

**Freedom of Information Act  
2000 – Statistics on  
implementation in central  
government  
Q1: January – March 2008**

Ministry of Justice  
Statistics bulletin

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## Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“Fol Act”) and the associated Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIRs”) came fully into force on 1 January 2005. This bulletin covers the period January to March 2008 and presents the latest quarterly set of statistics on their implementation within central government.

The previous quarterly bulletins, together covering the period from January 2005 to December 2007, are available via the links on the following pages of the Ministry of Justice and Freedom of Information websites:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/freedomofinformationquarterly.htm>

<http://www.foi.gov.uk/reference/statisticsAndReports.htm>

The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling of written requests for information received by monitored bodies during the relevant time period. **They cover only “non-routine” information requests**, and information given out on request as a part of routine business should not be counted. **Appendix A** gives a definition of a “non-routine” request, and other information on the scope of these statistics.

This bulletin presents monitoring statistics for a total of 42 central government bodies, including all major departments of state. **Appendix B** gives a full list of monitored bodies.

## Executive summary

Departments of State reported receiving 4,526 “non-routine” information requests during the first quarter of 2008 (Q1). Other monitored bodies received 3,903 requests. Across all monitored bodies, a total of 8,429 requests were received, of which 91 per cent had been processed at the time of monitoring. This includes 146 requests handled under the amended Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) which came into force on 1 January 2005. *[see Table 1]*

The 8,429 requests across all monitored bodies received in the first quarter of 2008 is 13 per cent fewer than the 9,644 received during the corresponding quarter of 2007, but is the highest quarterly total since that time. *[see Table A]*

During Q1 of 2008, 89 per cent of all monitored bodies’ requests (excluding those “on hold” or lapsed) were “in time”, in that they were processed within the statutory deadline\* or were subject to a permitted deadline extension. This figure is slightly lower than in the previous quarter, and slightly lower than in the corresponding quarter of 2007. *[see Table 2 and Table B]*

Of all “resolvable” requests received during Q1 of 2008 (i.e. requests where it was possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought), 58 per cent were granted in full, a small decrease compared to the previous quarter. *[see Table 3 and Table C]*

\* - 20 working days generally, 30 working days for The National Archives

# Commentary

## Number of requests [see Table 1 and Table A]

Departments of State reported receiving a total of 4,526 information requests under the Freedom of Information Act and the associated Environmental Information Regulations during the quarter from 1 January to 31 March 2008 (Q1). Other monitored bodies reported having received 3,903 requests. Across all monitored bodies, therefore, a total of 8,429 requests were reported.

This overall total for Q1 of 2008 is 13 per cent fewer than in the corresponding quarter last year (i.e. Q1 of 2007), although this is the highest quarterly total since that time. The number of requests received by Departments of State fell by 6 per cent compared to the same period last year, while the total received by other monitored bodies increased by 19 per cent. Departments of State accounted for 54 per cent of all requests received by monitored bodies in Q1 of 2008.

**Figure 1: Numbers of FoI requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies, quarterly from Q1 2006**

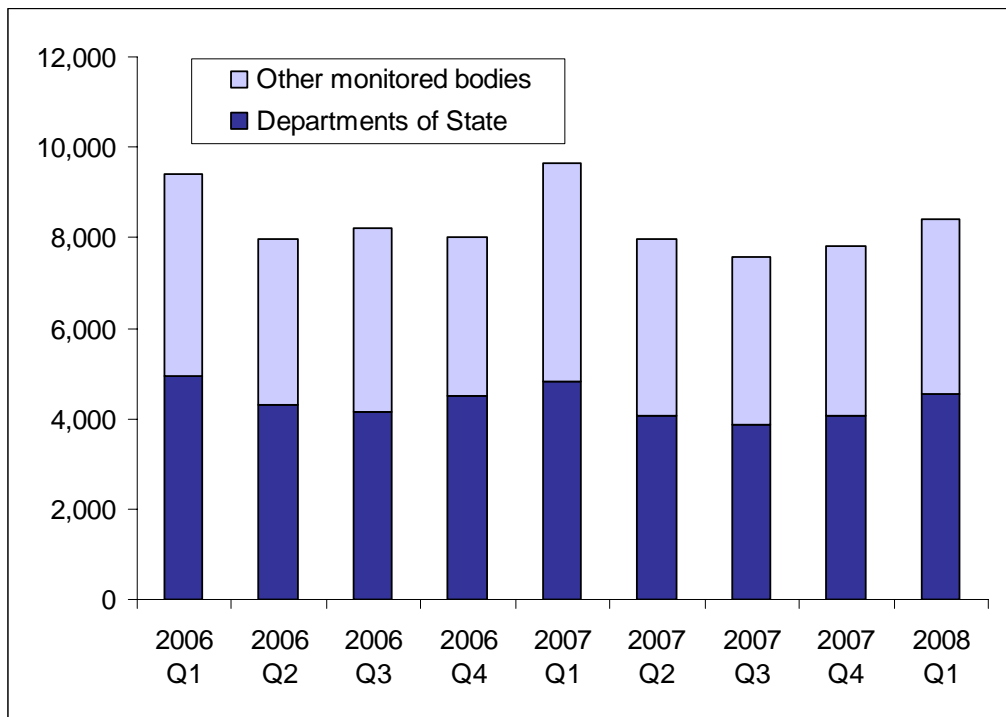


Figure 1 shows that there were been noticeable “jumps” in the total number of requests received in the first quarters of 2006 and 2007 (there was also a large number of requests in Q1 of 2005, although this was immediately following the Act’s implementation and is therefore unlikely to be representative). This appears to suggest that there may be a seasonal pattern to information requests. Although there was also an increase in the

total of number of requests received during Q1 of 2008, compared to the immediately preceding quarters, the increase was much less marked than in the previous two years, and it is not yet possible to be definitive on the issue of seasonality.

Of the Departments of State, the Ministry of Defence reported having received 718 requests during Q1, the highest departmental total. This was over 24 per cent more than the Ministry of Justice, whose total of 580 requests was the next highest. The Department for Transport (538) and the Home Office (470) were the other departments to receive more than 400 requests in Q1. It should be noted that all these departments' figures include requests received by some of their agencies (see Appendix B).

Among other monitored bodies, the Health and Safety Executive reported having received 1,584 requests during Q1, while the National Archives received 1,004. These are the only monitored bodies to have received more than 1,000 requests during each quarter since the Act was implemented.

Monitoring statistics also show the number of non-routine information requests that fell fully or mostly under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). There were 146 such requests during the first quarter of 2008, accounting for 1.7 per cent of all requests received. The monitored bodies with the highest numbers of requests falling under the EIRs were Communities and Local Government with 31 requests, the Department for Transport with 29 requests, and the Rural Payments Agency with 29 requests.

