



CORPORATE REPORT

1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023

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FOREWORD



We had a busy start to the year, with lots of activity across government and a significant number of impact assessments (IAs) coming to us for scrutiny. This asked a lot of our resources, both on the committee and the secretariat. I am pleased with the way we responded, producing opinions at pace for the most urgent cases and receiving positive feedback from departments.

In May this year, the Government [announced](#) that it would be reforming the Better Regulation Framework (BRF).¹ The RPC welcomes these reforms which include a number of changes that we have advocated including: earlier independent scrutiny of IAs to allow us to comment effectively on the evidence supporting different policy options; consideration of a wider range of impacts (including the impacts on households and the environment); and a greater emphasis on monitoring and evaluating regulations after they have been introduced, together with a commitment for post-implementation reviews to be carried out more comprehensively. It will require an ongoing commitment from Ministers to ensure that the benefits from the revised BRF are fully realised.

Concerningly, I have written in the [RPC Blog](#) about the increase in the number of IAs that have been red-rated as ‘Not Fit For Purpose’ and also the increase in the number of IAs submitted late by departments (in some cases when the legislation was already before Parliament). We have started to issue RPC statements when departments are late in submitting their IAs and we will continue to engage with departments to try to ensure that they submit their assessments on time – especially as we transition to the new framework. We have listed in this report and on our website the [red-rated IAs](#) and [RPC statements](#).

Another disappointing trend has been the failure of departments to complete post-implementation reviews of their regulations despite it being a statutory requirement – this has been commented on and criticised in [NAO](#) and the [Office of Environmental Protection](#) reports. We hope that the increased focus on evaluation in the new BRF will improve departmental performance in this area.

In early 2022, we recruited five new committee members: Daniel Dalton, Stephen Gifford, Hilary Jennings, John Longworth and Derek Ridyard, who joined Jonathan Cave, Andrew Williams-Fry and myself. I am pleased how quickly they have got to grips with the work of the RPC. I am grateful for their efforts and confident that we are in a good place to support the transition to the new framework over the coming months.

Finally, I would like to thank the RPC secretariat for their efforts over the year. It has been good to see increasing numbers back in the office after the challenges of remote working.

Stephen Gibson, RPC Chair

¹ The reformed BRF was launched in September 2023 with the publication of [new guidance](#).

About the Regulatory Policy Committee

- **The RPC is the independent better regulation watchdog.** The RPC is an advisory non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business & Trade (DBT).
- The RPC provides independent scrutiny of the quality of analysis and evidence presented in government options assessments (OAs), impact assessments (IAs) and post-implementation reviews (PIRs).
- The RPC was appointed, under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015, as the independent verification body (IVB) for the 2017-2019 parliament's business impact target (BIT) and was re-appointed, in December 2020, as the IVB for the 2019-24 parliament. As the IVB, the RPC had a statutory role to confirm whether a regulatory provision is a qualifying regulatory provision (QRP) for the BIT and to verify the Equivalent Annual Net Direct Cost to Business (EANDCB) figure for most regulatory proposals above the *de minimis* threshold. We acted as IVB for the duration of the year covered by this report but this role was abolished from 29 August 2023 (along with the BIT) by a provision in the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023.
- The RPC assesses and rates departmental IAs. A 'green-rated' opinion indicates that the analysis used to calculate the EANDCB and assess the quality of the small and micro business assessment (SaMBA) is robust and fit-for-purpose. A 'red-rated' opinion shows that the EANDCB and/or the SaMBA is/are not sufficiently robust and that the IA is therefore, not fit-for-purpose. The RPC also comments on the quality of the: rationale and options, cost-benefit analysis, wider impacts, and monitoring and evaluation plans in IAs and assesses whether they are 'good', 'satisfactory', 'weak' or 'very weak' – but this does not affect the red/green rating of the opinion.
- In cases where an IA is found to be not fit-for-purpose as first submitted, the RPC usually issues an 'initial review notice' (IRN) explaining the weaknesses in the IA and indicating areas to be addressed. The department is expected to respond to the IRN within 15 working days. Following submission of a revised IA, the RPC's opinion is issued with a green or red rating, depending on whether the revised IA is assessed as fit-for-purpose or not fit-for-purpose.
- The RPC aims to scrutinise final stage IAs within 30 working days. We work to a reduced target time scale of 20 working days for informal review of consultation stage IAs (and, previously, for measures that supported the UK's exit from the European Union). In cases where an IRN has been issued, the time scales may be extended. Within these targets, the RPC always aims to work flexibly with departments so as not to delay the policy process.

Executive Summary

During 2022-23, the RPC continued to deliver robust, independent scrutiny of the impact of government regulatory proposals in a timely and proportionate manner. We have also advised on the Government's approach to monitoring regulation more generally.

This year, we have:

- **Reviewed 109 submissions from 23 different departments, agencies and public bodies.** This remains in line with the typical number of cases submitted to the RPC for scrutiny over the past five years.
- **Worked with the Better Regulation Executive on their reforms of the Better Regulation Framework.** These reforms have resulted in changes that the RPC has long advocated, including: independent scrutiny earlier in the policy development process; monitoring and evaluation plans to be in place before regulation is introduced; and post-implementation reviews to be carried out more comprehensively.
- **Used our [blog](#) to communicate with stakeholders.** We published 8 blog posts over the year, including reports on our engagement with Parliamentary select committees and the key points in our report as Independent Verification Body for the Business Impact Target.

