



The Planning Inspectorate  
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

## Ministerial Measures - Experimental Statistics

### 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023

#### Introduction

This report provides information on how the Planning Inspectorate has performed against new measures by which Ministers agreed to assess the organisation's casework performance for appeals.

These measures are:

- A. Appeals valid on first submission
- B. How long appeals take
  - There is also an ambition for more consistent, timely decisions
- C. Customer satisfaction
- D. Number of cases quality assured

Full details of these are available at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1049462/Housing\\_Minister\\_letter\\_to\\_PINS.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1049462/Housing_Minister_letter_to_PINS.pdf)

For measure A this report covers the period to March 2023. Information on how long appeal decisions take from valid receipt to decision (measure B) covers the 12 months from August 2022 to July 2023. For measure C, survey fieldwork was carried out in April and early May 2023. Measure D covers the three months April to July 2023.

This is the fifth time such information has been produced, and work is still in development. Following a review, this series continues with the status of "Experimental", with updates provided every three months. The next publication will be in November 2023.

The review of these statistics highlighted an issue in the measure of appeals valid on first submission, which has been corrected. More detail is given in the section below and in the accompanying Background Quality Report.

These statistics are designated as Experimental Statistics and any feedback would be welcome. Please send comments to [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

## A. Appeals Valid on First Submission

Ambition: Proportion rising annually and ambition to reach 100%. Rising to at least 85% in 2023/24.

For appeals received during January to March 2023, 52.5% were valid first time<sup>1</sup>. Table 1 shows the proportion valid on first submission over the year. The proportion valid at first submission appears to be around 60% most quarters, apart from Jan – Mar 2023.<sup>2</sup>

Please note that an error in the processing of the data on appeals valid time was discovered during a review of these statistics. This has been corrected – and details are given in the Background Quality Report. This correction means that previous publications have over-stated the proportion of appeals valid first time.

In addition, it appears that the data for the most recent quarter may be lower than it will be reported in the future, due to some appeals still not being validated. It is possible that one hundred or more appeals will be validated for this quarter.

As a result of the issues described above, these values for valid on first submission should be treated as provisional. Further investigation is still required before more confidence can be placed in the data.

The Inspectorate is developing new digital public services. As more appeals are submitted through those services the proportion of valid cases submitted validly first time is expected to rise.

**Table 1 - Proportion of Appeals Valid on First Submission, By Quarter, for Appeals Received April 2022 to March 2023 (Provisional)**

Appeals Received	Jan – Mar 2022	Apr – Jun 2022	Jul -Sep 2022	Oct – Dec 2022	Jan – Mar 2023
% Valid First Time	62.8%	62.4%	60.4%	61.6%	56.2%

Source: Horizon

Figure 1 below shows how the proportion valid first-time varied for a selection of appeal types, for appeals received during 2022/23.

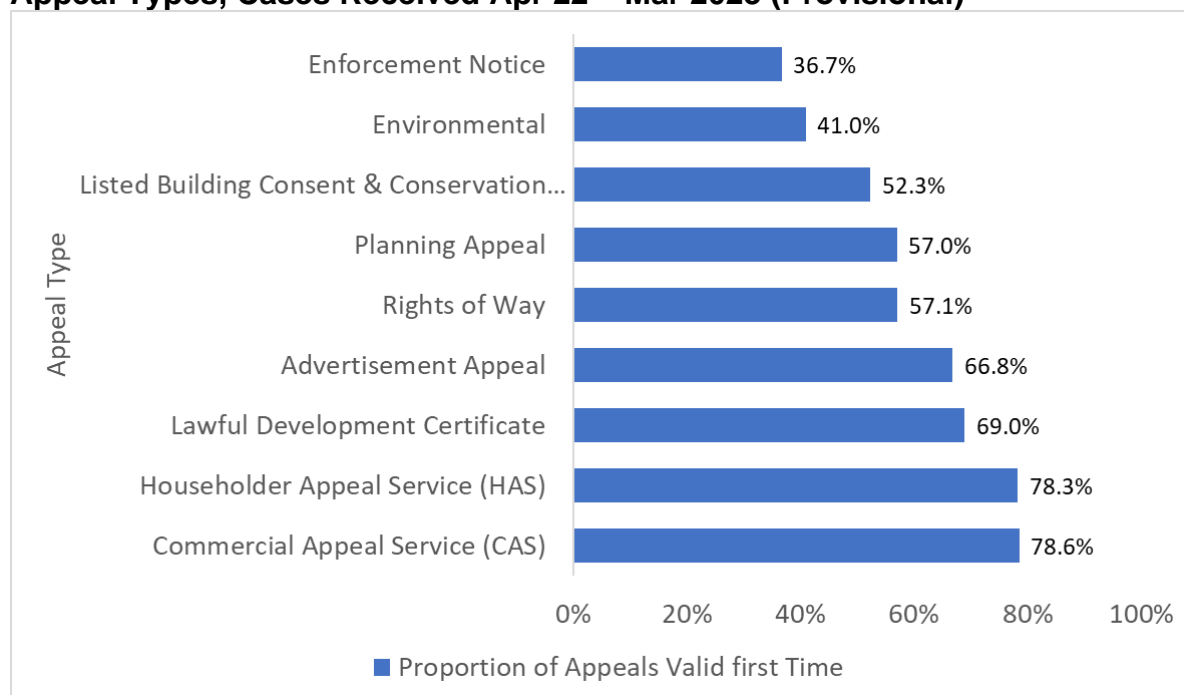
<sup>1</sup> Please note that this is calculated using a proxy: included are those cases where the date that the appeal had been validly received, is the same as the date that the case was first received. Additionally, be aware that the date for 'validly received' is the date on which the information was received, even if is assessed as being valid on a later date.