### **Status of requests at time of monitoring** *[see Table 1]*

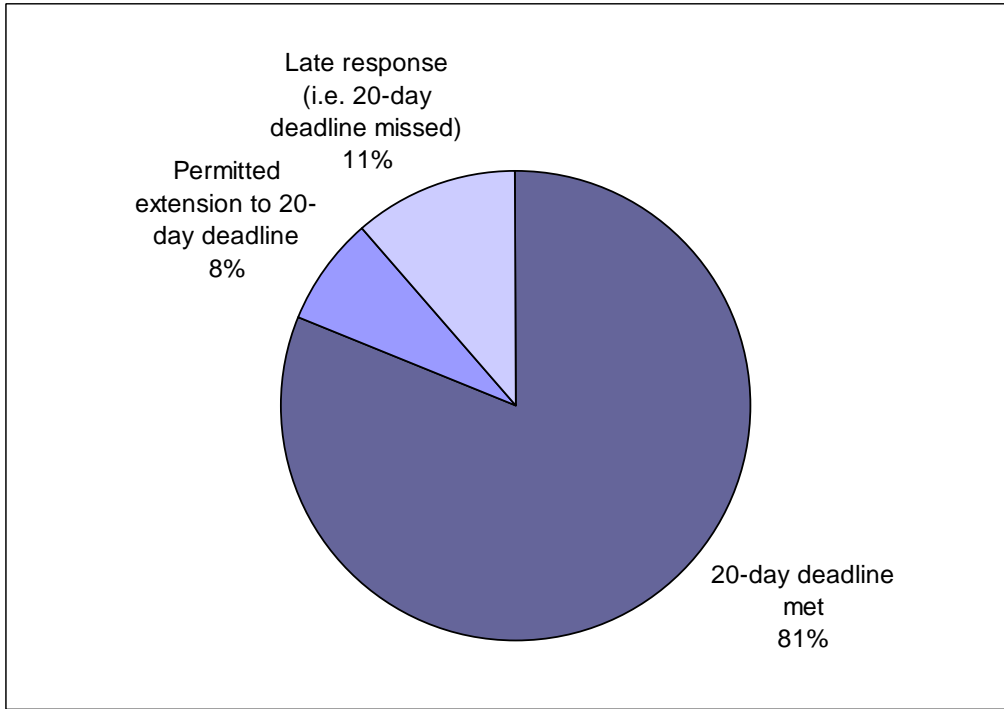
A large majority of requests (91 per cent) received during Q1 had been processed by the time monitoring information was collected. Of the 734 requests that were still being processed by the monitored bodies, 78 (11 per cent) were reported as "on hold" or "lapsed" because a fee had been charged but no payment had been received. These requests are effectively in suspension, since public authorities are not obliged to respond until the fee has been paid.

### **Timeliness of response to requests** *[see Table 2 and Table B]*

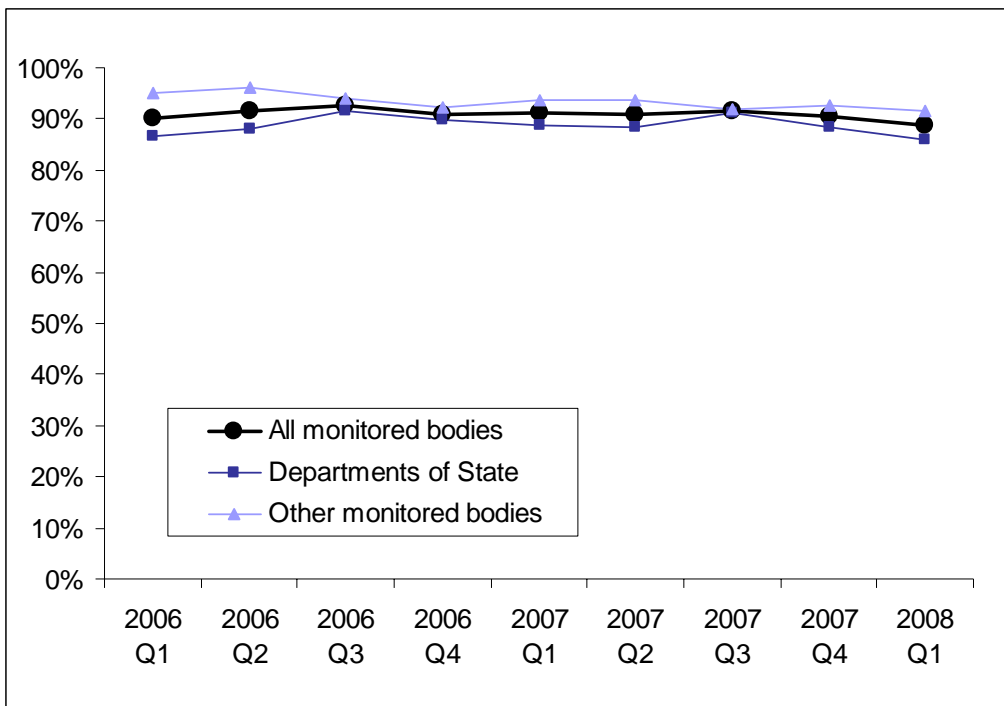
The FoI Act requires public bodies to respond to written requests for information within 20 working days of receipt (with limited exceptions, for example to allow additional time for the consideration of public interest). Across all monitored bodies, 81 per cent of requests received during Q1 of 2008 were sent a response within this standard deadline. Some 89 per cent of requests received during Q1 were "in time", in that they either received a response within the standard deadline or were subject to a permitted

deadline extension. Both of these measures are slightly lower than in the previous quarter and in the equivalent quarter last year.

**Figure 2: Timeliness of responses to Fol requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies in Q1 2008**



**Figure 3: Percentage of Fol requests processed “in time” by Departments of State and other monitored bodies, quarterly from Q1 2006**



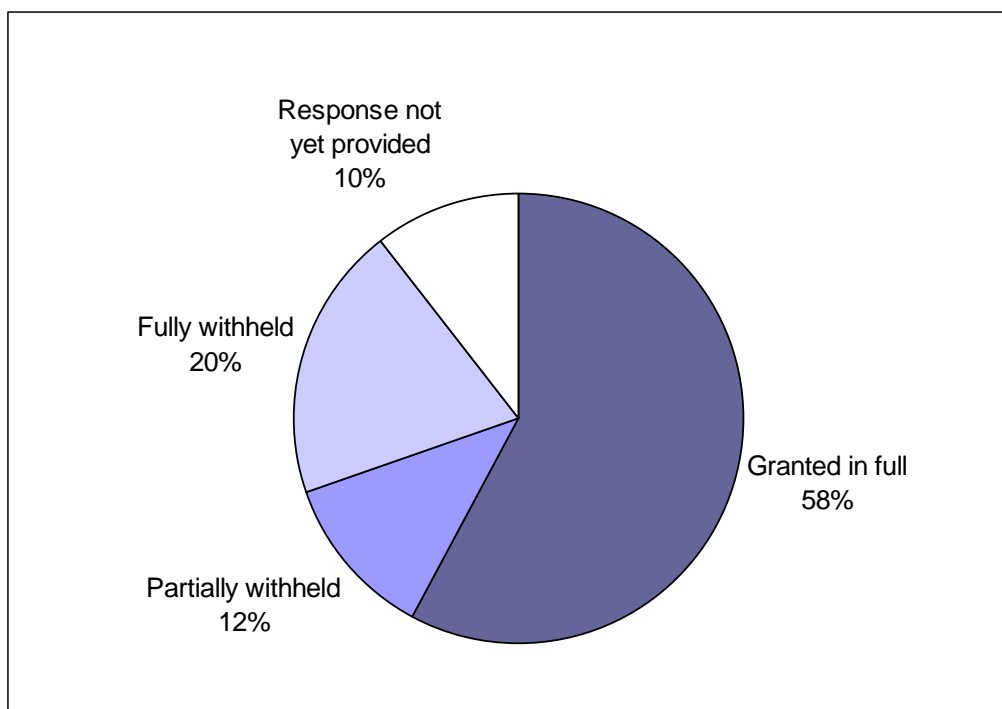
Although the standard statutory deadline for response to a FoI request is 20 working days, a 30 working day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to information transferred to the National Archives, which has provided response timeliness information on this basis.