ABOUT THE REPORT

1. This report summarises the RPC's performance and activities for the year from April 2022 to March 2023. This includes:
 - a. an analysis of the submissions to the RPC;
 - b. feedback from departments;
 - c. a summary of the RPC's other activities, including training and international work; and
 - d. an overview of budgets, staffing, and Freedom of Information Act 2000 responses.

2. Details of our vision and strategic objectives for the future will be set out in the *RPC Business Plan 2023-24*. We are in the process of developing this following the recent announcement of the updated Better Regulation Framework and will publish it shortly.

The RPC's objectives for the period covered by this report were:

1. To deliver independent opinions on impact assessments and post-implementation reviews, that are timely, clear and consistent;
2. To verify the impacts of regulatory proposals and confirm whether they are qualifying or non-qualifying for the Business Impact Target (BIT);
3. To encourage and assist departments and regulators to improve the quality of their impact assessments and evaluation of regulation;
4. To engage effectively with business, civil and voluntary organisations, parliamentarians and the public on the evidence and analysis supporting regulatory proposals;
5. To contribute to the development and implementation of policies for better regulation; and
6. To enhance UK regulatory scrutiny through engagement with international counterparts, and to encourage evidence-based regulation in our trading partners.

PERFORMANCE

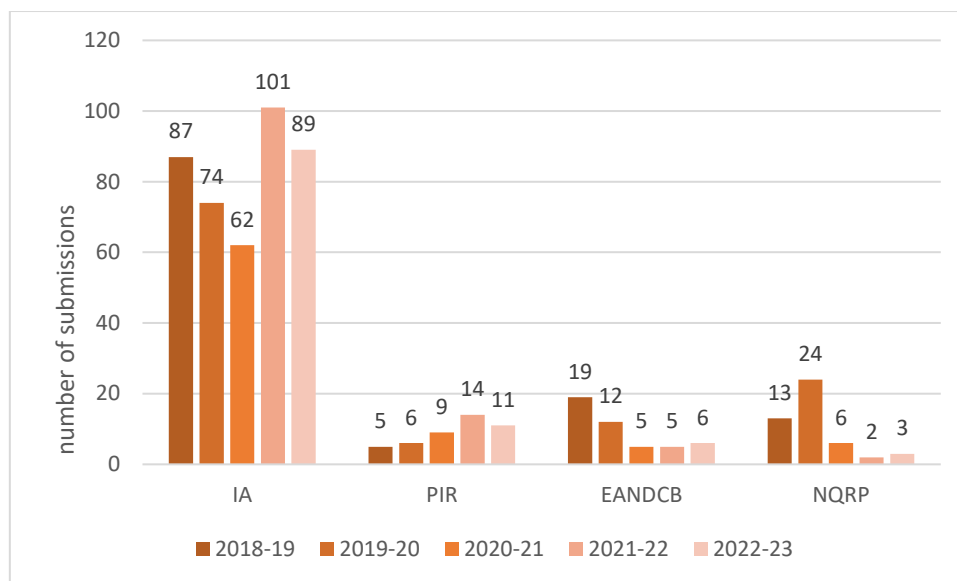
Casework summary

Numbers of submissions

6. In 2022-23, the RPC received 109 submissions from departments and regulators. This is slightly fewer than in 2021-22 (122), although in line with the typical number of cases submitted for scrutiny since the introduction of the *de-minimis* threshold in 2018.
7. As noted in previous reports, the introduction of the *de minimis* threshold significantly reduced the number of EANDCB validations² submitted to the RPC for scrutiny after a significant rise in the second quarter of 2017 (when regulators came under the scope of the business impact target for the first time). In the years that have followed, the vast majority of cases submitted to the RPC for scrutiny have been impact assessments (IAs). Figure 1 and Table 1 show the trends in recent years in the different types of submission that the RPC receives.
8. In 2020-21, RPC activity was curtailed, as much of government focused on developing emergency regulation in response to Covid 19 (much of which was exempt from the framework), rather than on creating ‘business as usual’ regulation. In 2021-22, there was a rebound in the number of submissions to the RPC, as government renewed its focus on introducing and amending legislation. This trend has continued through to this year and activity now seems to have stabilised at a level similar to that pre-pandemic.
9. There was a reduction in the percentage of opinions issued by the RPC within the agreed target time frame from 86% last year to 79% this year (see Table 1). This was below the target of 90%. The main reason for this was a significant increase in submissions in the first part of the year which led to us prioritising urgent cases and a number of less urgent cases missing the 30-day target.

² These are where regulators submit BIT scores for validation to the RPC.

