

CENTRAL ARBITRATION COMMITTEE



Annual Report

2025/26





This report of the activities of the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 was sent by the Chair of the CAC to the Chair of Acas on 23 June 2026 and was submitted to the Secretary of State for the Department for Business and Trade on 26 June 2026.

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Chair's Review of the Year



The Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) has been in existence in its present form for 25 years, and this milestone was marked on 6 June 2025. Also, during this period, we registered our 1500th part I application. These remarkable achievements took place during an eventful year, in which the CAC has been busy preparing for legislative changes arising from the Royal Assent of the Employment Rights Bill on 17 December 2025. As I noted in last year's report, these changes include additional powers being conferred on the CAC. Further employment rights provisions came into force in 2026, making this a particularly significant period for the development of industrial relations. For the CAC, this is a notable time, having been selected by the Government to play a key role within this flagship legislation. Further details on these legislative changes will be provided later in this report.

As in all my reviews, I begin by reporting on the CAC's caseload. During this reporting period, the number of case receipts has increased. Under Part I of Schedule A1, relating to trade union recognition, the CAC received 76 cases, compared with 63 in the previous year—a marked increase of a fraction more than 20%. No applications were received under Parts II, III, V, or VI. However, one application was received under Part IV, relating to de-recognition by workers, although it was subsequently withdrawn. This was the first Part IV application since 2018. When all applications received across the CAC's other jurisdictions are included, the total number of cases rises to 98, compared with 77 in the previous year. An increase of 27%. This represents a noticeable increase and makes this year's total the third highest in the CAC's history. Across all jurisdictions, 89 cases were concluded or withdrawn, compared with 81 in the previous year.

The first stage in the statutory process for trade union recognition is the acceptance stage, at which the CAC determines whether an application may proceed. As in previous years, the majority of applications were accepted at this stage. The next stage is the bargaining unit stage, during which the parties are invited to reach agreement on the appropriate bargaining unit if this has not already been agreed. Where agreement cannot be reached, the CAC determines the appropriate bargaining unit before the process moves forward. Again, consistent with previous years, in the majority of cases the parties were able to reach agreement without CAC intervention. During this reporting period, the CAC determined the appropriate bargaining unit in 13 cases, an increase from eight in the previous year. Of these determinations, the panel concluded that the bargaining unit proposed by the union was appropriate in nine cases.

Once the question of the appropriate bargaining unit has been resolved, and the application deemed to not be invalid if the bargaining unit did change by agreement or determination, the case moves into the ballot stage. At this point, a union may request that the CAC declares it recognised without the need for a ballot if specific criteria are met, including demonstrating majority membership within the agreed or determined bargaining unit. The union must provide evidence to support this request. If satisfactory evidence is provided and none of the qualifying conditions apply, no ballot is required. During this reporting period, in 16 cases unions were awarded recognition without a ballot, an increase of one compared with the previous year. Eleven ballots were conducted during the year, which is the same number as last year.

The final stage of the statutory process is for the parties to reach agreement on the method of collective bargaining, which determines how collective bargaining will operate in practice. Where agreement cannot be reached, the CAC may be asked to determine the method. I am pleased to report that there were no instances during this year where such a determination was required, compared with one case in the previous year.

Throughout the statutory process, parties are encouraged to reach their own agreements. During this reporting period, 19 voluntary agreements were achieved, an increase from 17 last year. This figure includes cases where assistance was provided by our Acas colleagues. It should also be noted that, during the statutory process, parties reached agreement on other specific matters not captured within this figure.

During the year, the CAC received 10 complaints under the Disclosure of Information provisions. Of these, nine were closed, including one by way of panel determination, matching the figures for the previous two years. In the majority of cases, the parties reached settlement with informal assistance from the CAC Panel Chair. Under the Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999, four applications or complaints were received, compared with one in the previous year. Under the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations, seven applications or complaints were received, an increase from five last year.

Judicial Reviews and Appeals

There are currently no appeals outstanding for the CAC.

The Employment Rights Act

As noted earlier, the Employment Rights Bill received Royal Assent on 17 December 2025, bringing changes to the CAC's legislative framework for the first time in over two decades. Under the changes to Schedule A1 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 brought about by the Employment Rights Act 2025, a trade union seeking recognition under Part I is no longer required to demonstrate that it is likely that a majority of the workers in the proposed bargaining unit support recognition of the union meaning that unions will no longer need to gather petitions in order to persuade the CAC that this test is satisfied. However, the union must still provide evidence that it has at least the 'required membership', which is currently 10%, within that unit.

An additional exception has been introduced concerning the acceptance of an application where there is in place a voluntary agreement with another union covering at least one worker in the proposed bargaining unit. This exception applies where an employer enters into an agreement with a non-independent union covering workers within the bargaining unit proposed by an independent union after receiving a valid request for recognition but before the CAC makes its acceptance decision. In such circumstances, the independent union's application may still be accepted if it is submitted within 20 working days of the end of the first or second periods. This timeframe for submitting an application being dependant on whether the employer fails to respond or rejects the request outright, or if it indicates a willingness to negotiate and so triggers the second period.

