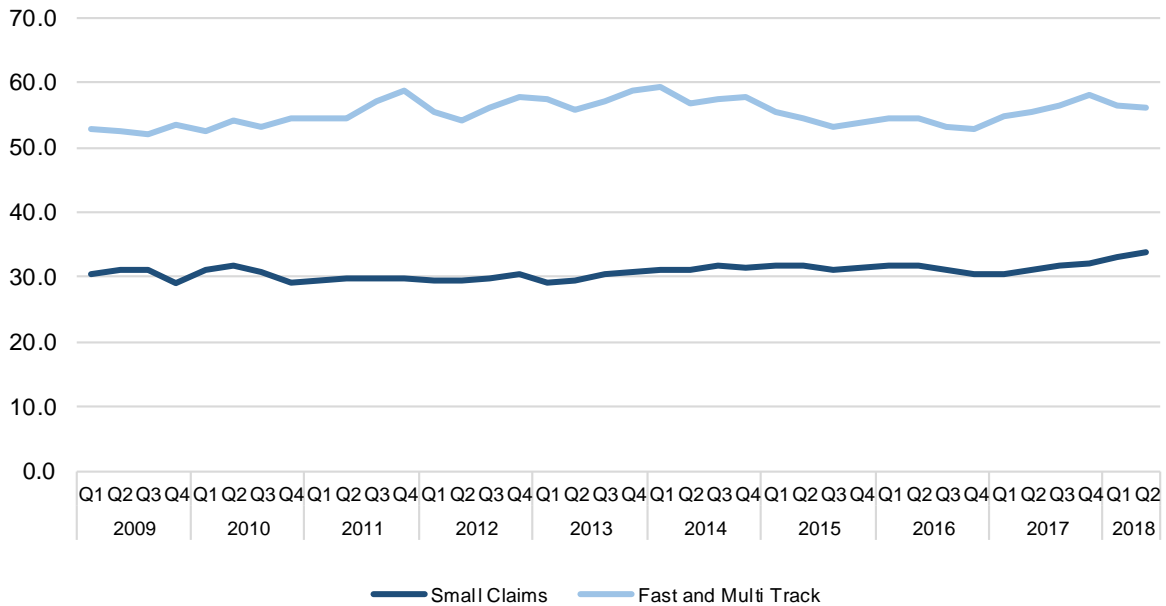
Claims defended (Table 1.6)

The total number of claims defended increased by 1% to 74,200 cases. Of these, over half (57%) were specified money claim defences, and 37% were unspecified money claim defences. The proportion of specified money claim defences has increased by one percentage point since April to June 2017, whereas unspecified money claims has remained at the same level. Mortgage and landlord possession defences accounted for 4% of claims defended and have decreased by one percentage point.

Trials and Time Taken to Reach Trial (Table 1.5)

Defended cases which are not settled or withdrawn generally result in a trial. In total, there were 15,400 trials in April to June 2018, up 10% on the same quarter in 2017. Of the claims that went to trial, 10,900 (71%) were small claims trials (at the same level as in the same quarter in 2017) and 4,500 (29%) were fast and multi-track trials (up 11% on the same quarter in 2017).

Figure 4: Average number of weeks from claim being issued to initial hearing date, Q2 (Jan-Mar) 2009 to Q2 (Apr-Jun) 2018 (Source: table 1.5)



In April to June 2018, there was an average of 33.9 weeks between a small claim being issued and the claim going to trial, nearly three weeks longer than the same period in the previous year. For multi/fast track claims the average was 56.2 weeks over the same period, just less than a week longer than in April to June 2017, although the average time taken remains in line with the long-term range (52-59 weeks).