Figure 1 – Number of submissions by type 2018-19 to 2022-23



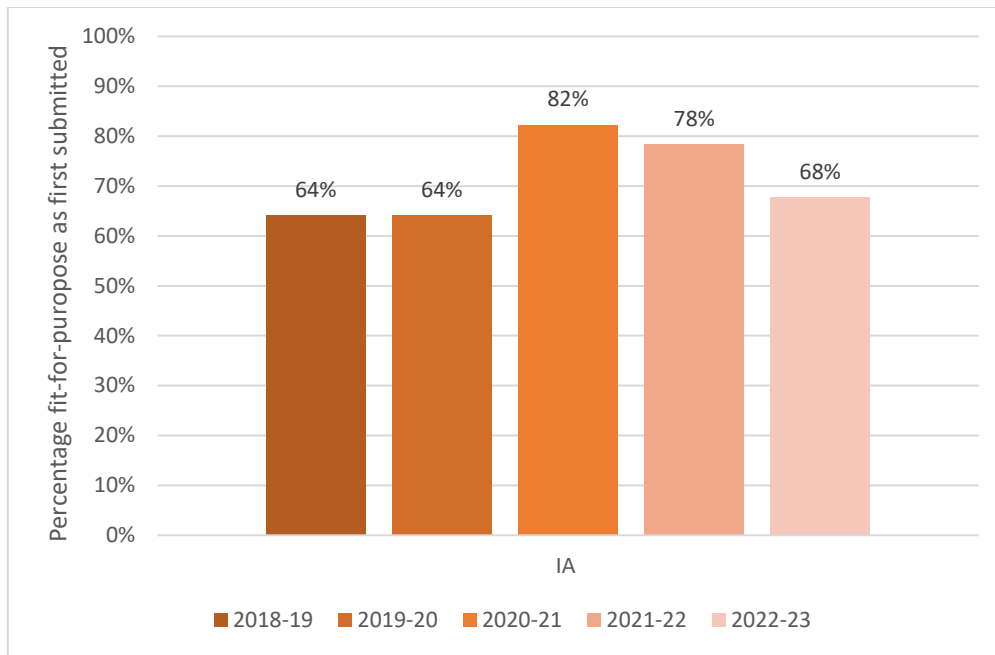
IA – Impact assessment
 PIR – Post-implementation review
 EANDCB – Regulator Equivalent Annual Net Direct Cost to Business validation
 NQRP – Non-qualifying regulatory provision verification

Table 1 – Submissions for financial years

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total number of cases submitted	125	116	82	122	109
Average number of days taken for RPC scrutiny	19.5	22.9	21.8	22.7	24.1
Percentage of opinions issued on time (all cases)	80%	89%	92%	86%	79%

10. The percentage of final stage IAs that were considered fit-for-purpose as first submitted fell from 78% in 2021-22 to 68% in 2022-23 (see Figure 2). This shows that departments' analysis of their regulations has seen a reduction in quality and highlights the value of independent scrutiny in identifying where departmental analysis needs improving.

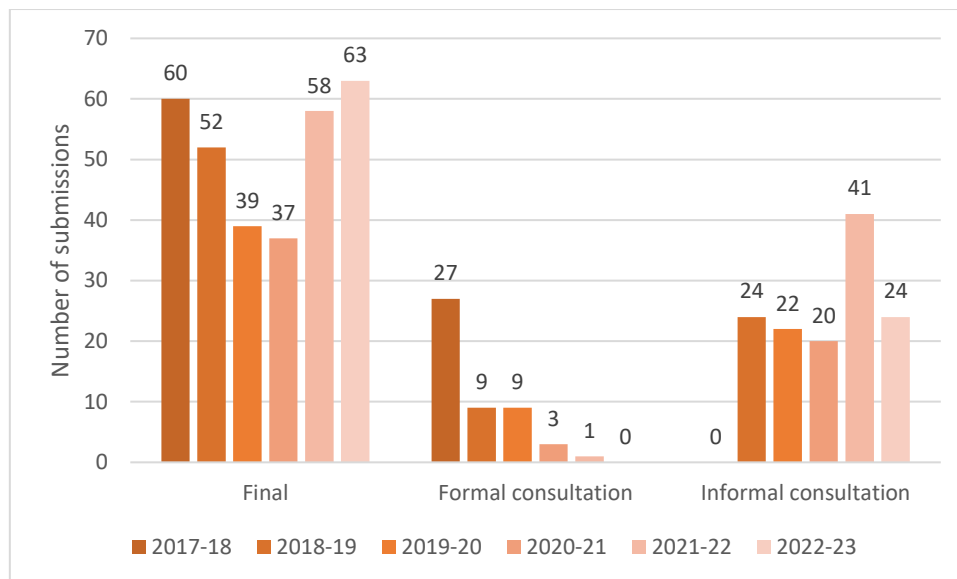
Figure 2 – Percentage of IAs fit-for-purpose at first submission



11. In 2018, the Better Regulation Framework was changed and the previous requirement for departments to submit IAs for RPC scrutiny at the consultation stage was removed. Following this change, the RPC offered voluntary scrutiny (either formal or informal) at consultation stage (informal advice is issued directly to the department without being published and no rating is provided).

12. The number of formal submissions to the RPC at the consultation stage has continued to fall with no cases being seen in 2021-22 (see Figure 3). Informal scrutiny now appears to have broadly replaced formal scrutiny at the consultation stage. While overall submissions to the RPC fell in 2022-23, the number of final stage IAs submitted rose slightly from 58 to 63.