The final legislative change relates to ballot outcomes. Unions are no longer required to meet the 40% support threshold of all workers in the bargaining unit. Instead, a union will be declared recognised if a simple majority of votes are cast in support of recognition.

These changes came into force on 6 April 2026, which is outside this reporting period; however, they are noted here due to the publication timing of this report.

Further changes are due to take effect later in 2026 including:

- the freezing of the size of the proposed or agreed bargaining unit at the date the CAC receives the application.
- unions having physical access to workers once an application is accepted, rather than waiting until the ballot stage. Unfair practice complaints may also be submitted by either party at this stage.

The CAC has also been given new powers to enable independent trade unions to access workforces for recruitment and organisational purposes. As secondary legislation is still awaited, I am unable to provide further details beyond those outlined in last year's report.

The Committee and Secretariat

In anticipation of an increased caseload following the implementation of the Employment Rights Act 2025, the CAC has completed a recruitment campaign for additional Committee Members. Appointment figures will be reported in next year's Annual Report. During the year, we also said farewell to two Committee Members: Employer Member Sean McIlveen, who served since November 2019, and Worker Member Tim Rose, who joined in May 2024. Both made valuable contributions, applying their expertise to complex issues, and I thank them sincerely for their service and wish them well for the future.

I am pleased to report that the CAC has once again achieved Investors in People (IIP) Gold re-accreditation, marking the third successive achievement at this level. The Secretariat has also recruited two additional Case Managers to support the Committee Members in managing the increased caseload resulting from the legislative changes. Further details will be included in next year's report.

Our stakeholders

The CAC's principal stakeholders are Acas, the Department for Business and Trade (DBT), the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), and the Trades Union Congress (TUC). We continue to maintain strong and constructive relationships with all. As part of our ongoing collaboration with Acas and DBT, the CAC has refreshed its Memorandum of Understanding, replacing

the previous version which had been in place since February 2020.

Conclusion

I have noted in previous reports the importance of the support provided by the Secretariat to the Committee Members and myself. Their professionalism and expertise remain a significant strength of the CAC, as evidenced by positive customer feedback and the achievement of IIP Gold accreditation once again. I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to the Committee Members. They continue to be highly regarded by both our customers and stakeholders, and rightly so.

In closing, the CAC is entering a period of significant change. The Employment Rights Act 2025 has reshaped the services we provide, and it is anticipated that by the end of 2026, most—if not all—of the legislative changes affecting the CAC will be in force. This will be a busy and challenging period as trade unions and employers adapt to this transformed employment relations landscape.

Stephen Redmond | Chair



Membership of the Central Arbitration Committee at 31 March 2026



Chair

Stephen Redmond

Deputy Chairs

Professor Alan Bogg

Professor of Labour Law, University of Bristol; Barrister, Old Square Chambers

Benjamin Burgher

Regional Employment Judge, Employment Tribunals (England & Wales), London East Region

Naeema Choudry

Solicitor (England & Wales), Partner at Eversheds Sutherland and Fee Paid Employment Judge, Employment Tribunals (England & Wales), Midlands West Region.

Susan Cox

Retired Employment Judge (England & Wales)

Lisa Gettins

Solicitor (England & Wales); Global Head Employee Relations and Employment Policy - Diaego

Jonathan Gray

Employment Judge, Employment Tribunals (England & Wales), South West Region

Andrew James

Employment Judge, Employment Tribunals (England & Wales), North East Region

Rohan Pirani

Regional Employment Judge, Employment Tribunals (England & Wales), South West Region

Laura Prince K.C.

Barrister at Matrix Chambers and Specialist in Employment Law

Stuart Robertson

Employment Judge (sitting in retirement), Employment Tribunals (England & Wales), North East Region; Formerly Regional Employment Judge, North East Region

Paul Swann

Employment Judge (sitting in retirement) Employment Tribunals (England and Wales), Midlands West Region; Formerly Regional Employment Judge, Midlands East Region