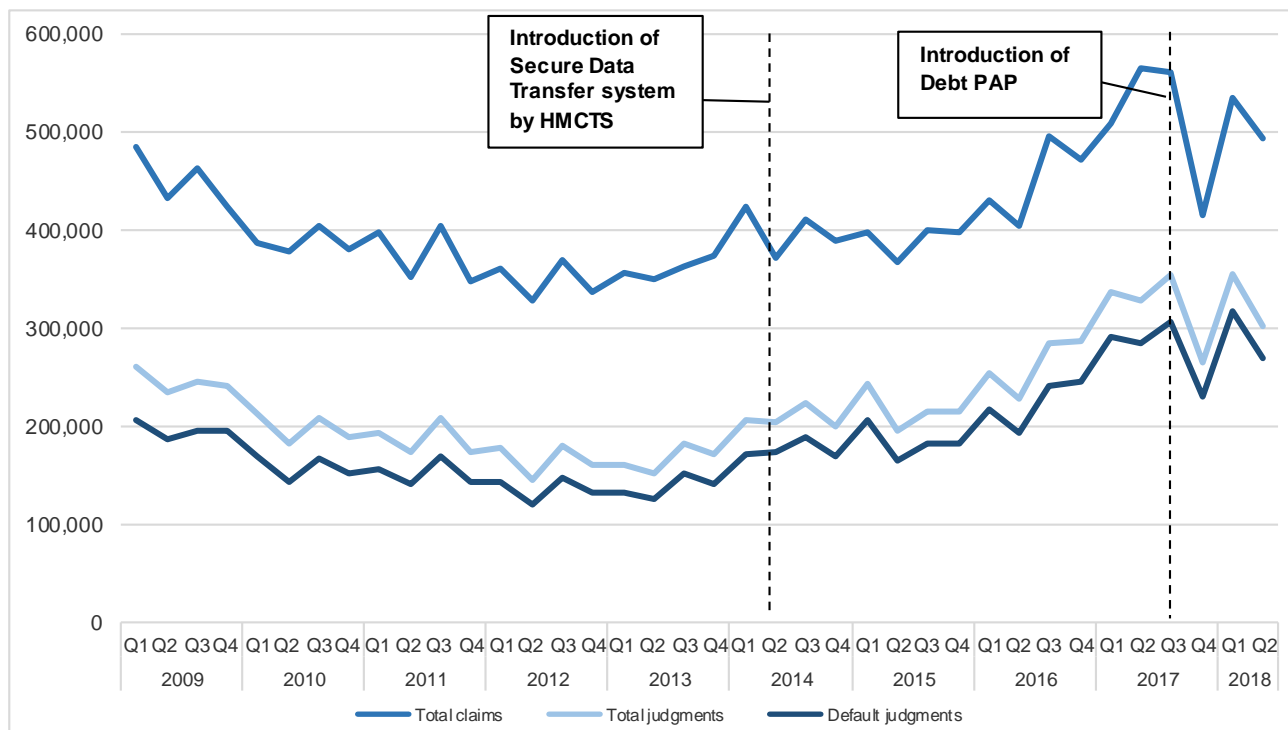
4. Judgments

Judgments decreased by 8% compared to same quarter in 2017



There were 301,000 judgments made in April to June 2018, of which 269,000 were default judgments. The proportion of default judgments however has increased by 2 percentage points to 89% when compared to the same quarter in 2017.

Figure 5: All claims, judgments and default judgments, Q1 (Jan-Mar) 2009 to Q2 (Apr-Jun) 2018 (Source: table 1.2 and 1.4)



There were 301,000 judgments made in April to June 2018, a decrease of 8% compared to the same quarter of the previous year, following the trend of claims after the Debt PAP introduction. Of these, 89% were default judgments, up 2 percentage points against the same quarter of the previous year. Whilst there has been a gradual increase in the proportion of default judgments since 2009, from 80% to 89% seen in the most recent quarter, the volume of default judgments has decreased by 6% from April to June 2017.

The second largest type of judgment were 'admissions'², of which there were 17,900 in April to June 2018, down 33% on the same quarter in 2017. Admission judgments accounted for 6% of all judgments, down 2 percentage points from April to June 2017.