Figure 3 – Number of IA submissions by type



13. The RPC in its role as IVB helped to ensure that BIT accounting of the impact of regulatory measures on business was accurate. This role was removed in August 2023 when the BIT was abolished. Further details of the BIT and our verification role can be found in our final IVB report³ and our blog post on the increase in the cost of regulation.⁴

Quality of submissions

14. In late 2020, the RPC introduced a new format for its opinions which, in addition to providing either a ‘fit-for-purpose’ or ‘not fit-for-purpose’ rating, introduced individual ‘quality indicators’ for key aspects of IAs.⁵

15. The RPC now provides quality ratings on a four-point scale – ‘good’, ‘satisfactory’, ‘weak’ or ‘very weak’⁶ – against additional categories depending on the type of submission (see Table 2).

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rpc-independent-verification-body-report-december-2021-to-december-2022>

⁴ <https://rpc.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/15/the-increase-in-the-cost-of-regulation-on-business-and-the-end-of-the-bit/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rpc-launches-new-opinion-templates>

⁶ Descriptions of the quality ratings are at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rpc-launches-new-opinion-templates>

Table 2: The RPC's use of red/green assessment and quality ratings

	<i>Consultation Stage IA</i>	<i>Final Stage IA</i>	<i>Post-implementation Review</i>
Red/Green assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rationale and options</i> • <i>Identification of impacts</i> • <i>SaMBA</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EANDCB</i> • <i>SaMBA</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recommendation</i>
Quality ratings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cost-benefit analysis</i> • <i>Wider impacts</i> • <i>Monitoring and evaluation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rationale and options</i> • <i>Cost-benefit analysis</i> • <i>Wider impacts</i> • <i>Monitoring and evaluation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Monitoring and implementation</i> • <i>Evaluation</i>

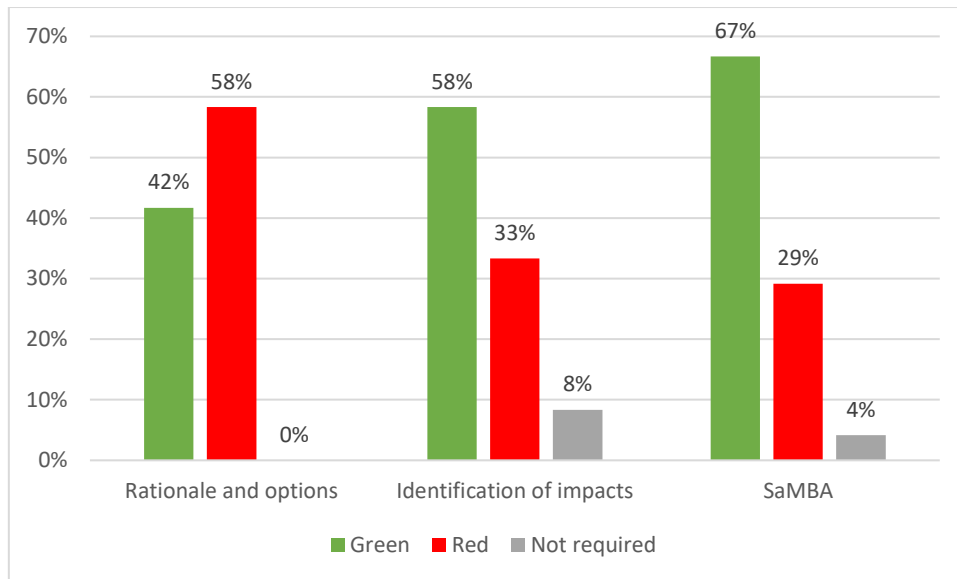
16. We have produced opinions in this new format across the full year covered by this report. Figures 4a to 4c below show the quality ratings given by the RPC for consultation and final stage IAs during the period covered by this report.

Consultation stage IAs

17. For the 24 consultation stage IAs reviewed, over half (58%) received a red (not fit-for-purpose) rating for 'rationale and options' (Figure 4a). Within this, common issues were insufficient identification and analysis of credible non-regulatory options, and failing to identify clearly the issue that required regulatory intervention. In addition, a third (33%) were rated as not fit-for-purpose on the identification of impacts and over a quarter (29%) on SaMBA. This suggests that departments need to develop their analysis of policy proposals in more detail before they reach the stage where they are consulting stakeholders.

18. The introduction of the Government's reformed Better Regulation Framework (BRF) should re-focus this early-stage scrutiny on how well the case has been made for regulation as the solution to the policy problem or whether non-regulatory options might be a better approach.

Figure 4a - Ratings⁷ by category for consultation stage IAs



19. Across the other quality ratings, three-quarters (75%) of consultation stage IAs received at least one ‘weak’ or ‘very weak’ rating. The consideration of ‘wider impacts’ is an area for particular improvement, with over half (62%) of IAs being rated ‘weak’ or ‘very weak’ (Figure 4b). This supports the proposal in our submission to the Better Regulation Framework review⁸ that it would be valuable to require IAs to consider a wider range of impacts.

⁷ For some submissions (for example measures that are out of scope of the Better Regulation Framework), the production of a rating may not be required for some categories. In these instances, the RPC does not provide a rating for this, but does comment on the quality of the category to aid the department or regulator to improve the quality of the IA.