Members with experience as representatives of employers

Amanda Ashworth	Non-Legal Member of the Employment Tribunal; Previously held a number of senior Employment Relations roles across the Retail, Manufacturing, Chemicals and Utilities sectors
Julia Buck	HR Consultant and Employment Tribunal Non-Legal Member; Previously held senior HR roles within the NHS
David Cadger	People Director, Transformation at Serco Limited
Joe Corcos	Independent HR Consultant; Former Public Sector Director of People
Derek Devereux	HR Coach and Mentor; Former HR Director of Constellation Europe and Matthew Clark
Deborah England	HR Consultant working in Education and Charity Sectors, Non-Legal Member of the Employment Tribunal Service and Charity Trustee; Formerly worked in senior HR roles in Higher Education and Financial Services
Mustafa Faruqi	Employee Relations Director for BT Group
Richard Fulham	Independent Employee Relations Consultant; Previously held Senior Employee Relations roles across Consumer Healthcare, Energy and Financial Services Sectors
Kieran Grimshaw	Senior Director of HR Business Advisory and Employee Relations at Equinix; Formerly Head of Employee Relations and European HR at easyJet
Susan Jordan	NED; Former VP of HR at DHL
Alastair Kelly	Assistant Chief Officer for Leicestershire Police
Martin Kirke	HR Consultant, Coach and Non-Executive Director, Previously Chief People Officer
Robert Light	Board Chair and Non-Executive Director; Former Local Government Leader
Rob Lummis	Chair of Trustees, Jaguar Land Rover Trustees Limited; Formerly Group Employee Relations Director, Jaguar Land Rover
Alistair Paton	Senior Director, Colleague Relations, ASDA
Mark Penniford	Current NHSPRB Member, Magistrate & NED; ex-CPO of Essar Oil (UK) Ltd and a former HRD at Nissan Sunderland, Jaguar Land Rover and Tata Chemicals (Europe) Ltd
John Rawling	Independent People Management Consultant; Experienced HR Director; Independent Committee Member

Members with experience as representatives of workers

Joanna Brown	Former Chief Executive, the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists (SCP) and the College of Podiatry (COP)
Christopher Burrows	Former Chairman of Greater Manchester Police Federation and No1 CopperPot Credit Union
Nicholas Childs	Senior Industrial Organiser for the National Education Union
Nigel Cotgrove	Former National Officer at the Communication Workers' Union
Steve Gillan	General Secretary of Prison Officers Association and Member of the TUC General Council
Ian Hanson QPM	Former Chairman of Greater Manchester Police Federation, Lay Member of the General Optical Council Fitness to Practise Panel, Lay Member of the Nursing & Midwifery Council Fitness to Practise Panel, and Independent Member of the Taxation Disciplinary Board
Brian Hooper	Former Trade Union Official, Executive Council Member, Fire Brigades Union
Dr Steve Jary	Retired National Secretary, Prospect and Member of the London Central Employment Tribunal
Joanne Kaye	Former Regional Secretary UNISON South West, Non-Legal Member Employment Tribunals
Paul Moloney	Consultant, British Airline Pilots Association
Paul Morley	Industrial Organiser for the National Education Union (NEU)
Paul Noon OBE	Former General Secretary, Prospect
Andy Peart	Industrial Relations Manager, Brighton and Hove City Council, Non-Legal Employment Tribunal Member at London South, Former Assistant General Secretary (NEU)
Matt Smith OBE DL JP	Former Scottish Secretary, UNISON
Sean Starbuck	Former National Officer for the Fire Brigades Union
Morris Stemp	Former Trade Union Official Musicians' Union and Current Non-Legal Member of the Employment Tribunals
Claire Sullivan	Director, Employment Relations and Union Services, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Chief Executive's Report



As outlined in the Chair's Review of the Year, the Employment Rights Act received Royal Assent in late December 2025. This legislation will introduce significant changes to the CAC's powers in relation to trade union recognition and de-recognition, as well as conferring new rights of workplace access for independent trade unions. Some changes came into effect from April 2026, with the majority expected to be implemented in late autumn. Over the past year, the CAC has been preparing for these developments, generating additional work, including the recruitment of additional Committee Members and Secretariat staff to support delivery. We have also taken the opportunity to review our practices and procedures, updating our published guidance, website content, and social media information accordingly.

Performance

Overall, case receipts increased during the reporting period. Increases were recorded not only in trade union recognition applications but also across the Disclosure of Information, European Works Councils, and Information and Consultation jurisdictions. Such fluctuations are not unusual and reflect the variable nature of the CAC's caseload since its establishment in June 2000. This continued level of engagement demonstrates that trade unions, employers, and workers regard the CAC's statutory framework as a valuable means of supporting collective bargaining matters.

The CAC remains committed to delivering a high-quality service to its users and actively seeks feedback to support continuous improvement. Satisfaction surveys are issued to parties engaged in CAC cases, including trade unions and employers. Overall satisfaction during the year was 96%, an increase from 92% in the previous year. These consistently high results reflect the value placed on the work of Committee Members and the Secretariat.

When looking at the average time lapsed for a trade union recognition case to complete the statutory process, for this reporting period it was 25 weeks, which is an increase on last year's figure of 22 weeks. To calculate this, we use the date the application was received to the date when either a declaration of recognition or non-recognition is issued. It should be noted that this figure also includes cases in which a ballot took place. Where a ballot took place the average length of time taken to complete the statutory process was 28 weeks, the same as for the previous two years.