<sup>2</sup> The figures in Table 1 differ from those published in May, which are given here for transparency:

Oct – Dec 21	Jan – Mar 22	Apr – Jun 22	Jul – Sep 22	Oct – Dec 22
64.6%	64.5%	64.1%	62.5%	64.4%

This difference is due to the processing issue being corrected.

**Figure 1 – Proportion of Appeals Valid on First Submission for Selected Appeal Types, Cases Received Apr 22 – Mar 2023 (Provisional)**



Source: Horizon

Robust data on the reasons for appeals not being valid are not currently available. The Inspectorate are developing new digital public services and as more cases are submitted using those services the data we hold will improve.

## B. How Long Appeals Take

**Ambition:** As an initial milestone in making more consistent, timely decisions - The Planning Inspectorate should be working towards consistently achieving decisions in these ranges:

Appeals decided entirely using writing evidence in 16 – 20 weeks.

Appeals decided including at least some evidence through hearing or inquiry in 24 - 26 weeks (30 weeks to recommendation for called in or recovered cases)

This section provides information on how long it has taken to make decisions in the last 12 months (in this case, August 2022 to July 2023). Complementary statistics for the same period can be found in our monthly Official Statistics publication<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 2 below shows the proportion of cases decided:

- within 20 weeks<sup>4</sup>;
- within 26 weeks (but more than 20 weeks);
- within 52 weeks (but more than 26 weeks); and
- more than 52 weeks.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that these are experimental statistics, with further work required to ensure robust, consistent quality assurance around them. As such they do not have the same status as the Official Statistics measures for the same period.

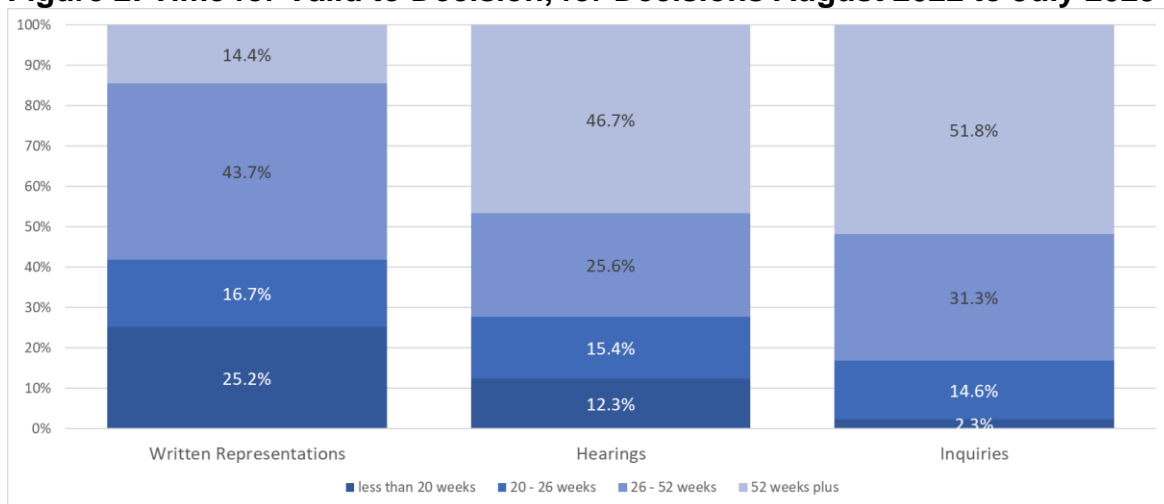
<sup>4</sup> The count of measures “within” a given number weeks, includes cases which took that number of weeks to decide. For example, cases that took 20 weeks are included in the “within 20 weeks” count.

The data applies to all cases decided in the year to the end of July 2023; and is broken down by the procedure used to arrive at the decision. The data for this Figure is available at Annex B.

Figure 2 shows how many cases are decided within a year, and how many take longer than a year. It shows that a much smaller proportion (15%) of cases decided by written representations take more than a year than those decided by Hearings (47%) or Inquiries (52%).