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rpc-response-to-the-government-consultation-on-reforming-the-framework-for-better-regulation>

Figure 4b - Quality ratings by category for consultation stage IAs



Final stage

20. At final stage, rather than issue a ‘not fit for purpose’ (red) rating immediately, we typically issue an ‘Initial Review Notice’ (IRN), which identifies issues that would otherwise lead to a red rating, and offers the department the opportunity to amend their IA. Of the 63 final stage IAs that we scrutinised, 17 (27%) received an IRN, of which all but five received a green rating when revised and re-submitted.

21. In addition to the five final stage IAs (and one EANDCB validation) that received a red rating after failing to adequately respond to concerns raised in IRNs, a further two final stage IAs received red ratings, without being issued with an IRN. This was because in those cases the IA was submitted too late to go through the IRN process before Parliamentary scrutiny.

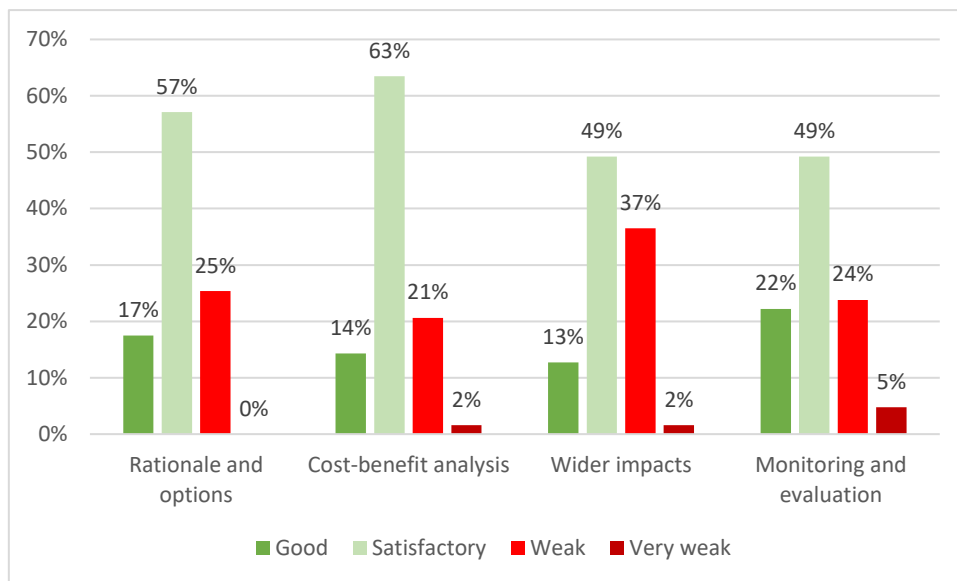
Table 3: Red-rated opinions issued by the RPC

Lead department	IA title
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill
HM Treasury	The Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2022
HM Treasury	Financial Services and Markets Bill
Cabinet Office / Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill
Financial Conduct Authority	Prohibiting the sale to retail clients of investment products that reference cryptoassets
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	Energy Prices Bill
Home Office	Martyn’s Law

22. As at consultation stage, we identify issues in the quality of the analysis at the final stage, with 63% of IAs receiving at least one ‘weak’ or ‘very weak’ rating in one of the four categories. Wider impacts are again an area that particularly needs to be improved, with only 13% being rated ‘good’ and 37% being rated either ‘weak’ or ‘very weak’ (Figure 4c).

23. There is also considerable scope to improve the quality of the monitoring and evaluation plans. Although 22% are rated ‘good’, around 29% are rated as ‘weak’ or ‘very weak’. Given the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of regulation, we believe that it is essential that impact assessments contain good monitoring and evaluation plans. This will ensure that early arrangements are in place to deliver robust post-implementation reviews that inform future decisions to retain or amend regulation. We are pleased that this is an issue that the Government is seeking to address in the revised BRF.

Figure 4c - Quality ratings by category at final stage



24. A final issue worth noting is the increase in the number of IAs being submitted for RPC scrutiny later than they should. IAs should be submitted to the RPC in time for both the IA (amended as appropriate) and RPC opinion to accompany the regulatory proposal through the decision-making process and into Parliament. We are increasingly receiving IAs very late in the process and in some cases even after the proposal has begun going through parliamentary scrutiny.

25. We had occasionally published statements to explain the absence of opinions in these circumstances and committed to doing this routinely in November 2022, in response to a recommendation from the House of Lords Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee. Now, when legislation reaches Parliament, if it is not accompanied by the IA and RPC opinion, we publish a statement on our website explaining why no opinion is yet available (including whether we have yet received an IA for scrutiny or not). Links to all such statements can be found [here](#) and those at the time of publishing this report are listed below in **Table 4**. In such cases, we aim to complete our scrutiny as quickly as possible and publish the opinion as soon as possible after we issue it to the relevant department.