**Initial outcomes of requests [see Table 3 and Table C]**

Of the 8,429 requests reported during Q1 of 2008 across all monitored bodies, 78 were “on hold” awaiting a fee payment. In addition, a further 1,456 requests sought information that was not held, and 623 were responded to with “advice and assistance” because the body handling the request needed further information in order to identify the information being sought. As a result, the remaining 6,272 requests were assumed to be “resolvable”, in that it would have been possible to give a substantive decision on whether to release the information being sought.

Of the “resolvable” requests received during Q1, 58 per cent were granted in full, 12 per cent were withheld in part, and 20 per cent were withheld in full at the time of monitoring. The remaining 10 per cent had not yet received a substantive response.

**Figure 4: Initial outcomes of “resolvable” FoI requests received by Departments of State and other monitored bodies in Q1 2008**



The proportion of “resolvable” requests granted in full in Q1, 58 per cent, was lower than in the previous quarter (60 per cent). The proportions of

requests in Q1 that were partially withheld and fully withheld were the same as in the previous quarter, while the proportion of requests for which a response had not yet been provided was slightly higher.

### Use of exemptions and exceptions [see Table 4]

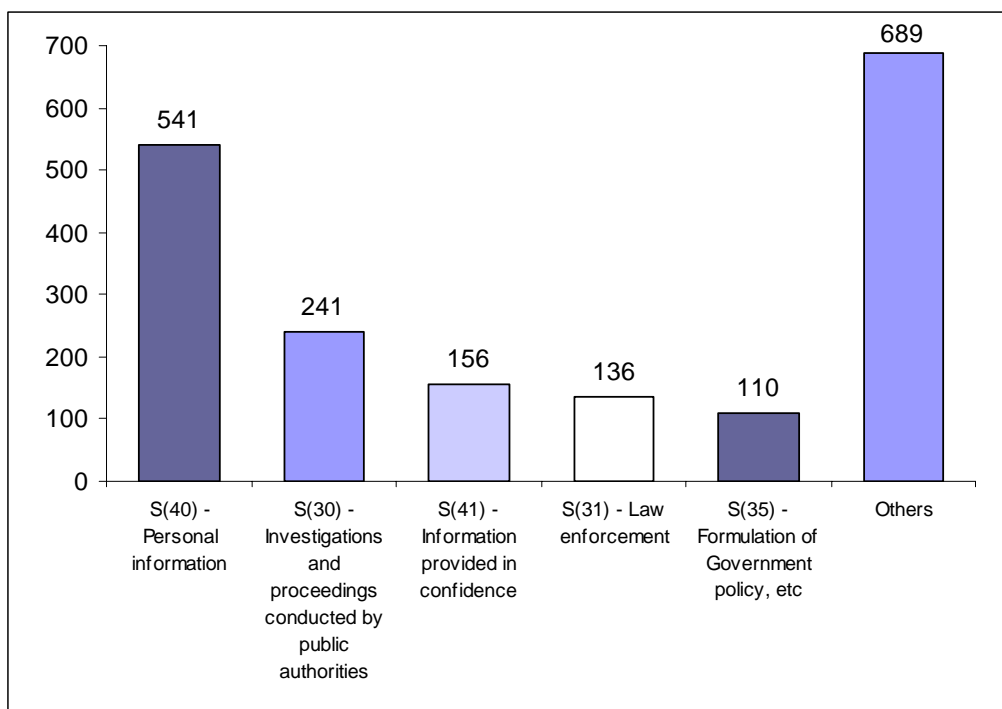
Under the FoI Act, a public authority can only refuse to provide requested information that it holds if:

- The request is considered vexatious or repeated
- The cost of compliance would exceed the appropriate limit
- The information falls in one or more of the categories of exempt information (“exemptions”) listed in Part II of the Act.

There are similar arrangements that apply to certain types of information under the EIRs. These list a number of “exceptions to the duty to disclose environmental information” in Part 3 of the Regulations.

Across all monitored bodies, a total of 1,583 requests were reported as having one or more of these exemptions or exceptions applied to them during Q1. This quarterly total is markedly higher than it was prior to Q3 of 2006 because it now includes data on exemption usage by the Health and Safety Executive, which was not previously available.

**Figure 5: Number of exemptions and exceptions applied by Departments of State and other monitored bodies on requests received in Q1 2008**





The most commonly applied exemptions or exceptions in Q1 were those listed at Section 40 of the FoI Act (relating to personal information), which was applied to 541 requests, Section 30 (investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities), which was applied to 241 requests, and Section 41 (information provided in confidence), which was applied to 156 requests.

### **Departmental name changes**

Please refer to note 1 in Appendix B for full details of departmental name changes that have occurred since Q1 2006, the period covered by the tables in this bulletin.

# Tables

## **Latest quarterly tables**

- Table 1. Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2008, and their status at time of monitoring
- Table 2. Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2008
- Table 3. Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January – 31 March 2008
- Table 4. Exemptions and exceptions applied by monitored bodies when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January – 31 March 2008

## **In-year performance and volume tables**

- Table A. Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2006
- Table B. Proportion of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were answered “in time”, by quarter, since 1 January 2006
- Table C. Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2006

**TABLE 1****Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2008, and their status at time of monitoring<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Government body</b>	<b>Total requests received</b>	<b>Request status at time of monitoring<sup>1</sup></b>			
		<b>Processed</b>	<b>"On hold" or lapsed<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Still being processed</b>	<b>Number handled under EIRs<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>8,429</b>	<b>7,695</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>4,526</b>	<b>4,030</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>3,665</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>53</b>
<b><i>Departments of State</i></b>					
Attorney General's Office	12	11	0	1	0
Cabinet Office	193	181	0	12	0
Communities and Local Government	150	133	0	17	31
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	135	117	0	18	0
Department for Children, Schools and Families	139	131	0	8	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	106	99	0	7	1
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	101	93	0	8	23
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	22	20	0	2	0
Department for International Development	67	63	0	4	0
Department for Transport #	538	502	0	36	29
Department for Work and Pensions #	298	262	0	36	0
Department of Health	329	323	0	6	0
Export Credits Guarantee Department	7	6	0	1	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	286	256	0	30	0
HM Treasury	293	278	0	15	7
Home Office #	470	414	0	56	0
Ministry of Defence #	718	623	0	95	2
Ministry of Justice #	580	445	0	135	0
Northern Ireland Office	45	39	2	4	0
Scotland Office	19	17	0	2	0
Wales Office	18	17	0	1	0

**TABLE 1 continued**

**Number of non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2008, and their status at time of monitoring<sup>1</sup>**

Government body	Total requests received	Request status at time of monitoring <sup>1</sup>			
		Processed	"On hold" or lapsed <sup>2</sup>	Still being processed	Number handled under EIRs <sup>3</sup>
<b><i>Other bodies included in monitoring</i></b>					
Central Office of Information	14	14	0	0	0
Charity Commission	125	122	0	3	0
Crown Prosecution Service	102	102	0	0	0
Debt Management Office	67	67	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	31	30	0	1	2
Health and Safety Executive	1,584	1,544	0	40	22
HM Land Registry	17	17	0	0	0
HM Revenue and Customs	312	267	0	45	0
National Archives	1,004	858	76	70	0
National Savings and Investments	40	40	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	24	24	0	0	0
Office for Standards in Education	240	240	0	0	0
Office of Fair Trading	66	66	0	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	46	46	0	0	0
Office of Rail Regulation	46	46	0	0	0
Ordnance Survey	33	32	0	1	0
Royal Mint	5	4	0	1	0
Rural Payments Agency	42	41	0	1	29
Serious Fraud Office	20	20	0	0	0
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	79	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	6	6	0	0	0

# - Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

**Notes**

1 - Monitoring returns were submitted to the Ministry of Justice during May 2008.