It also shows that a greater proportion of cases decided by written representations are decided within 20 weeks (25%) than those decided by Hearings (12%) or Inquiries (3%).

**Figure 2: Time for Valid to Decision, for Decisions August 2022 to July 2023**



Source: Horizon

Measures set by the Minister that apply to cases decided wholly by written representations are shown in Annex C.

### Consultation

If you would like to make a suggestion on which information you would like to see; or would like to have the chance to comment on any proposals on what is published, please contact us via [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

Figure 2 shows the proportion of cases that meet Ministerial timescales. Figure 3 below shows more detail. It gives the full spread of time taken to decide cases, providing visibility of those cases far outside the accepted range. It shows all cases decided in the 12 months to the end of July 2023; and a breakdown by the decision procedure. Larger pictures are available at Annex D.

Figure 3 shows:

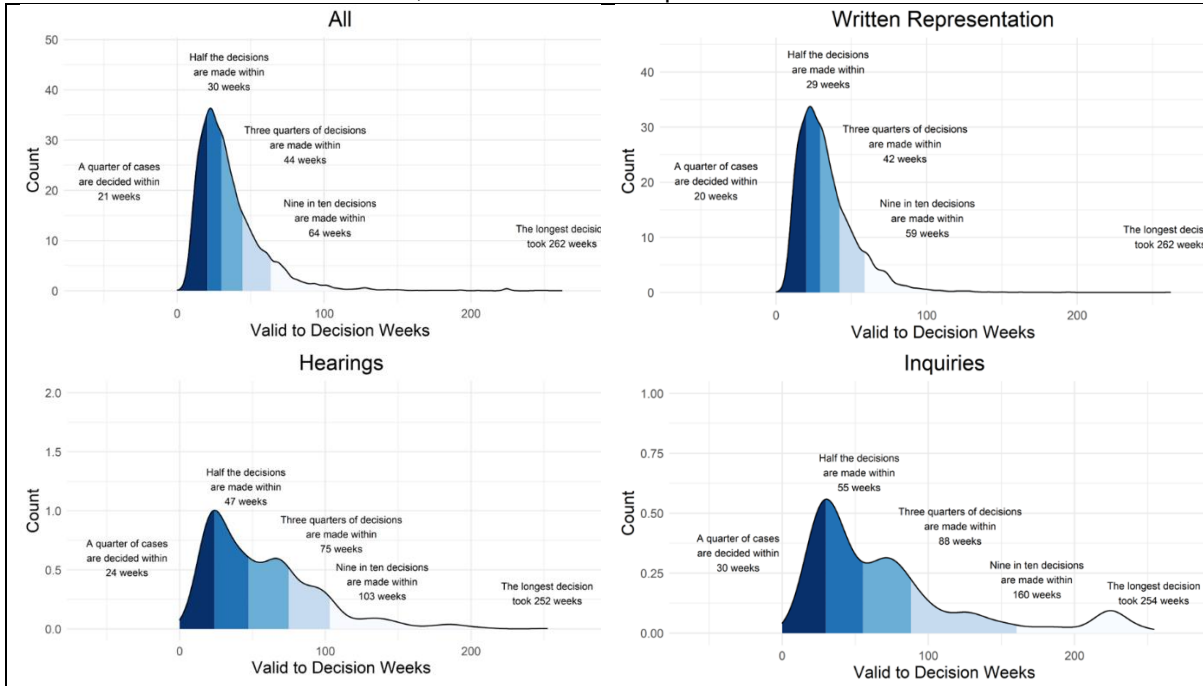
- The spread of time taken to decide for all cases, is similar to the spread for those decided wholly by written representations. This is because the large majority (16,407/17,845) of cases are decided this way.
- For all procedure types, there are a small number of cases that take over four years (200 weeks and more) – one decided through written representations, forty-one through inquiries, four through hearings.
- Three quarters of cases decided wholly by written representations are decided within 40 weeks. The corresponding time for three quarters of cases decided

wholly or partly by Hearings is 84 weeks and for those wholly or partly by Inquiries is 86 weeks – in each case, more than twice as long.

- Nine in ten cases decided wholly by written representations are decided within 56 weeks. The corresponding time for nine out of ten cases decided wholly or partly by Hearings (130 weeks) and Inquiries (163 weeks), is more than twice as long.

**Figure 3 – Spread of time taken to decide cases (in weeks), for cases decided May 22 – April 23**

Note: The figure for “Half the decisions are made within” is the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile; this is the same as the median time to decide these cases, which is how this is presented in the Official Statistics.



Source: Horizon

The Ministerial measure<sup>5</sup> requires information on how long appeal decisions take from valid receipt to decision<sup>6</sup>, with information on various percentiles.

Ambition: Decision time for 50th percentile falling. Decision time for 90th percentile falling faster than 50th percentile.