Table 4: Cases where the RPC issued a statement explaining absence of IA/opinions

Lead department	IA title
Department for Health and Social Care	The Draft Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2021 (July 2021)
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy / Business and Trade	Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill IA (January 2023)
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy / Business and Trade	Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill IA (April 2023)
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	Renters (Reform) Bill IA (May 2023)
Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	The Windsor Framework (Retail Movement Scheme) Regulations 2023 (September 2023)
Department for Science, Innovation and Technology	The Data Protection (Adequacy) (United States of America) Regulations 2023 – UK extension to the EU-US Data Privacy Framework IA (September 2023)

Departmental feedback

26. The RPC requests feedback from departments on its opinions (using an online form). We received 56 responses from departments between April 2022 and March 2023 (compared with 45 responses the previous year). As shown in Figures 5 a-c, feedback from departments has been generally positive. Key messages are:

- 84% of respondents felt the RPC's opinion was either 'very clear' or 'clear' (up from 78% the previous year).
- 82% felt that the RPC's scrutiny had been either 'very useful' or 'useful' (same as the previous year).
- 80% found it either 'very easy' or 'easy' to communicate with the RPC (again the same as the previous year).

Across these three questions, only 6 cases were rated in the bottom two categories.

Figure 5a – Departmental feedback: How clear was the independent feedback or informal advice that you received?

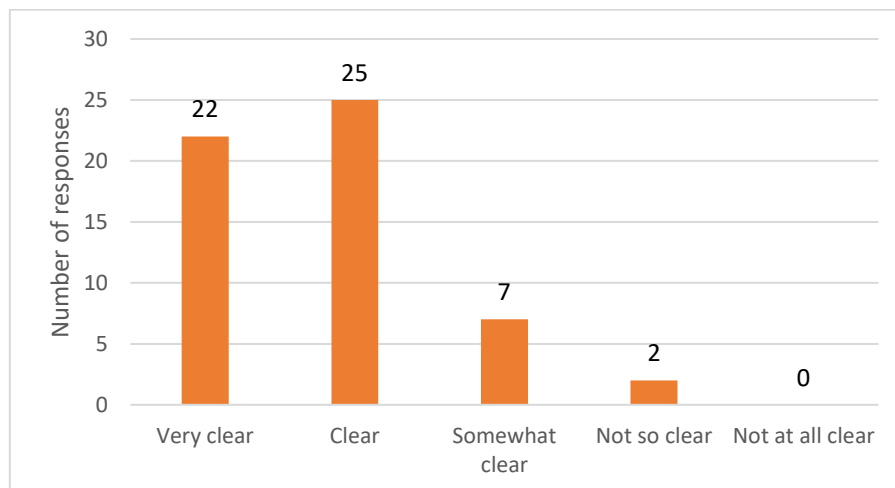


Figure 5b – Departmental feedback: How useful was the independent scrutiny of the IA?

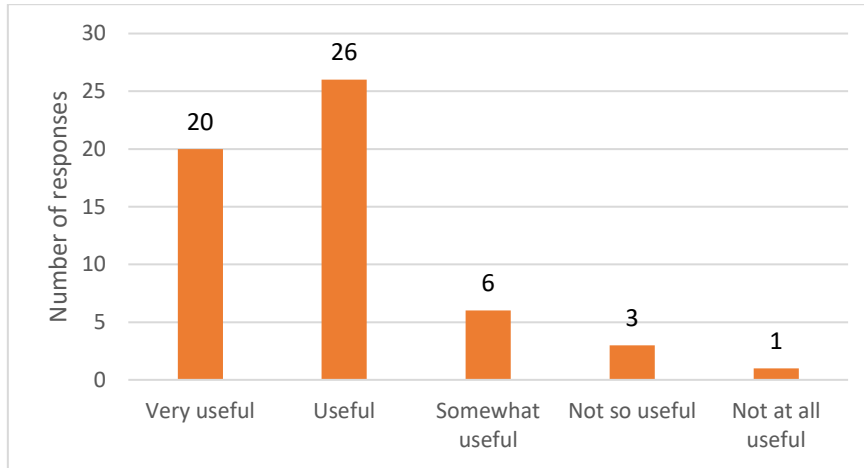
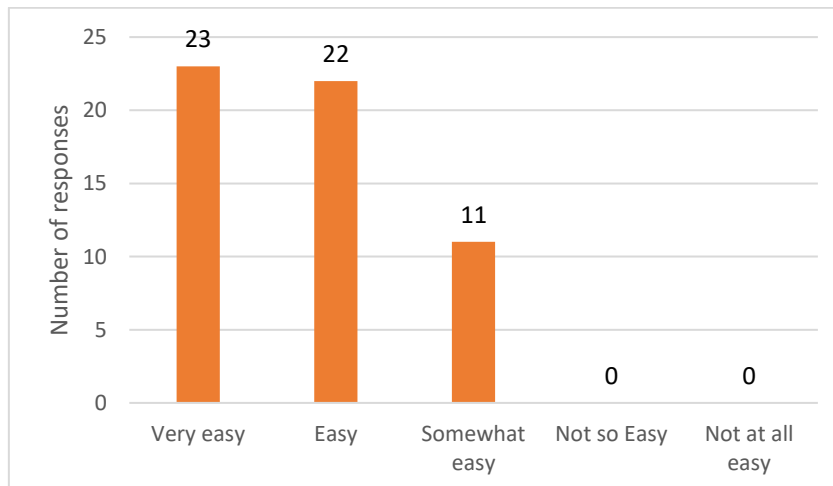


Figure 5c – Departmental feedback: Did you find it easy to communicate with the RPC during and after the independent scrutiny process?