2 - Requests "on hold" are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received at the time of monitoring. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made.

Where a fee is charged and the deadline for payment expires, the request is deemed to have "lapsed" as no further action is required from the public authority.

3 - The amended Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) came into force on 1 January 2005 to coincide with the FoI Act. For further information on the EIRs, see the main Notes section of this publication.

TABLE 2

Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2008

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Timeliness of response			Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline	Percentage of requests "in time" (i.e. meeting deadline or with permitted extension)
		20-day deadline met	Permitted extension <sup>2</sup> to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>8,351</b>	<b>6,765</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>4,524</b>	<b>3,384</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>3,827</b>	<b>3,381</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>						
Attorney General's Office	12	11	1	0	*	*
Cabinet Office	193	165	21	7	85%	96%
Communities and Local Government	150	117	14	19	78%	87%
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	135	83	42	10	61%	93%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	139	115	15	9	83%	94%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	106	83	4	19	78%	82%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	101	69	20	12	68%	88%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	22	11	6	5	50%	77%
Department for International Development	67	46	9	12	69%	82%
Department for Transport #	538	456	29	53	85%	90%
Department for Work and Pensions #	298	177	31	90	59%	70%
Department of Health	329	294	12	23	89%	93%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	7	2	0	5	*	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	286	226	55	5	79%	98%
HM Treasury	293	264	27	2	90%	99%
Home Office #	470	337	59	74	72%	84%
Ministry of Defence #	718	531	87	100	74%	86%
Ministry of Justice #	580	340	73	167	59%	71%
Northern Ireland Office	43	32	3	8	74%	81%
Scotland Office	19	10	0	9	*	*
Wales Office	18	15	1	2	*	*

**TABLE 2 continued**

**Timeliness of response to non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2008**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Timeliness of response			Percentage of requests meeting 20-day deadline	Percentage of requests "in time" (i.e. meeting deadline or with permitted extension)
		20-day deadline met	Permitted extension <sup>2</sup> to 20-day deadline	Late response (i.e. 20-day deadline missed)		
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>						
Central Office of Information	14	14	0	0	*	*
Charity Commission	125	112	0	13	90%	90%
Crown Prosecution Service	102	99	2	1	97%	99%
Debt Management Office	67	67	0	0	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	31	26	5	0	84%	100%
Health and Safety Executive	1,584	1,408	21	155	89%	90%
HM Land Registry	17	17	0	0	*	*
HM Revenue and Customs	312	235	5	72	75%	77%
National Archives ^	928	821	74	33	88%	96%
National Savings and Investments	40	40	0	0	100%	100%
Office for National Statistics	24	22	1	1	92%	96%
Office for Standards in Education	240	225	2	13	94%	95%
Office of Fair Trading	66	62	0	4	94%	94%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	46	40	1	5	87%	89%
Office of Rail Regulation	46	41	4	1	89%	98%
Ordnance Survey	33	25	4	4	76%	88%
Royal Mint	5	4	1	0	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	42	25	7	10	60%	76%
Serious Fraud Office	20	14	0	6	*	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	78	0	1	99%	99%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	6	6	0	0	*	*

**Notes**

\* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

# - Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

^ - Although the standard statutory deadline for responding to an information request is 20 working days, a 30-day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to archived information. The National Archives' timeliness figures are therefore reported on this basis.

1 - Requests "on hold" or "lapsed" are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made. They are therefore excluded from the calculation of timeliness measures.

2 - "Permitted extensions" include:

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Freedom of Information Act is extended to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest.

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Environmental Information Regulations is extended because of the complexity or volume of the request.

**TABLE 3**  
**Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2008**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Requests where advice and assistance <sup>2</sup> provided	Requests where information not held	Total "resolvable" requests <sup>3</sup>	Initial outcome of request				Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full	Percentage of resolvable requests withheld in full
					Granted in full	Partially withheld	Fully withheld <sup>4</sup>	Response not yet provided <sup>5</sup>		
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>8,351</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>1,456</b>	<b>6,272</b>	<b>3,631</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>1,243</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>4,524</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>3,452</b>	<b>1,960</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>3,827</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>1,671</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>										
Attorney General's Office	12	0	6	6	3	2	0	1	*	*
Cabinet Office	193	31	61	101	25	11	53	12	25%	52%
Communities and Local Government	150	0	25	125	77	22	9	17	62%	7%
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	135	4	28	103	41	16	28	18	40%	27%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	139	10	20	109	64	11	26	8	59%	24%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	106	14	11	81	51	17	6	7	63%	7%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	101	12	9	80	53	7	12	8	66%	15%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	22	3	3	16	10	1	3	2	*	*
Department for International Development	67	0	10	57	36	10	7	4	63%	12%
Department for Transport #	538	14	42	482	350	25	71	36	73%	15%
Department for Work and Pensions #	298	0	14	284	207	5	36	36	73%	13%
Department of Health	329	4	75	250	174	27	43	6	70%	17%
Export Credits Guarantee Department	7	1	1	5	2	1	1	1	*	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	286	20	36	230	78	53	69	30	34%	30%
HM Treasury	293	56	84	153	50	15	73	15	33%	48%
Home Office #	470	47	95	328	152	23	97	56	46%	30%
Ministry of Defence #	718	23	50	645	453	43	54	95	70%	8%
Ministry of Justice #	580	116	122	342	105	20	82	135	31%	24%
Northern Ireland Office	43	2	5	36	15	13	4	4	42%	11%
Scotland Office	19	0	5	14	10	0	2	2	*	*
Wales Office	18	5	8	5	4	0	0	1	*	*

**TABLE 3 continued**  
**Initial outcomes of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies from 1 January - 31 March 2008**

Government body	Total requests received (excluding on-hold and lapsed <sup>1</sup> )	Requests where advice and assistance <sup>2</sup> provided	Requests where information not held	Total "resolvable" requests <sup>3</sup>	Initial outcome of request				Percentage of resolvable requests granted in full	Percentage of resolvable requests withheld in full
					Granted in full	Partially withheld	Fully withheld <sup>4</sup>	Response not yet provided <sup>5</sup>		
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>										
Central Office of Information	14	0	1	13	12	0	1	0	*	*
Charity Commission	125	17	7	101	67	19	12	3	66%	12%
Crown Prosecution Service	102	15	26	61	28	6	27	0	46%	44%
Debt Management Office	67	0	0	67	67	0	0	0	100%	0%
Food Standards Agency	31	0	2	29	13	9	6	1	45%	21%
Health and Safety Executive	1,584	43	457	1,084	527	262	255	40	49%	24%
HM Land Registry	17	0	3	14	12	0	2	0	*	*
HM Revenue and Customs	312	1	46	265	133	5	82	45	50%	31%
National Archives	928	132	141	655	504	30	51	70	77%	8%
National Savings and Investments	40	0	4	36	33	1	2	0	92%	6%
Office for National Statistics	24	0	6	18	14	0	4	0	*	*
Office for Standards in Education	240	0	33	207	97	61	49	0	47%	24%
Office of Fair Trading	66	6	0	60	15	3	42	0	25%	70%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	46	10	3	33	21	12	0	0	64%	0%
Office of Rail Regulation	46	12	5	29	24	5	0	0	83%	0%
Ordnance Survey	33	2	4	27	23	0	3	1	85%	11%
Royal Mint	5	0	0	5	3	0	1	1	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	42	10	2	30	17	3	9	1	57%	30%
Serious Fraud Office	20	9	1	10	8	1	1	0	*	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	79	4	2	73	50	3	20	0	68%	27%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	6	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	*	*

**Notes**

\* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

# - Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

1 - Requests "on hold" or "lapsed" are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made.