The ambition is that cases are decided more quickly, and the time taken for longest cases is reduced. If the ambition is met, the gap between the 50th percentile and 90th percentile needs to reduce.

<sup>5</sup> Measure: How long appeal decisions take from valid receipt to decision with information on 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> percentiles accompanied by reasons to explain what factors affected longer or shorter timeframes.

<sup>6</sup> As noted in Footnote 1 above, the date for ‘validly received’ is the date on which the information was received, even if it is assessed as being valid on a later date.

### What is a percentile?

A percentile is a measure that shows the value below which a given percentage of the values in a group of numbers fall.

For example, if we tell you the 25th percentile for decision times, then you know that 25% of decisions are issued in less time (or the same time) as that.

Table 2 below shows the 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles for valid to decision, in weeks, for the decisions made from August 2022 to July 2023. Note that these match the timings given in text on the shapes in Figure 3 above.

**Table 2 - Percentiles for Valid to Decision (in weeks) for decisions made August 2022 to July 2023 – and number of decisions in that time**

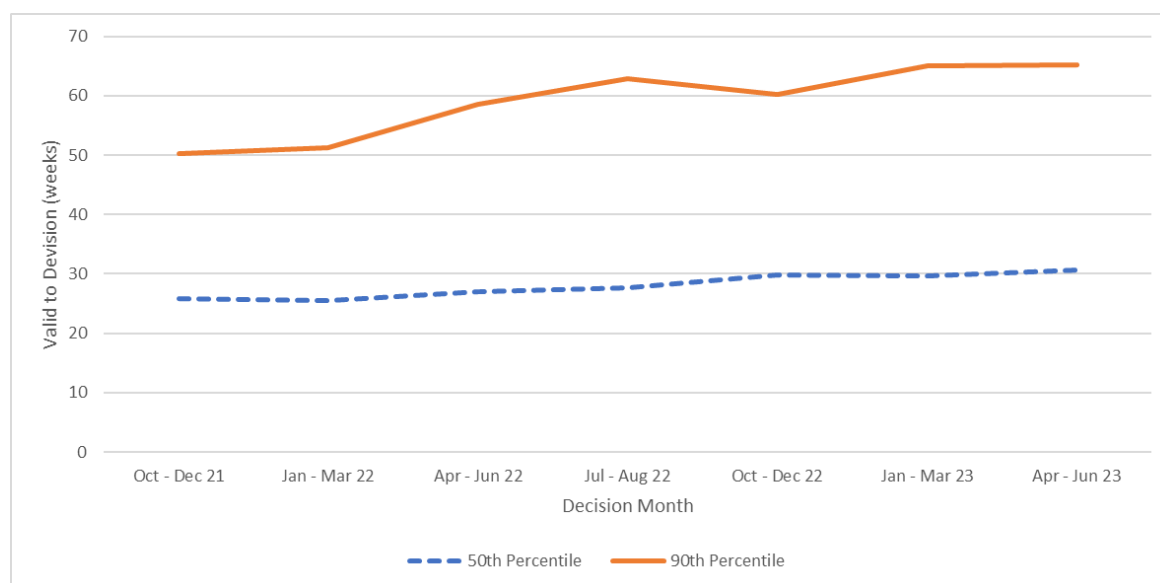
Procedure	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	100 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Number of decisions
Written reps	20 weeks	29 weeks	42 weeks	59 weeks	262 weeks	16,407
Hearing	24 weeks	47 weeks	75 weeks	103 weeks	252 weeks	903
Inquiry	30 weeks	55 weeks	88 weeks	160 weeks	254 weeks	535
All	21 weeks	30 weeks	44 weeks	64 weeks	262 weeks	17,845

Source: Horizon

If performance changes, it will be more quickly apparent by looking at quarterly data than 12 monthly data. And the ambition is to show a fall. So, Annex E shows the same percentiles, for decisions in the three months April to June 2023. There are relatively few hearings and inquiries in each quarter, which means quarterly percentiles for these appeals are susceptible to extreme values - so they should be viewed with caution. Future publications will provide updates on subsequent quarters.

Figure 4 and Table 3 below show the 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles for valid to decision time (in weeks) for the last six quarters, for all decisions. It shows that both measures are rising rather than falling; and that the gap between them is not reducing.

**Figure 4: All Appeal Decisions, 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> Percentile for Valid to Decision, By Quarter, Oct 21 – June 23**



**Table 3 - All appeal Decisions, 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles of Valid to Decision (weeks), October 2021 to June 2023**

Decision made:	50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Gap
Oct - Dec 21	26 weeks	49 weeks	23 weeks
Jan - Mar 22	25 weeks	50 weeks	25 weeks
Apr - Jun 22	27 weeks	58 weeks	31 weeks
Jul - Aug 22	27 weeks	60 weeks	33 weeks
Oct - Dec 22	30 weeks	60 weeks	30 weeks
Jan - Mar 23	30 weeks	65 weeks	35 weeks

Source: Horizon

The table above covers all appeal decisions. Annex F gives figures for appeals decided wholly by written representations; wholly or partially through hearings; and wholly or partially through inquiries.