² Information available within the workload csv

5. Enforcements and Warrants

Enforcement applications were up 1% and enforcement orders down 12% compared to same quarter in 2017



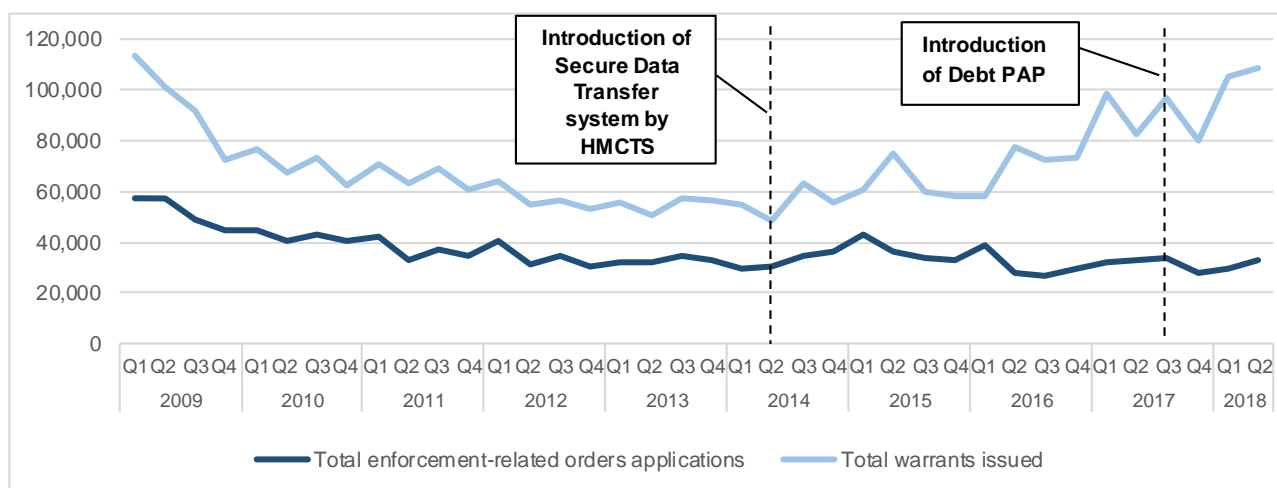
There were 33,300 applications and 20,400 orders made in April to June 2018. The decline in orders were driven by the decrease in charging order (down 14%) while applications remained largely at similar levels as in the same period in 2017.

Warrants issued increased by 32%, driven by an increase in warrants of control



In April to June 2018, 108,300 warrants were issued, of which 83% were warrants of control which increased by 48% compared to the same quarter in 2017.

Figure 6: Warrants and enforcements issued – Q1 (Jan–Mar) 2009 to Q2 (Apr–Jun) 2018 (Source: tables 1.7 and 1.8)



Warrants (Table 1.7)

There were 108,000 warrants issued in April to June 2018, an increase of 32% on the same quarter in 2017. Over the longer term, issued warrants fell between 2000 and April to June 2014, to 48,400. They have since gradually increased, driven by warrants of control.

This increase is likely due to the introduction of the Secure Data Transfer system in July 2014 by HMCTS for the issue of warrants of control. This enables bulk customers to not only issue money claims digitally, but also the subsequent enforcement by a warrant; speeding up and simplifying the process, which has led to a customer preference for warrants over other types of enforcement.

Enforcements (Table 1.8)

There were 33,300 enforcement-related order applications (which include attachment of earnings orders, charging orders, third party debt orders, administration orders, and orders to obtain information) in April to June 2018 and 20,400 actual enforcement related orders made (up 1% and down 12% respectively, compared to the same period last year). The fall in orders has been driven by a decrease in charging orders (down 14%). There is a delay between orders being applied for and subsequently being issued – this explains the different trends in applications and orders made in the year leading to April to June 2018.