Regarding cases where the union was declared recognised without the need for a ballot, the average time taken was 22 weeks, which is again an increase on last year's figure of 17 weeks, but still much less time than if a ballot is required. The increases in the time lapsed give an indication of the complexities of the cases received in this reporting period. These figures do not take into account any stays in proceedings that were requested by trade unions during the course of an application to allow for voluntary negotiations between the parties to take place.

The Secretariat continues to welcome enquiries from our customers. We receive these either by telephone or in writing. For this reporting period we received 75 telephone enquiries, with the majority continuing to relate to trade union recognition and 211 written enquiries. In comparison to last year, we received 76 telephone enquiries and 212 written enquiries.

Development

The CAC continues to assess and strengthen its arrangements for knowledge-sharing in order to improve service delivery. This remains particularly important given recent workforce expansion and the forthcoming legislative changes arising from the Employment Rights Act.

There have been no further developments to the CAC's gov.uk website, other than changes to update information being added to it due to the amendments to Schedule A1. In the customer survey, we also ask about the usefulness of the CAC's LinkedIn page and our website. The respondents' level of satisfaction was 100%, an excellent endorsement that the CAC is doing very well reaching its audiences on these platforms.

The addresses to access our website and

LinkedIn page are shown below:

www.gov.uk/cac

www.linkedin.com/company/centralarbitrationcommittee/

The CAC continues to provide training to interested parties on the statutory process. Now that the Employment Rights Bill has received Royal Assent, we expect this to continue following these changes and also for the Right of Access legislation.

Stakeholders

The CAC remains in regular contact with its main stakeholders. These are DBT, CBI, TUC and Acas. There have been no concerns raised on the CAC's operational performance and by the CAC doing this it allows for any issues to be resolved amicably if it was to ever transpire. I'm pleased to report that this has never occurred in the CAC's history.

Public interest

The activities of the CAC are reported on its website on gov.uk, which is regularly updated. Every decision made by the CAC is published on the site and we ensure this is done as soon as possible after being promulgated but not before it has been served on the parties concerned.

The CAC has responsibilities under the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Up to 31 March 2026, the CAC received 20 requests under (FOIA) which is double last year's total of 10. Of these, 16 were answered by Acas on the CAC's behalf and all were processed within the set timescale. This year we received our first request under the UK GDPR provisions and this was answered by the CAC within the GDPR set deadlines.

Administration and accountability

CAC Costs

The CAC's expenditure in this reporting period has increased. This is due to the costs associated with the increased caseload. A breakdown of the CAC's caseload can be viewed in Appendix I and the expenditure in Appendix II.

Governance

Acas provides resources and the staff for the CAC Secretariat. The CAC continues to cooperate and comply with Acas's corporate governance requirements. There is a Memorandum of Understanding, which was refreshed during this reporting period and it sets out the CAC's relationship with Acas and with DBT. It continues to assure Acas and DBT that the CAC's activities and the resources used are appropriate and compliant with public sector policies. It also maintains the CAC's independence. This can be located on the CAC's website.

Equality

The activities of the CAC are completed in accordance with the principles of fair and equitable treatment for its members, staff, and users. The CAC does its utmost to ensure that its policies and practices do not discriminate against any individual or group. The CAC communicates its information in a way that meets users' needs. Since the CAC is resourced by Acas, it is covered by the Acas Equality and Diversity Policy and corresponds with Acas's published equality objectives. The documents regarding this are available on the Acas website (www.acas.org.uk).

Secretariat

Even though we have recruited more staff in readiness for the changes in the CAC's legislation and additional powers, the CAC Secretariat remains as a small team,

comprising of Case Managers, an Administrative Team and a Social Media Team. They provide valuable support and responsibility for the management of the CAC's resources.

During this reporting period we were successful in retaining the Gold IIP accreditation for a third successive time. This is a fantastic achievement. I, therefore, would once again like to thank the Secretariat for the first-rate service they provide to the Chair, Committee Members, and to our customers. We are always striving to improve our working practices for the benefit of the aforementioned and are committed to keeping our skills relevant.

There will be more to say on how the new legislative provisions have developed in next year's report. The CAC is looking forward to working with these and being part of the government's historic legislation to positively refresh the working relationships between trade unions and employers.

Maverlie Tavares | Chief Executive



Remarks from Sofia Toncheva, Finance & Admin Supervisor



My Civil Service journey started in 2021. Prior, I worked in the hospitality industry, but I was ultimately made redundant in late 2020 due to COVID. I already had an interest in working in the civil service as I understood the importance of providing vital services that underline the principles and values of society. Looking to change careers, I had the perfect opportunity to find out more about the Civil Service. This led me to working on the 2021 Census – the first digital one. My experience working on the census resonates across my other civil service work – it is a fast-paced environment, with different learning opportunities, and a sense of community with your colleagues. Shortly after, I started working in the HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS). I worked there for just over three and a half years and was involved in a variety of projects – some relating to the digitalisation of the courts.