### C. Customer Satisfaction

Ambition: Proportion of customers reporting satisfaction with the planning Inspectorate’s services rising annually

The Planning Inspectorate have worked with the Institute for Customer Service to conduct a satisfaction survey. The data capture phase was carried out in April and early May 2023. The results of this survey show that Planning Inspectorate was given an overall satisfaction score of 56.8.

It is not simple to compare these customer service results against other organisations, given the nature of the services the Planning Inspectorate provides. For instance, based on customer complaint data, almost a half of the complaints that the Inspectorate received were complaints about an Inspector’s decision, rather than a complaint about how the process was run.

The results suggested that the organisation is underperforming in these key areas:

- Experience
- Complaint handling
- Customer Ethos
- Emotional Connection
- Ethics

Action plans will be put in place to address these areas of concern to optimise, evolve and ultimately improve our performance.

## D. Number of Cases Quality Assured

Ambition: There is no minimum number or percentage ambition on this measure.

During the three months April to June, 966 appeal cases were quality assured. These are shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4 - Number of appeal decisions quality assured, April to June 2023**

Number	Category	Explanation
58	Inspector Manager team reading	Inspector Managers are expected to review a proportion of their Inspectors' decisions post-decision. This is to ensure quality standards and to identify learning opportunities and to check for consistency with the relevant quality framework.
19	APOs	Recommendations made by Appeals Planning Officers (APOs) are all reviewed as part of routine quality assurance before a decision is issued by an Inspector.
889	Inspector in Training – pre-decision	The majority of decisions made by Inspectors in Training (IITs) are reviewed for teaching purposes. Each review is by an experienced Inspector.
966	Total Appeal decisions	

Source: MiPINS

To put these totals in context, the 966 appeal decisions quality assured constitutes between a fifth a quarter (23%) of all decisions (4,252) issued over that period.

Table 5 shows the number of cases quality assured, beyond appeal cases, for the same quarter. These are much larger more complex cases than the average appeal case.



**Table 5 - Number of Other Cases Quality Assured, April to June 2023**

Number	Category	Explanation
5	Local Plans	All Local Plans are quality assured as part of the examination process. One Local Plan Report was issued in this quarter; quality assurance also took place for plans yet to be published.
3	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)	All NSIP decisions are quality assured as part of the examination process. Three recommendation reports were submitted to the Secretary of State this quarter.

Source: Local Plan and NSIP case records

**Annex A - Proportion of Appeals Valid First Time for Selected Appeal Types, Appeals Received Ap 22 – Mar 2023 (Provisional)**

Appeal Type	Proportion valid on first submission	Number of Appeals Received
Planning Appeal (s78)	57.0%	10,620
Householder Appeal Service (HAS)	78.3%	4,940
Enforcement Notice	36.7%	2,519
Lawful Development Certificate	69.0%	631
Commercial Appeal Service (CAS)	78.6%	475
Listed Building Consent & Conservation Area Consent Appeal	52.3%	399
Advertisement Appeal	66.8%	311
Rights of Way	57.1%	147
Environmental	41.0%	99