2 - "Advice and assistance" would be provided to a requester when the body "reasonably requires further information in order to identify and locate the information requested". See section 1(3) of the Freedom of Information Act for further details.

3 - "Resolvable requests" are all those where it is possible to make a substantive decision on whether to release the requested information. They exclude requests which are lapsed or "on-hold", where the information was not held, and where it was necessary to provide advice and assistance (see note above) since in each of these cases it would not have been possible to resolve the request in the form it was asked.

4 - "Fully withheld" requests include those which were refused because it was estimated that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

5 - This table counts as "resolvable" all requests where a response has not yet been provided. This assumption is likely to be generally true but may be incorrect in a small number of cases.

It should also be noted that requests where a response has not yet been provided are more likely to involve considerations which are complex and finely balanced. As a result, it cannot be assumed that these requests will be granted and refused in the same proportions as "resolvable" requests in general.



TABLE 4

Exemptions and exceptions<sup>1</sup> applied by monitored bodies\* when withholding non-routine information requests received from 1 January - 31 March 2008

Exemption / Exception <sup>1</sup>	Number of requests where exemption used		TOTAL
	Departments of State only	Other monitored bodies	
<b>Total number of requests where one or more exemptions or exceptions were applied</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>1,583</b>
<b>Number of requests where each exemption (listed in Part II of FoI Act<sup>2</sup>) was applied</b>			
S(22) - Information intended for future publication	84	12	96
S(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters	27	3	30
S(24) - National security	26	2	28
S(26) - Defence	10	1	11
S(27) - International relations	45	8	53
S(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom	1	0	1
S(29) - The economy	1	1	2
S(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	6	235	241
S(31) - Law enforcement	55	81	136
S(32) - Court records, etc	10	17	27
S(33) - Audit functions	2	4	6
S(34) - Parliamentary privilege	0	0	0
S(35) - Formulation of Government policy, etc	104	6	110
S(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	50	4	54
S(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc and honours	10	2	12
S(38) - Health and Safety	23	25	48
S(39) - Environmental information	_3	_3	_3
S(40) - Personal information	180	361	541
S(41) - Information provided in confidence	39	117	156
S(42) - Legal professional privilege	30	15	45
S(43) - Commercial interests	84	20	104
S(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	9	88	97
<b>Number of requests where each exception (listed in Part 3 of EIRs) was applied</b>			
3(a) - Exempt personal data	1	9	10
4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	2	3	5
4(c) - Too general	4	0	4
4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	9	4	13
4(e) - Internal communications	15	1	16
5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security, public safety	1	15	16
5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of enquiries	1	0	1
5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights	0	0	0
5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work	0	0	0
5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information	0	0	0
5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	2	1	3
5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates	0	7	7

#### Notes

\* - A full list of monitored bodies is shown in Appendix B. This also includes details of those departments of state whose figures include non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves.

1 - "Exemptions" refers to the provisions in Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act (and the similar "exceptions" in Part 3 of the Environmental Information Regulations) which classify certain types of information as exempt from the release obligations. More than one exemption or exception can apply to a single information request.

2 - The exemption described in section 21 of the Act ("Information accessible ... by other means") is not listed here, because requests falling under this exemption do not meet the formal definition of a "non-routine" request and therefore are not counted in these monitoring statistics.

3 - The exemption listed at section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act ("Environmental Information") effectively states that information requests which fall within the scope of the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) should be handled as these Regulations specify. Requests for environmental information which are refused should apply one of the EIR exceptions listed above.



**TABLE A**

**Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2006**

Government body	Total requests received								
	2006				2007				2008
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>9,398</b>	<b>7,976</b>	<b>8,209</b>	<b>7,999</b>	<b>9,644</b>	<b>7,988</b>	<b>7,580</b>	<b>7,804</b>	<b>8,429</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>4,934</b>	<b>4,307</b>	<b>4,159</b>	<b>4,517</b>	<b>4,838</b>	<b>4,084</b>	<b>3,883</b>	<b>4,078</b>	<b>4,526</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>4,464</b>	<b>3,669</b>	<b>4,050</b>	<b>3,482</b>	<b>4,806</b>	<b>3,904</b>	<b>3,697</b>	<b>3,726</b>	<b>3,903</b>
<b>Departments of State</b>									
Attorney General's Office	13	17	22	15	31	10	14	13	12
Cabinet Office	244	194	177	192	181	170	130	157	193
Communities and Local Government	185	169	150	157	137	119	154	136	150
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	-	-	-	-	-	-	114	142	135
Department for Children, Schools and Families	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	115	139
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	152	92	88	115	113	113	77	70	106
Department for Education and Skills	165	110	104	167	158	131	-	-	-
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	161	91	128	95	111	75	106	100	101
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	20	22
Department for International Development	85	73	52	56	49	41	47	53	67
Department for Transport #	439	448	400	417	483	440	482	473	538
Department for Work and Pensions #	403	285	304	384	366	308	260	325	298
Department of Health	388	347	346	320	408	311	310	260	329
Department of Trade and Industry	201	159	111	119	144	114	-	-	-
Deputy Prime Minister's Office	-	15	20	3	2	1	-	-	-
Export Credits Guarantee Department	18	14	22	20	10	11	13	16	7
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	316	260	220	229	297	249	248	233	286
HM Treasury	307	304	264	353	316	267	241	268	293
Home Office #	673	670	733	785	920	512	417	420	470
Ministry of Defence #	905	818	761	816	790	830	667	739	718
Ministry of Justice #^	200	168	178	158	222	304	455	464	580
Northern Ireland Office	55	41	43	73	54	51	25	36	45
Privy Council Office	8	12	8	7	3	-	-	-	-
Scotland Office	10	7	16	17	25	14	8	28	19
Wales Office	6	13	12	19	18	13	6	10	18