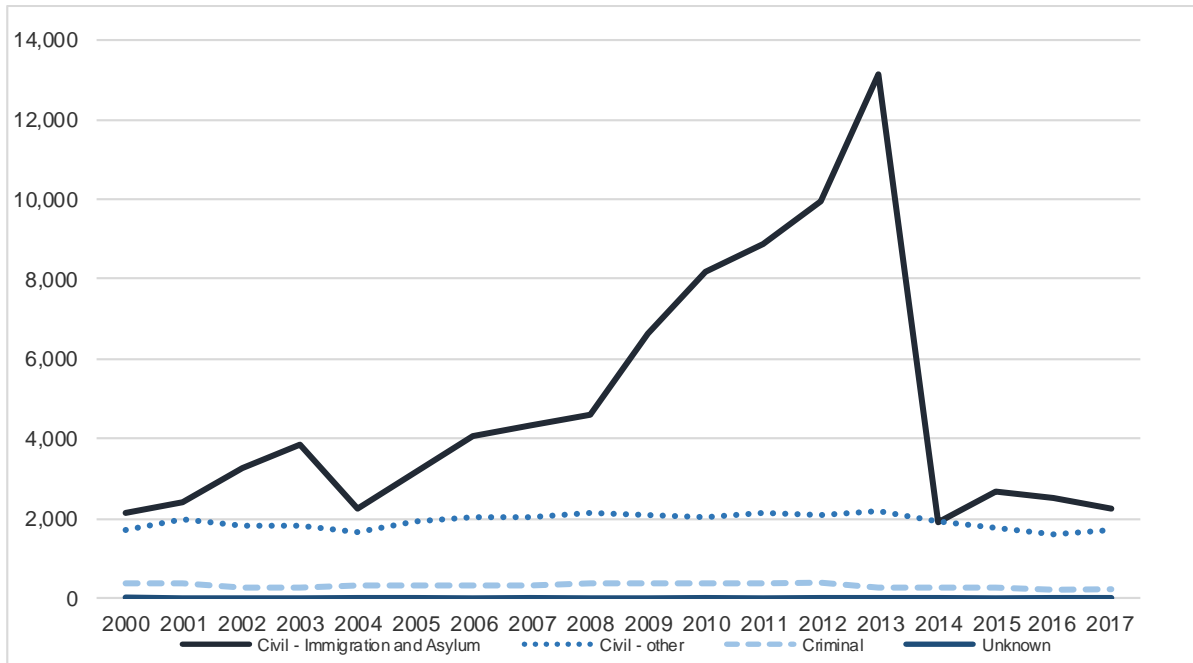
Over the longer term, there has been a decreasing trend in enforcement related applications received and orders made since 2008, possibly due to claimants' preference for using warrants instead to retrieve money, property or goods (as warrants increased over this same period). Figure 6 highlights the increase in warrants issued since Q3 2014 and the decrease in enforcements issued across the time series.

6. Judicial Reviews³

Of the 1,800 applications received, 60% have already closed, and 120 were found to be 'Totally Without Merit' (34% of cases that reached the permission stage).

There were 1,800 judicial review applications received so far in 2018, down 19% on the same period in 2017.

Figure 7: Annual Judicial Review Application, by type calendar year 2000-2017 (Source: table 2.1)



Of the 1,800 judicial review applications received in 2018, 867 were civil immigration and asylum applications, 770 were civil (other) and 110 were criminal, down 24%, down 15% and down 3% respectively on 2017. Twenty-eight of the civil immigration and asylum cases have since been transferred to the UTIAC.

In the first half of 2018, 60% of the applications made progressed and are now closed. Of the total applications, 1,100 reached the permission stage within the first half of 2018, and of these:

- 11% (120) were found to be totally without merit (TWM), a 1% increase with the proportion in the previous year.
- 240 cases were granted permission to proceed and 780 were refused at the permission stage. However, 30 of cases refused at permission stage went on to be granted permission at the renewal stage.
- 270 of the 2018 cases have been assessed to be eligible for a final hearing and of these, 40 have since been heard.
- For the 2018 cases, the mean time from a case being lodged to the permission decision was 55 days, up from 51 days across the same period of 2017.

Future quarterly bulletins will give more insight into the 2018 cases, as the work their way through the system.