Source: Horizon

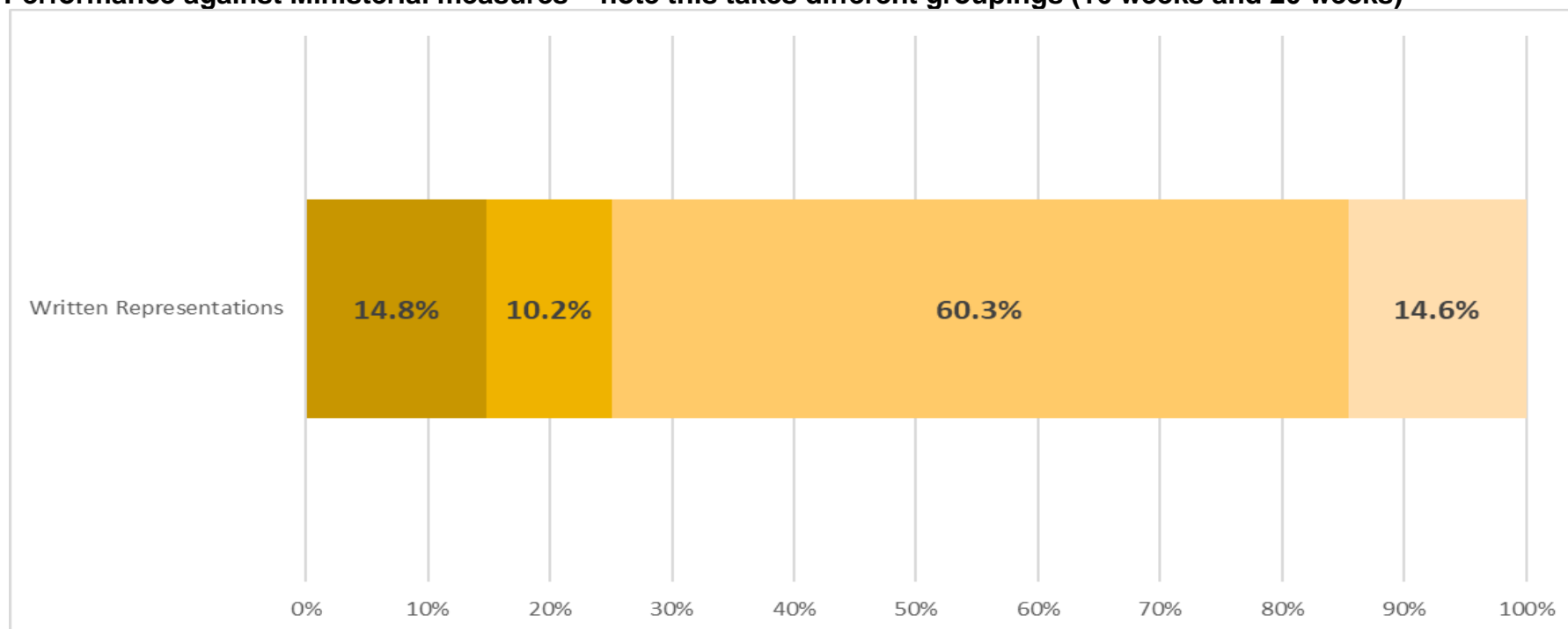
Note: Appeals not yet validated are included in the number of appeals received but excluded from the calculation on proportion valid on first submission

**Annex B: Proportion of Appeals decided within 20, 26 and 52 weeks - Decisions August 2022 – July 2023**

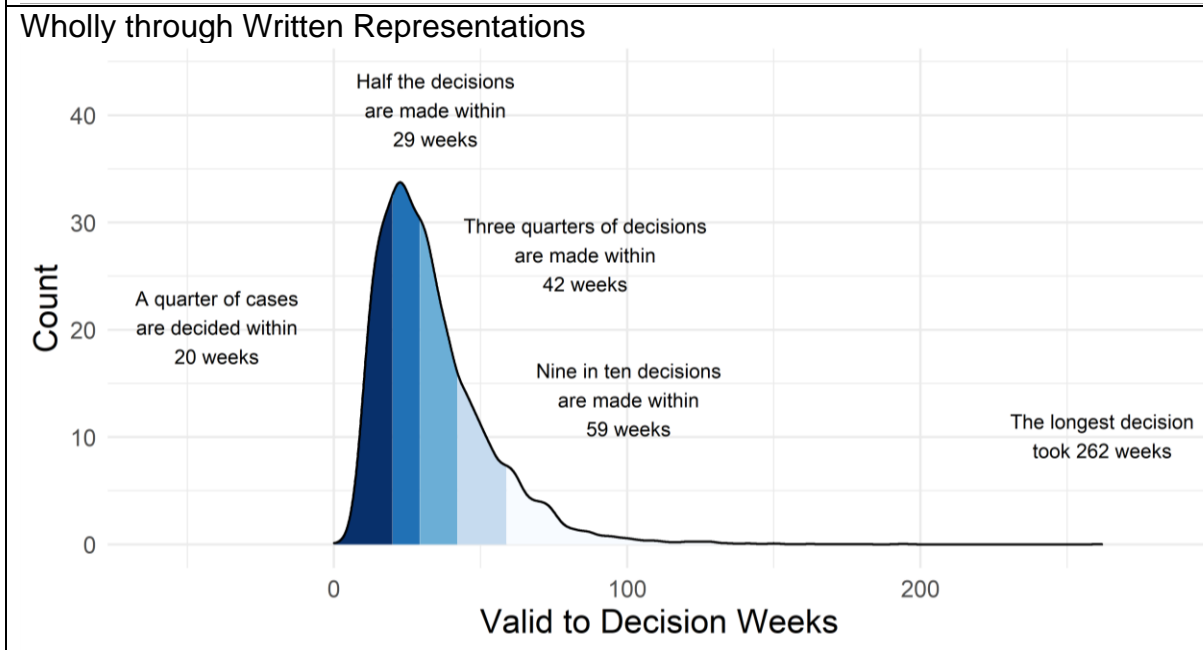
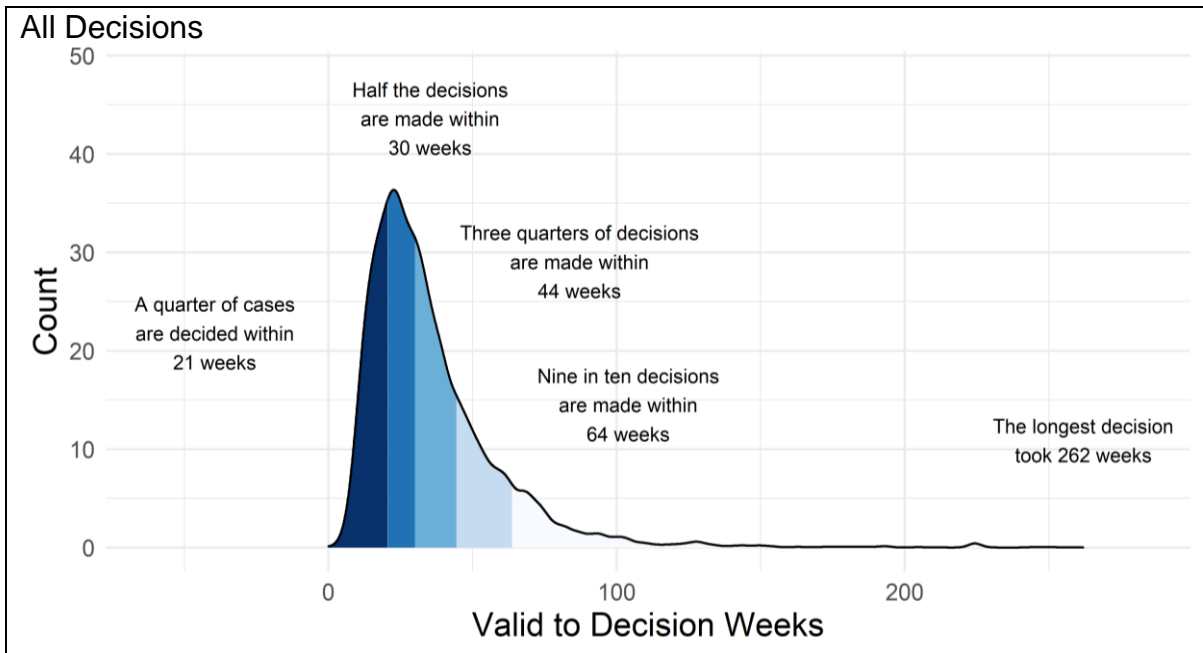
	Within 20 weeks	Within 26 weeks	Within 52 weeks	More than 52 weeks
Wholly Written Reps	25.1%	16.7%	43.6%	14.6%
Wholly or partly Hearings	12.4%	15.7%	25.4%	46.5%
Wholly or partly Inquiries	2.6%	14.8%	30.8%	51.8%