While my time in HMCTS was extremely valuable, in late 2024, I had made a decision to take on a new challenge, and in April 2025, I started working at the CAC. My first days were somewhat bittersweet – I missed my previous team, and I was feeling nervous about starting a new role, but I was also excited to see what the CAC has in store for me. The CAC Secretariat were very welcoming and supportive in those first few weeks and throughout and made my transition a very smooth and peaceful process.

With just over a year in the CAC, some learning completed and more to come, and a new legislation in the mix, working in the CAC is as ever fast-paced, interesting, good for development, and most importantly full of people committed to similar values. I am excited to see what the next year brings.

Sofia Toncheva | Finance & Admin
Supervisor

1500 Registered Statutory Recognition Applications

Looking back at the CAC in numbers



Of the 1500 applications for statutory recognition:



873

Applications have been accepted.



176

Applications were not accepted.



446

Cases have been withdrawn at this stage.

Out of the 873 cases that went forward:

255

Cases the CAC determined the appropriate bargaining unit.

446

Cases - Parties reached agreement on the appropriate bargaining unit.

164

Cases withdrawn at this stage.

The CAC had to consider whether or not a ballot should take place in 701 cases:

254

Cases, the CAC issued a declaration of recognition without a ballot.

311

Cases, a ballot was held.

104

Cases withdrawn at this stage.

OUT OF THE 311 CASES THAT WENT TO BALLOT:

194

Cases, the Union was declared recognised.

117

Cases, the Union was not successful at ballot.

OF THE 488 CASES IN WHICH RECOGNITION WAS DECLARED:

391

Cases, parties agreed the method of collective bargaining.

39

Cases, the CAC decided the method.

44,487 workers are covered by statutory recognition following a ballot

The CAC's Caseload in 2025-26

Trade Union Recognition

In the year ending 31 March 2026, the CAC received 76 applications for trade union recognition under Part I of the Schedule^[1]. This represents an increase from 63 applications in the previous year but a decrease from the 81 received two years earlier. No applications were received under Parts II, III, V, or VI of the Schedule. One application was received under Part IV, the first since 2018.

As in previous years, an indicator used to describe the characteristics of applications for trade union recognition is the size of the employers concerned. Employers with fewer than 200 workers accounted for 37% of applications, compared with 43% in the previous year. Employer size ranged from 26 to 150,000 workers, the upper figure relating to a company specialising in logistics solutions. This range illustrates the breadth of employers covered by CAC applications. The average size of the proposed bargaining unit rose to 133 workers, compared with 93 in 2024–25, though it remains below the 2023–24 figure of 148. Bargaining unit sizes ranged from zero workers (in an application that was later withdrawn) to 1,881 workers. Excluding the withdrawn case, the smallest bargaining unit comprised eight workers. Bargaining units with fewer than 100 workers accounted for 80% of applications, up from 73% in the previous year. Applications from the manufacturing, transport, and communications sectors accounted for 41% of the total, compared with 38% in 2024–25 and 42% in 2023–24. In total, 18 different trade unions submitted applications during the reporting year.

During the reporting period, 51 applications progressed to the first stage of the statutory process for trade union recognition,

[1] Schedule A1 to the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, inserted by the Employment Relations Act 1999 and amended by the Employment Relations Act 2004.

in which a CAC panel determines whether an application should be accepted. Of these, 48 applications were accepted and three were rejected, giving an acceptance rate of 94%, a slight increase from 93% in the previous year. Two applications were refused because a collective agreement with another trade union was already in force. The remaining application failed to satisfy the majority support test. There were 22 applications withdrawn at this stage prior to a panel decision. Withdrawals occurred for a range of reasons. Two applications were submitted prematurely, and one union withdrew as it was conducting national negotiations with the employer. In another two cases there were deficiencies in the formal request letters. Two applications were withdrawn as there were overlapping bargaining units. In another case there was a discrepancy in the description of the bargaining unit between the request letter and application form. One union withdrew its application to pursue voluntary agreements with the employer. Another union withdrew its application as it came to light that there were no workers in its proposed bargaining unit. A further union found there to be issues with its application form. In one case, an application was withdrawn following a membership check and in three cases, no reasons for the withdrawal were given. In seven cases, the applications were withdrawn because voluntary agreements were reached between the parties.

The second stage in the statutory process is for the parties to engage and reach agreement on the appropriate bargaining unit where no agreement was reached prior to the application being made.

The CAC will decide an appropriate bargaining unit if the parties are unable to reach agreement. Consistent with previous years, most cases reaching this stage were resolved by agreement rather than determination. Agreement was reached in 21 cases, two fewer than in the previous year, while 13 cases required a CAC decision, an increase of five. Since the statutory provisions were introduced in 2000, 64% of bargaining units at this stage have been agreed, compared with 63% in 2024–25. Nine applications were withdrawn at this stage, one more than last year, in each case following the conclusion of a voluntary agreement. Where a bargaining unit differs from that originally proposed, the CAC must assess whether the application remains valid. This occurred in eight cases, double the number in the previous year. Two applications were found to be invalid when the admissibility tests were applied.

