

Reference: 2025-117

Thank you for your email in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

Please provide statistics:

- 1. Numbers of prosecutions brought by your agency to magistrates courts throughout England and Wales in each of the past 8 years.**
- 2. How many of these resulted in different outcomes, such as summons being initially granted or refused by the magistrates on their first decisions.**
- 3. How many required a request for the magistrates to reconsider or for fresh applications to be submitted against the same matters.**
- 4. How many resulted in applications for judicial review against the magistrates and how many prosecutions have resulted in convictions.**

Response

You have sought information about the number of prosecutions brought by the SFO in the magistrates' court for each of the last eight years, along with information about the conduct of those proceedings including their outcomes. Whilst all the SFO's criminal cases must start in the magistrates' court, our remit to investigate and prosecute serious and complex fraud means that the vast majority of our cases are sent immediately to the Crown Court at their first appearance. We do not consider that the details of these cases fall within the scope of your request and so our response is limited only to those cases which stayed at the magistrates' court for the entirety of their proceedings. With that in mind the answers to your questions are as follows:

Question 1: Number of prosecutions brought to magistrates' courts (past 8 years)

2 prosecutions.

Question 2: Outcomes at first decision by magistrates

0 – Neither case involved a refusal of summons at first decision.

Question 3: Reconsiderations or fresh applications

0 – Neither case required magistrates to reconsider their decision or necessitated fresh applications to be submitted for the same matters

Question 4: Applications for judicial review

Neither case involved applications for judicial review. Neither prosecution resulted in a conviction. In one case a conviction was obtained in the magistrates' court, but this was subsequently appealed to the Crown Court and the conviction was overturned. In the other case, the SFO offered no evidence after the defendant served evidence not previously available to the SFO which meant there was no longer a realistic prospect of conviction.