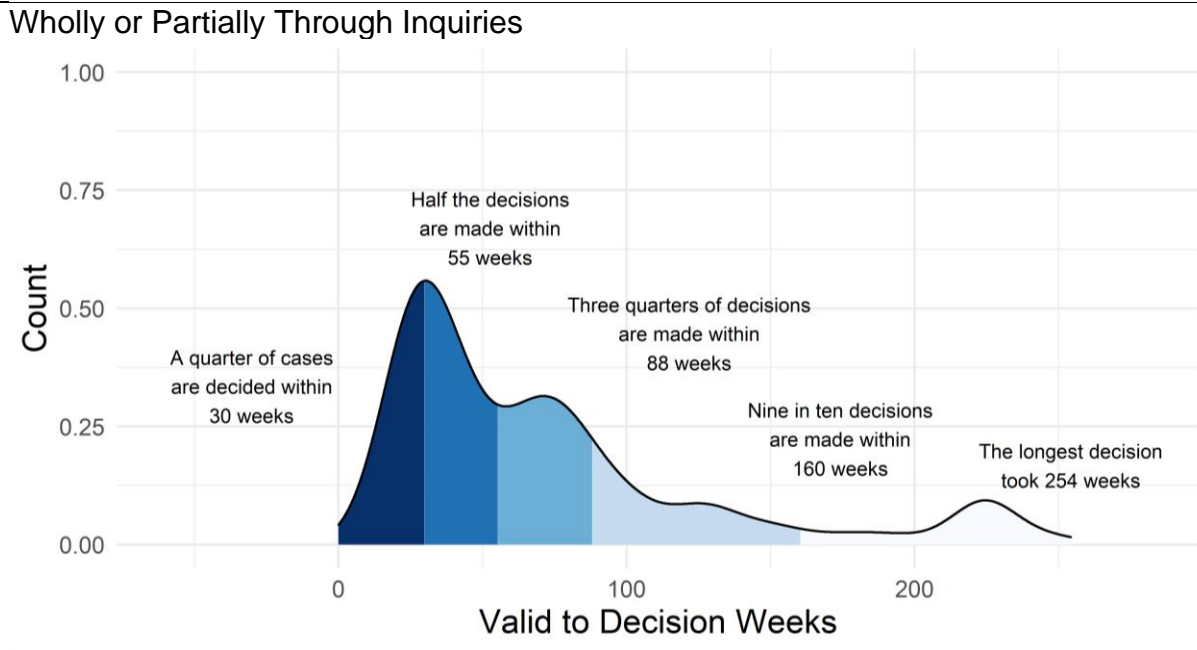
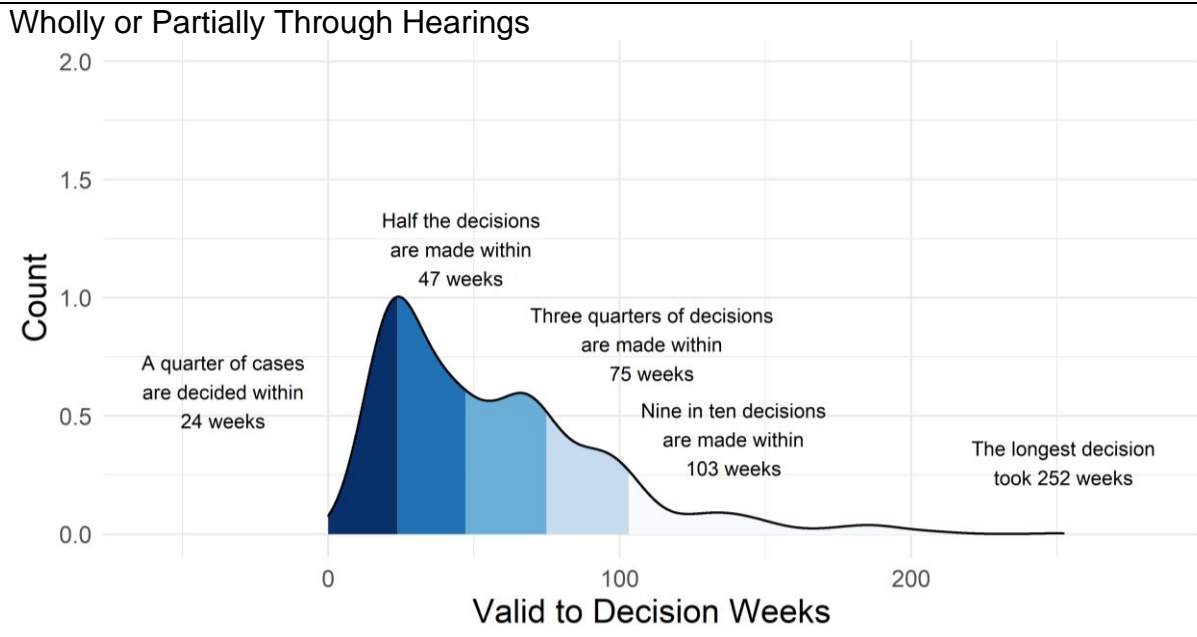
**Annex C: Decisions made wholly through written representations – Decisions August 2022 to July 2023 -Weeks from valid to Decision**