At the third stage of the statutory process, the CAC has to decide whether a union should be recognised without a ballot or whether a ballot should be held. Recognition was granted without a ballot in 16 cases, one more than in the previous year. Since the introduction of the statutory recognition provisions, unions have claimed majority membership in 294 cases, with recognition awarded without a ballot in 243 cases, representing 88% of the total. Prior to balloting, parties are given a final opportunity to reach a voluntary agreement. Three applications were withdrawn at this point, compared with seven in 2024–25.

Eleven ballots were held in cases where unions did not have majority membership.

Seven ballots resulted in recognition and four did not. The success rate of ballots increased to 64%, up from 55% in the previous year and above the long-term average of 62%. The average participation rate in CAC-commissioned ballots declined from 66% to 55%. One complaint was received alleging the use of unfair practices during the balloting period; this complaint remains under consideration.

The final stage of the statutory process involves agreement, or determination by the CAC, of the method of collective bargaining. In line with previous years, the vast majority of cases were resolved by agreement. During the reporting period, 22 agreements were concluded without the need for a CAC determination. The historical average proportion of cases resolved by agreement remains at 91%.

No applications were received under Parts II, III, V, or VI of the Schedule, although one application was received under Part IV. For Part IV to apply, the CAC must previously have issued a declaration of recognition, after which either party may apply for de-recognition after three years. In this case, the application was withdrawn before a panel determination was made. No cases were carried forward from 2024–25.

Disclosure of Information

A trade union may submit a complaint to the CAC where an employer has failed to disclose information for the purposes of collective bargaining, in accordance with section 183 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. During the year, the CAC received 10 such complaints. Nine were resolved without the need for a formal decision,

illustrating that the majority of these cases are addressed through informal intervention, either directly or with Acas support.

The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004

Seven complaints were received under these Regulations, all of which were concluded during the year. Five complaints were withdrawn and two required formal panel decisions.

Requests under Regulation 7

For the second consecutive year, no requests were made by employees under regulation 7 for the establishment of information and consultation arrangements through the CAC. The cumulative total number of such requests since the Regulations came into force therefore remains at 35.

IC/69(2025) & IC/70(2025) Pollock, Slevin and DHL eCommerce UK Limited

In June 2025, the panel heard a complaint by an employee that the employer had failed to make arrangements for the election of negotiating representatives which satisfied regulation 14 of the 2004 regulations. The panel upheld the complaint and made an order under regulation 15(2) that the process be re-taken.

Two employees of the employer made separate complaints under regulation 19(1) that the effect of the employer's failure to elect representatives meant that the default standard provisions applied and the employer was in breach of the requirements of those provisions. They relied on the findings of the panel in the earlier mentioned regulation 15 case (IC/66(2024)).

If successful, the effect of the applications would have been that although the employees relied on the decision of the panel, the order made under regulation 15 that the election process be re-taken would be of no effect because, after six months, the default provisions applied, and the employer was already in default for failing to arrange for the election of representatives under the standard provisions. Those provide that representatives must be elected before the date the standard provisions start to apply.

The panel concluded that the standard provisions could not apply where the CAC had made an order under regulation 15(2). In such circumstances, an employer could not know it had failed to make arrangements for the election of representatives until the CAC so decided and ordered that the process be re-taken. It must have been intended by the legislators that the CAC's order would have priority in that eventuality and the employer could not be said to have failed to make arrangements for the purposes of the 2004 regulations where the CAC had ordered them to re-take the process. It was also irrational to construe the regulations in a way which resulted in the employer being already in default a year before (in this case), that it could have known of the fact by virtue of the CAC's decision and could not possibly have arranged for a ballot before the standard provisions applied. The panel also construed the stop the clock provisions in regulation 14(3) where the time to reach a negotiated agreement is paused in the event of a regulation 15 complaint as applying to the whole period for that process rather than the limited period set out in regulation 14(3), to address an apparent deficiency where the

stop the clock extension could not apply at all because the limited period had already expired before the regulation 15 complaint had been made.

The Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999

Four complaints were received under these Regulations. Action is continuing in two cases, reflecting the complexity of the statutory framework and issues involved.

EWC/41(2022) 2 Sisters Food Group

A complaint was received on 4 October 2022 pursuant to regulation 20 of the Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999 (TICER). The complainant argued that central management had failed to establish a European Works Council (an EWC) as required by TICER. In 2023, a panel made a decision in agreement with the complainant. The panel however declined to make an order, giving the parties additional time to make the necessary arrangements.

At the parties request the CAC stayed the proceedings pending an appeal to the EAT (which was later withdrawn) and thereafter discussions between the parties. In October 2023, the employer informed the complainant and the CAC that following a corporate reorganisation, TICER no longer applied as there was no longer a Community-wide group of undertakings with central management in the United Kingdom.