27. The RPC also provides departments with an opportunity to provide qualitative feedback through open questions. Reassuringly, the majority of feedback continues to be positive.

Other RPC activities

28. Alongside its core role of scrutinising government impact assessments (IAs) and post-implementation reviews (PIRs), the RPC aims to improve the general quality of government regulatory analysis. This is done by continuing to develop the RPC and secretariat as a 'centre of excellence' on IAs and PIRs; by sharing best practice across government through in-person and online training; and by distributing RPC case histories and guidance documents. This section summarises some of the key activities in this area.

High-quality, objective opinions and statements

29. We have now been using our revised opinion format for over two years. The new format makes our opinions more consistent and accessible, and helps them to get their points across. Between November 2020 and June 2023, we issued 276 formal and informal opinions in the new template.

30. One of the benefits of the new format is that it allows us to analyse the quality of IAs across government against the different categories that we assess. We make this information available in blog posts and in these annual Corporate Reports.

Impact of free trade agreements

31. With the UK having left the EU, the Government have been developing and implementing a new independent trade policy. To support this, we agreed in September 2020 to extend our existing role by providing independent scrutiny of the IAs of new free trade agreements (FTAs) negotiated by the Department for International Trade (DIT).

32. As with regulatory proposals, we produce opinions that provide a fitness-for-purpose rating on the analysis and consideration of impacts in the final IA. In these new opinions on trade agreement IAs, we comment on the strength of evidence and analysis of the impacts of the negotiated agreement. We have developed with DIT (now DBT) a comprehensive checklist for our scrutiny, as well as an opinion template and guidance to align with our regulatory opinions. We delivered our first opinion on an FTA IA in October 2020, for the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

33. Last year, we produced opinions on two final IAs for the FTAs with Australia and New Zealand.⁹ These opinions highlighted the areas for improvements such as contextualising the results with descriptive trade statistics and trend data, and deeper analysis of the short-term versus longer-term impacts in those sectors and regions most affected by the agreements.

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-australia-free-trade-agreement-rpc-opinion> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-new-zealand-free-trade-agreement-rpc-opinion>

34. As with the earlier UK-Japan CEPA FTA, Stephen Gibson (RPC Chair) and Jonathan Cave (RPC Member) provided evidence to the International Trade Select Committee on our opinion.¹⁰

Methodological and guidance documents

35. Our activity in this area has been lighter than normal, as we awaited the update to the Better Regulation Framework, including the new role for independent scrutiny. Nevertheless, over the year we have developed thinking around some of the methodological issues that have fed into the new BRF.

Training

36. This year we delivered 12 policy training sessions across Whitehall and several tailored analysts training sessions. These continued to be conducted virtually but, (according to feedback) just as effectively, enabling non-economists to understand the economic requirements of developing impact assessments.

37. In addition, the RPC has worked alongside the Government Economic and Social Research (GESR) team in HM Treasury, to reintroduce IA training for economists across government departments. The RPC has run two of these training sessions over the last 12 months and is planning to continue working with the GESR team to continue providing these sessions and to update them to reflect the changing regulatory framework requirements.

International

38. The RPC continues to engage with its international counterparts and others with an interest in scrutiny of regulation, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and RegWatchEurope (RWE), to promote international co-operation and cohesion across the regulatory landscape.

39. As a member of RWE, we have been exchanging best practice on how governments have handled Covid regulation, and how to engage with different stakeholders. With the Czech Republic in the chair for this period there has been a special emphasis on ways to ensure the permanence and acceptability of better regulation procedures over time.

40. With the OECD we have considered how regulation can work with infrastructure, as well as the core topic of international regulatory co-operation.

41. Over the past year, we also engaged in bilateral meetings with various international governments and agencies, including the Forum of Indian Regulators and the Israel

¹⁰ <https://rpc.blog.gov.uk/2022/03/29/rpc-gives-evidence-to-the-international-trade-committee/>

Regulation Authority, ensuring that our sharing of knowledge on regulation remained up to date.

Stakeholder engagement

42. The RPC has maintained engagement with business representative groups, industry associations and civil society organisations. This engagement is very valuable to help understand the different perspectives on the impacts that might result from specific regulatory proposals.
43. In addition to a range of stakeholders providing their inputs during IA scrutiny, we have welcomed a full calendar programme of stakeholder presentations at our bi-monthly meetings. This has allowed us to hear first-hand views on the Government's approach to the regulatory landscape. Stakeholders have recognised the vital role that independent scrutiny plays in ensuring robust evidence and analysis to support the government's regulatory programme and its decision making.
44. In addition to external stakeholders, the RPC maintained and increased our contacts within Westminster, speaking to parliamentarians (as key 'customers' of our opinions), and in particular improving awareness of our role with select committees. Parliamentarians continue to share our concern about the ongoing absence and lateness of impact assessments being available for their legislative scrutiny. To this end, after discussing this concern with the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee (SLSC), we decided to publish our opinions as soon as is possible following introduction of legislation, irrespective of the availability of the associated impact assessment. This has led to an increased use of our opinions within parliamentary debate.
45. Another area of concern is the lack of post-implementation reviews (PIRs) for many regulations (less than 40% of PIRs were completed on time) despite them being a statutory requirement. This has been commented upon by the SLSC and in reports from the NAO and the Office of Environmental Protection. We hope that departments and ministers will work to ensure that PIRs are completed for all regulations.
46. The RPC continues to maintain close working relationships with departmental better regulation units, departmental policy and analytical teams, regulators and the Better Regulation Executive, as our sponsor. This will be of increasing importance as the updated Better Regulation Framework is rolled out.