**TABLE A continued**

**Number of non-routine information requests received by monitored bodies, by quarter, since 1 January 2006**

Government body	Total requests received								
	2006				2007				2008
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Central Office of Information	2	4	6	6	7	8	14	13	14
Charity Commission	42	54	57	63	84	120	79	106	125
Crown Prosecution Service	83	75	68	67	113	87	100	106	102
Debt Management Office	90	64	117	129	64	66	54	62	67
Food Standards Agency	89	37	35	41	42	24	26	24	31
Health and Safety Executive	1,599	1,484	1,349	1,282	1,542	1,355	1,531	1,471	1,584
HM Land Registry	28	12	25	12	12	17	12	27	17
HM Revenue and Customs	317	277	279	293	337	291	280	303	312
National Archives	1,624	1,150	1,597	1,101	1,939	1,376	1,026	1,064	1,004
National Savings and Investments	8	15	11	30	22	28	32	22	40
Office for National Statistics	31	31	39	23	50	33	31	34	24
Office for Standards in Education	129	131	156	152	200	191	188	227	240
Office of Fair Trading	107	69	50	48	97	64	96	68	66
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	87	53	46	46	45	45	39	28	46
Office of Rail Regulation	54	43	51	38	71	47	52	31	46
Ordnance Survey	45	35	39	16	26	32	27	36	33
Royal Mint	2	2	3	1	1	3	5	2	5
Rural Payments Agency	48	44	36	53	50	43	32	29	42
Serious Fraud Office	8	6	8	20	27	10	9	4	20
Treasury Solicitor's Department	46	61	59	45	68	48	51	52	79
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	25	22	19	16	9	16	13	17	6

**Notes**

# - Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

^ - Figures up to and including Q1 2007 are for the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

**TABLE B**

Proportion of non-routine information requests received that were answered "in time", by quarter, since 1 January 2006 (see footnote)

Government body	Proportion of requests answered "in time" (see footnote)								
	2006				2007				2008
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<i>Departments of State</i>									
Attorney General's Office	*	*	100%	*	81%	*	*	*	*
Cabinet Office	92%	95%	92%	93%	95%	98%	97%	97%	96%
Communities and Local Government	78%	91%	87%	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%	87%
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	-	-	-	-	-	-	96%	92%	93%
Department for Children, Schools and Families	-	-	-	-	-	-	91%	94%	94%
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	87%	89%	85%	82%	76%	74%	79%	70%	82%
Department for Education and Skills	59%	84%	96%	91%	91%	92%	-	-	-
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	89%	86%	91%	92%	87%	81%	90%	88%	88%
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	-	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	77%
Department for International Development	99%	99%	98%	73%	41%	93%	96%	81%	82%
Department for Transport #	88%	92%	93%	92%	90%	88%	92%	91%	90%
Department for Work and Pensions #	90%	91%	94%	88%	91%	88%	92%	79%	70%
Department of Health	82%	88%	95%	92%	93%	88%	93%	91%	93%
Department of Trade and Industry	95%	95%	93%	94%	95%	83%	-	-	-
Deputy Prime Minister's Office	-	*	*	*	*	*	-	-	-
Export Credits Guarantee Department	*	*	41%	*	*	*	*	*	*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	91%	92%	90%	96%	98%	98%	98%	97%	98%
HM Treasury	89%	93%	97%	92%	97%	93%	94%	97%	99%
Home Office #	92%	81%	91%	90%	86%	88%	88%	88%	84%
Ministry of Defence #	81%	85%	91%	89%	87%	86%	89%	85%	86%
Ministry of Justice #^	93%	90%	92%	91%	86%	91%	90%	88%	71%
Northern Ireland Office	80%	87%	81%	69%	85%	98%	88%	83%	81%
Privy Council Office	*	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	-
Scotland Office	*	*	*	*	84%	*	*	79%	*
Wales Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

**TABLE B continued**

**Proportion of non-routine information requests received that were answered "in time", by quarter, since 1 January 2006 (see footnote)**

Government body	Proportion of requests answered "in time" (see footnote)									
	2006				2007				2008	
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>										
Central Office of Information	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Charity Commission	69%	93%	96%	94%	98%	99%	96%	97%	90%	
Crown Prosecution Service	89%	96%	94%	97%	100%	99%	100%	100%	99%	
Debt Management Office	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Food Standards Agency	100%	100%	97%	95%	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%	
Health and Safety Executive	95%	96%	92%	89%	88%	90%	90%	91%	90%	
HM Land Registry	96%	*	96%	*	*	*	*	100%	*	
HM Revenue and Customs	83%	90%	84%	80%	86%	81%	78%	71%	77%	
National Archives +	99%	98%	99%	98%	98%	98%	95%	99%	96%	
National Savings and Investments	*	*	*	100%	95%	100%	100%	95%	100%	
Office for National Statistics	97%	97%	95%	91%	88%	91%	90%	94%	96%	
Office for Standards in Education	96%	97%	97%	99%	98%	94%	95%	93%	95%	
Office of Fair Trading	89%	90%	92%	88%	95%	91%	93%	97%	94%	
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	94%	91%	93%	100%	96%	96%	95%	93%	89%	
Office of Rail Regulation	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	98%	98%	97%	98%	
Ordnance Survey	98%	91%	95%	*	92%	94%	85%	83%	88%	
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Rural Payments Agency	94%	89%	78%	81%	84%	88%	84%	79%	76%	
Serious Fraud Office	*	*	*	*	100%	*	*	*	*	
Treasury Solicitor's Department	100%	98%	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	96%	99%	
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	100%	100%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	

# - Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

\* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

^ - Figures up to and including Q1 2007 are for the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

+ - Although the standard statutory deadline for responding to an information request is 20 working days, a 30-day deadline applies where requests relate wholly or partly to archived information. The National Archives' timeliness figures are therefore reported on this basis.

**Notes**

A request is "in time" if it was answered within the statutory response deadline, or within a permitted extension to this deadline.

Permitted extensions include:

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Freedom of Information Act is extended to allow for consideration of the balance of the public interest.

Requests where the 20-day deadline for response under the Environmental Information Regulations is extended because of the complexity or volume of the request.

Requests "on hold" or "lapsed" are those where a fee has been charged but no payment has been received. These requests are effectively suspended since public authorities are not obliged to respond until payment has been made. They are therefore excluded from this calculation.

TABLE C

Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2006 (see footnote)

Government body	Proportion of requests granted in full									
	2006				2007				2008	
	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	Q2: Apr–Jun	Q3: Jul–Sep	Q4: Oct–Dec	Q1: Jan–Mar	
<b>TOTAL for all monitored bodies</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>58%</b>	
<b>TOTAL for Departments of State only</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>57%</b>	
<b>TOTAL for other monitored bodies</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>59%</b>	
<b>Departments of State</b>										
Attorney General's Office	*	*	*	*	4%	*	*	*	*	
Cabinet Office	45%	39%	44%	33%	35%	35%	30%	29%	25%	
Communities and Local Government	61%	72%	62%	69%	65%	71%	60%	61%	62%	
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	-	-	-	-	-	-	42%	45%	40%	
Department for Children, Schools and Families	-	-	-	-	-	-	70%	68%	59%	
Department for Culture, Media and Sport #	57%	63%	52%	40%	45%	45%	55%	47%	63%	
Department for Education and Skills	51%	67%	70%	70%	66%	67%	-	-	-	
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	50%	60%	64%	71%	79%	55%	46%	64%	66%	
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	-	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	*	
Department for International Development	83%	70%	89%	62%	56%	57%	51%	64%	63%	
Department for Transport #	78%	78%	76%	74%	77%	74%	71%	67%	73%	
Department for Work and Pensions #	83%	81%	75%	78%	82%	83%	83%	83%	73%	
Department of Health	70%	68%	69%	75%	67%	65%	62%	63%	70%	
Department of Trade and Industry	54%	48%	41%	35%	47%	39%	-	-	-	
Deputy Prime Minister's Office	-	*	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	
Export Credits Guarantee Department	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	43%	42%	30%	17%	31%	26%	26%	34%	34%	
HM Treasury	46%	61%	59%	40%	41%	21%	27%	35%	33%	
Home Office #	48%	39%	40%	41%	40%	51%	58%	49%	46%	
Ministry of Defence #	69%	70%	74%	70%	68%	68%	68%	73%	70%	
Ministry of Justice #	40%	38%	39%	43%	41%	41%	39%	45%	31%	
Northern Ireland Office	49%	64%	47%	42%	28%	62%	*	46%	42%	
Privy Council Office	*	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	-	
Scotland Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	81%	*	
Wales Office	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	