³ The judicial review data are Official Statistics

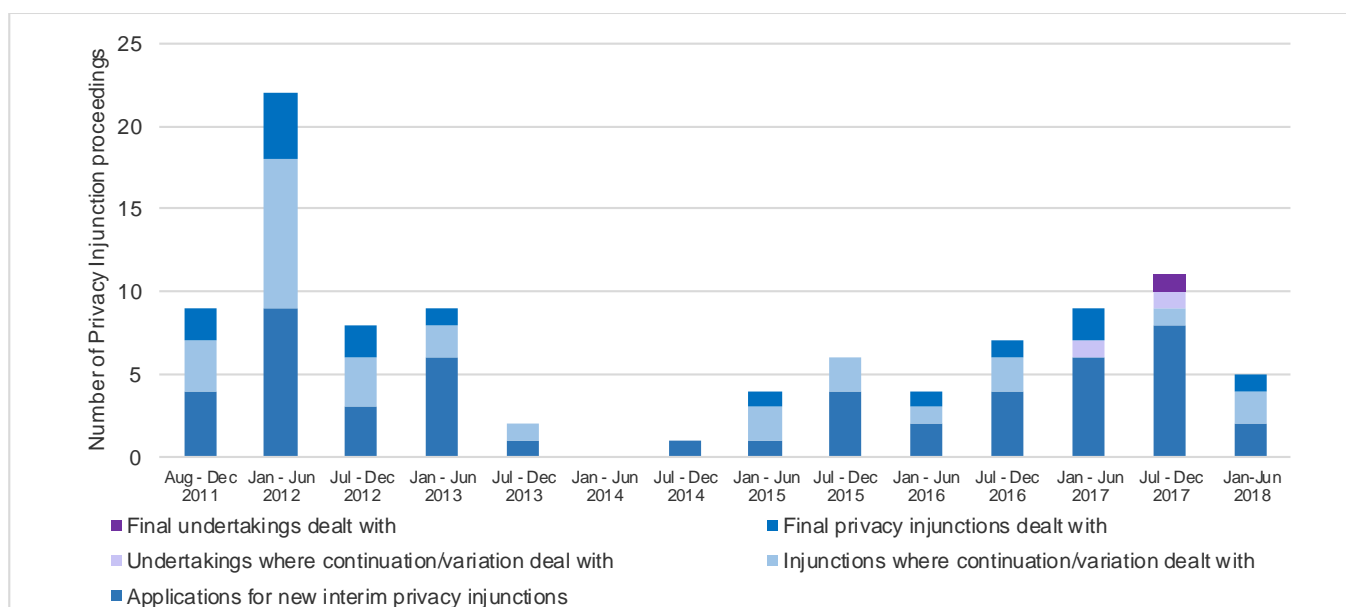
7. Privacy Injunctions⁴

In the first six months of 2018, there were two proceedings where the High Court considered an application for a new interim privacy injunction.

Two proceedings were considered at the High Court on whether to continue or amend an interim injunction, and one proceeding was considered to issue a final permanent injunction.

There were no proceedings considered at the High Court on whether to continue or amend an undertaking, or consider a final undertaking⁵.

Figure 8: Revised number of privacy injunction proceedings, by type of proceeding, from Aug-Dec 2011 to Jan-Jun 2018 (Source: tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3)



New interim privacy injunctions (Table 3.1)

Of the two proceedings at the High Court that took place in January to June 2018, one was refused and one application was withdrawn. In the previous six months (July to December 2017) eight new interim privacy injunction proceedings took place. All eight of these were granted.

Continuation of existing interim injunctions (Table 3.2)

The continuation of two existing interim injunction proceedings that took place in January to June 2018 were both granted/varied. In July to December 2018, the continuation of an existing interim injunction proceeding was granted/varied, and the continuation of an undertaking was also accepted.

Final privacy injunctions (Table 3.3)

The final privacy injunction dealt with in January to June 2018 was granted, and the final undertaking dealt with in July to December 2017 was accepted.

⁴ The privacy injunction data are Official Statistics

⁵ An undertaking is different from an injunction, in that it is a promise given by the defendants, rather than an injunction which is an order of the court.

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A supporting document providing further information on how the data is collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to civil justice.
- A set of overview tables and CSV files, covering each section of this bulletin.

Rounding convention

Figures greater than 10,000 are rounded to the nearest 1,000 and those between 1,000 and 10,000 are rounded to the nearest 100.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.



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