The panel held a formal hearing in March 2025 at which the employer argued that the group's European and United Kingdom activities had been separated and were now controlled by separate holding companies.

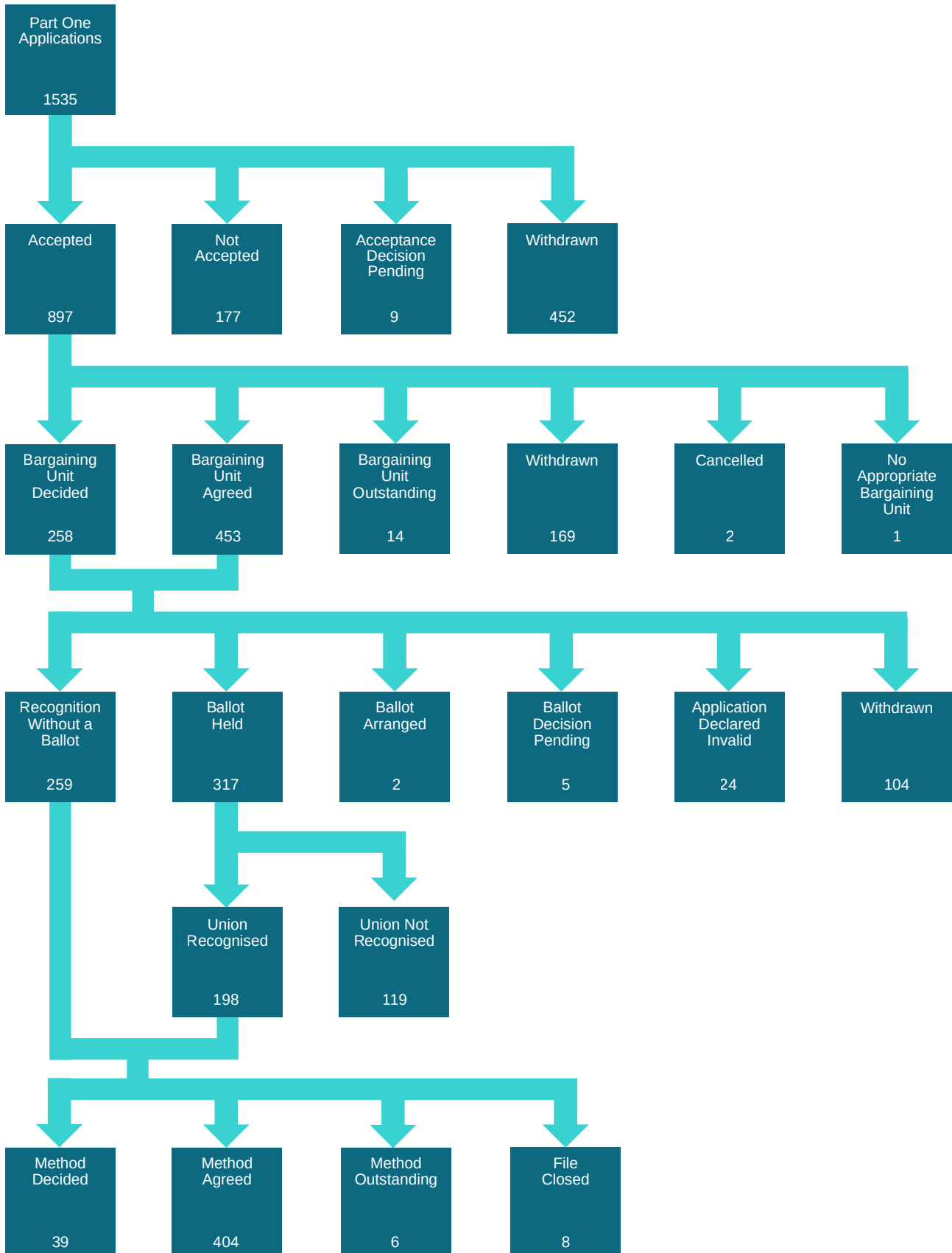
Those companies operated independently of each other. They were, however, both controlled by one family. The panel decided that as the status of the family was as shareholders only, they did not as shareholders amount to an undertaking. This meant TICER did not apply as there was no controlling undertaking for the separated parts of the group. The panel declined to make an order under regulation 20. There has been no appeal against this decision.

The European Public Limited-Liability Company (Employee Involvement) (Great Britain) Regulations 2009

No applications were received under these Regulations during the reporting year.