**TABLE C continued**

**Proportion of resolvable non-routine information requests received that were granted in full, by quarter, since 1 January 2006 (see footnote)**

Government body	Proportion of requests granted in full								
	2006				2007				2008
	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar	Q2: Apr-Jun	Q3: Jul-Sep	Q4: Oct-Dec	Q1: Jan-Mar
<b>Other bodies included in monitoring</b>									
Central Office of Information	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Charity Commission	53%	51%	35%	37%	55%	53%	51%	61%	66%
Crown Prosecution Service	33%	34%	47%	52%	44%	59%	31%	26%	46%
Debt Management Office	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Food Standards Agency	40%	29%	59%	16%	34%	43%	48%	32%	45%
Health and Safety Executive	42%	61%	54%	51%	52%	52%	48%	46%	49%
HM Land Registry	83%	*	86%	*	*	*	*	100%	*
HM Revenue and Customs	52%	46%	47%	44%	43%	47%	47%	55%	50%
National Archives	72%	79%	74%	79%	89%	84%	78%	82%	77%
National Savings and Investments	*	*	*	92%	*	91%	92%	*	92%
Office for National Statistics	59%	62%	47%	*	21%	48%	50%	57%	*
Office for Standards in Education	49%	48%	55%	42%	38%	44%	38%	45%	47%
Office of Fair Trading	59%	37%	23%	38%	45%	48%	42%	33%	25%
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	73%	63%	55%	82%	63%	52%	58%	*	64%
Office of Rail Regulation	81%	80%	87%	71%	88%	78%	62%	65%	83%
Ordnance Survey	66%	61%	74%	*	85%	65%	67%	78%	85%
Royal Mint	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rural Payments Agency	69%	71%	79%	68%	70%	41%	*	57%	57%
Serious Fraud Office	*	*	*	*	30%	*	*	*	*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	70%	82%	96%	88%	96%	100%	93%	94%	68%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

# - Figures supplied by these departments of state count non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. Appendix B gives full details.

\* - These percentages are not shown because the number of qualifying requests is 20 or fewer.

^ - Figures up to and including Q1 2007 are for the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

**Notes**

"Resolvable requests" are all those where it would have been possible to provide a substantive response. They exclude requests which are lapsed or "on-hold", where the information was not held, and where it was necessary to provide advice and assistance to the requester, since in each of these cases it would not have been possible to resolve the request in the form it was asked.



## Appendix A – Important note on the scope and consistency of the statistics

### Defining the scope of Freedom of Information monitoring

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol) states that (subject to certain conditions):

*“Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled—*

*(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and*

*(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him”*

Regulation 5 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 states that (subject to certain conditions):

*“A public authority that holds environmental information shall make it available on request.”*

Following their introduction on 1 January 2005, the above provisions apply to all relevant requests for information made to public authorities, no matter how routine and straightforward they may be.

Government departments supply large amounts of information, both on request and proactively, as an established and routine part of their business. This includes information released in the form of leaflets, correspondence exchanges, reports and other published material, and through websites and departmental Fol Publication Schemes. All information released on request is covered by the Freedom of Information Act. However, it would be both uninformative and fundamentally unfeasible to count all such activity in departmental Freedom of Information monitoring returns.

The statistics in this bulletin therefore relate only to **the “non-routine” information requests** that government departments have received. Essentially, this means that departments’ statistics should only count those requests where:

1. it was necessary to take a considered view on how to handle the request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, and
2. departmental Freedom of Information officer(s) were informed of the request and logged it in their case management systems.

## Defining a request

The full definition of an “information request” for the purposes of inclusion the Ministry of Justice’s monitoring returns is shown below. This definition was circulated to members of the central government “Freedom of Information Practitioners’ Group” in November 2004.

*“[An information request for monitoring purposes is one ...]*

1. *Which meets the criteria in section 8 of the Freedom of Information Act and if the request falls under the Environmental Information Regulations it includes requests made in any form or context, including oral requests; **and***
2. *Which is a request for information that is not already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means; **and***
  - (i) Which results in the release of one or more documents (in any media) or inclusion of extracts of documents in the information released; **or***
  - (ii) Results in information being withheld under an exemption or exception from the right of access (either the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations); **or***
  - (iii) The request is not processed because the department estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit in accordance with section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act; **or***
  - (iv) The request is not processed because the department is relying on the provisions of section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act; **or***
  - (v) Where a search is made for information sought in the request and it is found that none is held.”*

## Consistency of the statistics

It is necessary to apply a definition of this sort in order to set a clear boundary to the coverage of our monitoring, and thereby obtain meaningful information from the process. The definition shown above has been widely disseminated to Freedom of Information officers in government and we have tried to ensure that it is applied consistently across all monitored bodies.

However, there is considerable variation in the way these bodies are structured and managed, and in the mechanisms that they have put in place to meet their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. For example, some bodies operate a centralised Freedom of Information secretariat that co-ordinates responses to all information requests received. Others give a greater degree of autonomy to individual work areas in the handing of information requests.

As a result of these differences, **there is likely to be a degree of inconsistency** in the way in which bodies have interpreted and applied the definition of an “information request” for monitoring purposes. Although we cannot estimate the extent or effect of the likely inconsistency, it is very important to bear in mind when using the figures in this bulletin, particularly when comparing statistics for individual bodies.

**In summary, it is important to note that:**

- (i) These statistics only cover “non-routine” information requests, and do not give a representative picture of all requests for information received in government.**
- (ii) There is likely to be a degree of inconsistency between monitored bodies’ interpretations of the definition of an “information request” for monitoring purposes. This should be borne in mind when using these statistics.**

## Appendix B – Government bodies included in these statistics

The statistics in this bulletin have been derived from monitoring returns completed by Freedom of Information officers in government departments during May 2008. This is the fifth set of quarterly Freedom of Information statistics to be published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the government department which now has lead responsibility for the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The first eight bulletins in this series were published by the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

The formal monitoring work covers a total of 42 government bodies, including all major departments of state (i.e. Ministerial departments).

The monitored bodies which are not departments of state nonetheless have significant policymaking, regulatory or information-handling functions. As far as possible, this list includes major non-Ministerial Government Departments (NMGDs) and excludes Executive Agencies, although these classifications are not mutually exclusive and periodic “Machinery of Government” changes make it difficult to define the list precisely.

### **Coverage within the UK**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Office and the Wales Office are included in these statistics. However, we have not collected formal monitoring data from the National Assembly for Wales, or from the bodies that make up the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies in Scotland. This legislation lies outside the scope of the monitoring work on which this bulletin is based. However, the Scotland Office has been included here because, although it deals with matters relating to Scotland, it is based in England and hence falls under the scope of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 rather than the corresponding Scottish legislation.