Raising awareness of the importance of regulatory scrutiny

47. A key component of our engagement with stakeholders was the Blog that we started using in June 2021. Since then, we have published 27 articles on a range of topics including updates on what we have been doing, setting out our views on aspects of the

better regulation system, and encouraging people to engage with government. We published 8 articles over the period covered by this report.

48. We would encourage anyone interested in the work of the RPC to bookmark our blog site - <https://rpc.blog.gov.uk/> - and sign up for alerts on new posts here - <https://rpc.blog.gov.uk/subscribe/>.

FINANCES

Table 5 – RPC budget for period 2021-22 to 2023-24

	<i>Budget 2021-22</i>	<i>Outturn 2021-22</i>	<i>Budget 2022-23</i>	<i>Outturn 2022-2023</i>	<i>Budget 2023-24</i>
Pay costs	<i>£1,020,000</i>	£1,131,333	<i>£856,800</i>	£1,009,475	£964,468
Honoraria	<i>£180,000</i>	£180,741	<i>£180,000</i>	£188,532	£198,000
Other costs	<i>£40,000</i>	£10,792	<i>£24,000</i>	£8,868	£18,000
Total	<i>£1,240,000</i>	£1,322,776	<i>£1,060,800</i>	£1,206,874	£1,180,468

49. Table 5 above sets out the RPC budgets and outturn expenditure for 2021-22 and 2022-23, and the budget for 2023-24. The overspends in both 2021-22 and 2022-23 were anticipated as the year progressed and were accommodated within an underspend in the overall budget for the Better Regulation Executive (of which the RPC secretariat budget is a part). The budget for 2023-24 is a 11% increase on the budget for 2022-23 and reverses the downwards trend over the previous two years.

50. Pay costs refer to the salaries of the civil servants in the RPC secretariat. All secretariat staff are employed by the Department for Business & Trade (having been transferred to that new department from the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) and are subject to the Department’s terms and conditions. In any given year, the RPC secretariat can include staff paid from these budgets and staff on annual rotation on development schemes paid from central budgets. Staff numbers across the period are set out in the next section.

51. Honoraria refers to the payments made to committee members for the services they provide as public appointees. Committee members were paid at a daily rate of £350 and the Chair at a daily rate of £500, with members being paid for 50 days per year and the Chair for 100 days per year, reflecting the proportion of their time spent on RPC business.

52. Other costs refer to non-staff costs such as office supplies, travel and catering for meetings. These have been relatively low for a few years as a result of many meetings taking place virtually rather than in the RPC office in London, both during the Covid pandemic and with increased hybrid working since then.

PERSONNEL

The Regulatory Policy Committee

53. The Regulatory Policy Committee has members from a range of business and academic backgrounds. The committee had the following eight members for the whole of the year covered by this report.



Stephen Gibson
Chair
May 2018 – present



Jonathan Cave
Mar 2015 – present



Daniel Dalton
Jan 2022 – present



Stephen Gifford
Jan 2022 – present



Hilary Jennings
Jan 2022 – present



John Longworth
Jan 2022 – present



Derek Ridyard
Jan 2022 – present



Andrew Williams-Fry
May 2018 – present

The RPC secretariat

54. The RPC secretariat supports the committee and is staffed by civil servants employed by the Department for Business & Trade (DBT) having transferred to that new department from the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in the course of 2023. The secretariat is headed by a senior civil servant (at SCS pay band 1) who reports to the Director of the Better Regulation Executive in DBT.

55. Staffing in the RPC secretariat reduced from 15 people at the start of the year (April 2022) to 12 by December, but had risen again to 13 people by April 2023 and back to 15 by June 2023. We anticipate staffing levels to increase to 16 during 2023/24.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

56. Freedom of Information (FOI) requests provide for public access to information held by public authorities in two ways:
- Public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities.
 - Members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.
57. Environmental information requests are handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). Environmental information includes carbon emissions and the environment’s effect on human health.
58. The RPC endeavours to be an open and transparent organisation. It makes available, on its website, a variety of information such as minutes of meetings, reports and various publications, thereby helping to minimise the number of FOI and EIR requests.
59. The RPC is required to respond to FOI requests within 20 working days, although it aims to provide information sooner. Table 6 summarises the numbers of FOI requests the RPC received, and responded to, from 2018-19 to 2022-23.
60. As shown, the RPC received 10 FOI requests over the period covered by this report. Nine were responded to within 20 working days. The average turnaround time for responding to FOI’s is 8.5 days.

Table 6 – FOI performance for 2018-19 to 2022-23

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of requests	3	10	7	9	10
Requests met within 20 working days	2	10	7	9	9
Requests not met within 20 working days	1	0	0	0	1
Average turnaround time in working days	15	10	7	3	8.5