Progress chart of applications for recognition



The CAC's Aims



The role of the CAC is to promote fair and efficient arrangements in the workplace, by resolving collective disputes either by voluntary agreement or, if necessary, through adjudication. The areas of dispute dealt with by the CAC are:

- i.** Statutory applications for Trade Union Recognition and Derecognition;
- ii.** Applications under the Information and Consultation Regulations;
- iii.** Statutory applications for Disclosure of Information for collective bargaining;
- iv.** Disputes over the constitution and operation of European Works Councils;
- v.** Applications under legislation relating to European Companies where the provisions will continue to be available from 1 January 2021 to the UK Societas domestic framework.

In addition, the CAC and its predecessors have historically provided voluntary arbitration in collective disputes, though this role has not been used for some years.



Our objectives are:

- 1.** To achieve outcomes which are practicable, lawful, impartial, and where possible voluntary.
- 2.** To give a courteous and helpful service to all who approach us.
- 3.** To provide an efficient service, and to supply assistance and decisions as rapidly as is consistent with good standards of accuracy and thoroughness.
- 4.** To provide good value for money to the taxpayer, through effective corporate governance and internal controls.
- 5.** To develop a CAC secretariat with the skills, knowledge and experience to meet operational objectives, valuing diversity and maintaining future capability.

Our performance measures and targets based on these objectives are:

- Proportion of applications for which notice of receipt is given and responses sought within one working day

Target: 95% - achieved 99%.

- Proportion of users expressing satisfaction with administration and conduct of the case and/or the procedural guidance provided to them

Target: 85% - 96% of those who responded to the customer survey, which is sent to all users, rated their level of satisfaction as 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.

- Proportion of written enquiries and complaints responded to within three working days

Target: 90% - The CAC received 211 enquiries in writing or by e-mail and we responded to 100% within this timescale.

- Proportion of Freedom of Information requests replied to within the statutory 20 working days

There were 20 requests in 2025-26. Four requests were responded to by the CAC. 16 requests related to information which fell within Acas' sphere of responsibility. Replies to all requests were provided within the statutory timescale.

User Satisfaction

If you are asked for your views on any aspect of our service, we would appreciate your co-operation. But if you have comments, whether of satisfaction, complaint or suggestion, please do not wait to be asked. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, please let us know so that we can put things right. If you cannot resolve your problem with the person who dealt with you originally, please ask to speak to their manager or, if necessary, the Chief Executive who will investigate your complaint. If you wish to complain in writing, please write to:

Maverlie Tavares
Chief Executive
Central Arbitration Committee
PO Box 80600
London
E15 9JX

In the event of any complaint, we hope that you will let us try to put things right. But, if necessary, you can write to your MP, who can tell you how to have your complaint referred to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.



Appendix I

Analysis of References to the Committee: 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Jurisdiction	Brought forward from 31 March 2025	Received between 1 April 2025 & 31 March 2026	References completed or withdrawn	References outstanding at 31 March 2026
Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992:				
VOLUNTARY ARBITRATION s212	-	-	-	-
DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION s183	1	10	9	2
TRADE UNION RECOGNITION				
Schedule A1 – Part One	25	76	65	36
Schedule A1 – Part Two	-	-	-	-
Schedule A1 – Part Three	-	-	-	-
Schedule A1 – Part Four	-	1	1	-
Schedule A1 – Part Five	-	-	-	-
Schedule A1 – Part Six	-	-	-	-
The Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999:	2	4	4	2
The European Public Limited-Liability Company (Employee Involvement) (Great Britain) Regulations 2009:	-	-	-	-
The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004:	3	7	10	0
Total:	31	98	89	40



Appendix II

CAC Resources and Finance: 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

CAC Committee

Committee Members		46
Of which	Chair and Deputy Chairs	12
	Employer and Worker Members	34

CAC Secretariat

Secretariat staff	11
Committee fees, salary costs and casework expenses	£726,141

Other Expenditure

Accommodation and related costs	£0
Other costs	£21,358
Total CAC expenditure from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026	£747,499

CAC Expenditure

The CAC's overall expenditure has increased. This is primarily attributable to the increase in workload by the CAC.

Acas, which provides the CAC with its resources, also apportions to the CAC budget the costs of depreciation and shared services. That apportionment is not included in the above figures but will be included in the Acas Annual Report and Accounts for 2025-26.

Appendix III



CAC Staff at 31 March 2026 and Contact Details

Chief Executive	Maverlie Tavares
Operations Manager	Bola Olayinka
Senior Case Manager	Nigel Cookson
Case Managers	Kaniza Bibi Joanne Curtis Kate Norgate
Video and Content Manager	Monsur Choudhury Sileas MacInnes
Content Creator	Caroline Griffiths
Finance & Admin Supervisor	Sofia Toncheva
Finance & Admin Support	Emma Bentley

Central Arbitration Committee
PO Box 80600
London
E15 9JX

Telephone: **0330 109 3610**
 E Mail: **enquiries@cac.gov.uk**
 Web Site: **www.gov.uk/cac**
 LinkedIn: **www.linkedin.com/company/centralarbitrationcommittee/**



**CENTRAL
ARBITRATION
COMMITTEE**



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