**Performance against Ministerial measures – note this takes different groupings (16 weeks and 20 weeks)**



**Annex D – Variation in Valid to Decisions (weeks) for appeal decisions made May 2022 to April 2023, by procedure.**





**Annex E - Percentiles for Valid to Decision (in weeks) for decisions made April – June 2023 and number of decisions in that time**

Procedure	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	100 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Number of decisions
Written reps	20 weeks	30 weeks	44 weeks	62 weeks	194 weeks	3,947
Hearing	24 weeks	44 weeks	79 weeks	109 weeks	211 weeks	209
Inquiry	29 weeks	60 weeks	101 weeks	142 weeks	193 weeks	96
All	20 weeks	31 weeks	45 weeks	65 weeks	211 weeks	4,252

Source: Horizon

**Annex F - Appeal Decisions, 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles of Valid to Decision (weeks), October 21 to June 2023 - by procedure**

Note: all measurements are in weeks

**Wholly by written representations**

Decision made:	50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Gap
Oct - Dec 21	25	44	19
Jan - Mar 22	25	45	20
Apr - Jun 22	26	49	23
Jul - Aug 22	27	54	27
Oct - Dec 22	29	56	27
Jan - Mar 23	29	59	30
Apr - Jun 23	30	62	32

**Wholly or partially through Hearings**

Decision made:	50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Gap
Oct - Dec 21	53	115	62
Jan - Mar 22	55	134	79
Apr - Jun 22	93	184	91
Jul - Aug 22	51	111	60
Oct - Dec 22	48	101	52
Jan - Mar 23	49	101	52
Apr - Jun 23	44	109	64

**Wholly or partially through Inquiries**

Decision made:	50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Gap
Oct - Dec 21	54	129	75
Jan - Mar 22	58	105	47
Apr - Jun 22	43	117	74
Jul - Aug 22	69	128	59
Oct - Dec 22	39	100	62
Jan - Mar 23	77	224	148
Apr - Jun 23	60	142	82

Source: Horizon