The following is a full list of the bodies covered by the monitoring statistics in the first quarter of 2008.

### **Departments of State**

- Attorney General’s Office
- Cabinet Office
- Communities and Local Government
- Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
- Department for Children, Schools and Families

Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills  
Department for International Development  
Department for Transport  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Department of Health  
Export Credits Guarantee Department  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
HM Treasury  
Home Office  
Ministry of Defence  
Ministry of Justice  
Northern Ireland Office  
Scotland Office  
Wales Office

#### **Other monitored bodies**

Central Office of Information  
Charity Commission  
Crown Prosecution Service  
Debt Management Office  
Food Standards Agency  
Health and Safety Executive and Commission  
HM Land Registry  
HM Revenue and Customs  
National Archives  
National Savings and Investments  
Office for National Statistics  
Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)  
Office of Fair Trading  
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)  
Office of Rail Regulation  
Ordnance Survey  
Royal Mint  
Rural Payments Agency  
Serious Fraud Office  
Treasury Solicitor's Department  
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)

#### **Notes**

1. The following departmental changes occurred between the beginning of January 2006 and the end of March 2008, the period covered by the in-year performance and volume tables (Tables A, B and C) in this bulletin.

The Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers was renamed as the **Attorney General's Office** from 2 June 2006, although its substantive responsibilities remained unchanged.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was superseded from 7 May 2006 by **Communities and Local Government (CLG)**, which inherited the major part of its responsibilities. FoI requests relating to the Deputy Prime Minister and his work have been handled as follows in these statistics. All requests received by the ODPM prior to 7 May 2006, and requests relating to the work of CLG since that date are counted under Communities and Local Government. Requests relating to the Deputy Prime Minister received between 7 May 2006 and 28 June 2007 are counted against the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO). The DPMO was abolished on 28 June 2007.

On 2 April 2007, the functions of the **Privy Council Office (PCO)** were split between the Cabinet Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs (now the Ministry of Justice). No separate monitoring statistics have therefore been collected for the PCO from Q2 of 2007 onwards.

On 9 May 2007, the **Ministry of Justice (MoJ)** was created, assuming the responsibilities of the former Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA), as well as the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR) from the Home Office. The statistics for MoJ comprise information requests received by the DCA prior to 9 May 2007 and requests received by all parts of MoJ since that date. Information requests received by NOMS and OCJR prior to the transfer of responsibilities on 9 May 2007 have been counted under the Home Office, of which they were a part at the time the request was initially received.

Three new departments of state were created on 28 June 2007. These were the **Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)**, the **Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)**, and the **Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR)**. They replaced the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). In the Q2 2007 statistics, information requests received by DCSF and DIUS on 28 and 29 June 2007, the last two working days of the quarter, were counted under the figures for DfES. Requests to BERR on these last two days of Q2 2007 were counted under the figures for DTI. The three new departments have been separately identified in the statistics since Q3 2007.

2. Cabinet Office figures include requests that were addressed to 10 Downing Street.
3. The figures provided by a number of Departments of State count the non-routine information requests received by one or more of their agencies, as well those received by the departments themselves. The departments and agencies affected are shown below.

#### Department for Transport

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Driving Standards Agency  
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency  
Highways Agency  
Marine and Coastguard Agency  
Vehicle Certification Agency  
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

#### Department for Work and Pensions

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

Appeals Agency  
Child Support Agency  
Disability Carers Service  
Jobcentre plus  
Pension Service  
Rent Service

#### Department for Culture Media and Sport

Figures include requests received by the Royal Parks Agency.

#### Home Office

From 2006 onwards, figures include requests received by the Criminal Records Bureau, the Borders and Immigration Agency, and the UK Passport Service. The latter agency was absorbed within the Identity and Passport Service from 1 April 2006. Previously-supplied figures for the year 2005 (as reported in tables A, B and C) only include requests received by the Home Office itself.

#### Ministry of Defence

Figures include requests received by the following agencies:

ABRO (Army Base Repair Organisation) (Trading Fund)  
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency  
Army Training and Recruiting Agency  
British Forces Post Office  
Defence Analytical Services Agency  
Defence Aviation Repair Agency (Trading Fund)  
Defence Bills Agency  
Defence Communications Services Agency  
Defence Estates  
Defence Medical Education and Training Agency  
Defence Procurement Agency  
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Trading Fund)  
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency  
Defence Transport and Movements Agency  
Defence Vetting Agency  
Disposal Services Agency  
Duke of York's Royal Military School

Met Office (Trading Fund)  
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency  
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency  
Pay and Personnel Agency  
RAF Training Group Defence Agency  
Service Children's Education  
UK Hydrographic Office (Trading Fund)  
Veterans Agency

Ministry of Justice

Figures include requests received by HM Court Service where they were referred to the department's Access Rights Unit.



## Explanatory notes

1. The statistics in this bulletin relate to the handling by central government bodies of information requests received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol Act) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs). They are collected and published by Ministry of Justice (MoJ), with assistance from Freedom of Information officers across central government.
2. The Fol Act received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. Under the Act, anybody may request information from a public authority which has functions in England, Wales and/or Northern Ireland. The Act confers two statutory rights on applicants:
  - To be told whether or not the public authority holds that information; and if so,
  - To have that information communicated to them.

These statutory rights came into force on 1 January 2005. The MoJ is the lead department responsible for the Fol Act. Further information is available at:

<http://www.foi.gov.uk/index.htm>

3. The (amended) EIRs also came into force on 1 January 2005, to coincide with the Fol Act. They clarify and extend previous rights to environmental information held by public authorities. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is the lead department responsible for the EIRs. Further information is available from their website at:  
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/opengov/eir/index.htm>
4. These statistics are derived from monitoring returns submitted to MoJ in May 2008. They relate to information requests received during the period 1 January to 31 March 2008. The collection of monitoring data began on the 21st working day after the last day of this period (i.e. on 29 April 2008), since 20 working days is the statutory deadline for public authorities to respond to information requests under both the Fol Act and the EIRs.
5. Only “non-routine” information requests are counted in these statistics. Important notes on the scope and consistency of these statistics are given in **Appendix A**.
6. These statistics cover a total of 42 central government bodies. At the commencement of the Act in January 2005 there were 43 bodies covered by the monitoring statistics, but the precise number can change from time to time due to “Machinery of Government” changes. A full list of the monitored bodies in Q1 2008 is shown in **Appendix B**.

7. This is the thirteenth quarterly statistical bulletin on the implementation of the Fol Act. This publication has been prepared jointly by the Economics and Statistics Division and the Information Rights Division of the Ministry of Justice.

### **Symbols and conventions**

The following symbols have been used throughout the tables in this bulletin:

- = Not applicable  
0 = Nil

### **Contact points for further information**

Press enquires on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in a particular government body should be addressed to that body's Press Office.

Press enquiries on the contents of this bulletin should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

**Sandra Smith-Hughes**

Tel: 020 7210 8692

Email: [press.office@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

Other enquiries about these statistics or queries on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 should be directed to:

Information Rights Division  
Ministry of Justice  
6th Floor  
Selborne House  
54-60 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1E 6QW  
Tel: 020 7210 8034  
Email: [informationrights@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:informationrights@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: [statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

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