

Background

This report is based on the actual information on the Teams Request Trackers, at the end of Quarter 2 2008-09. We only track complex requests, which are defined as:

1. requests which fall outside our normal course of business;
2. requests for information where we might refuse eg sensitive, confidential information or a repeat request;
3. requests for information related to the policy making process;
4. requests on which it may be necessary to consult with others either within Natural England or outside;
5. requests for large amounts of information or information which may be difficult to locate;
6. requests which seem unclear or too general to deal with, and where we will need to seek clarification from the applicant;
7. requests for information where a search is made, but none is found.

| Requests and Applicants | | |
|---|--------------------|--|
| No of requests for information which have been logged on to the Natural England request trackers | | 31 |
| % of requests identified as falling under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. | | 90% |
| % of requests identified as falling under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 | | 10% |
| % of requests identified as falling under the Data Protection Act 1998 | | 0 |
| % of requests that were from private citizens | | 45% |
| % of requests that were from business | | 26% |
| % of requests that were from academics, NGOs, media and politicians | | 29% |
| Timeliness | | |
| Requests completed within the 20 working day legal deadline | | 29 |
| Requests completed within the extended deadline of 40 working days. | | 0 |
| % completed within the deadlines | | 100% |
| Requests still ongoing but still within 20 working day legal deadlines | | 2 |
| Requests completed beyond the legal deadline. | | 0 |
| Requests completed beyond the extended deadline. | | 0 |
| Requests with an extended deadline due to the complexity of the request or the need to consider the public interest | | 0 |
| The timeliness for responding to requests: | | |
| | 0–5 working days | 28% |
| | 6–10 working days | 31% |
| | 11–15 working days | 24% |
| | 16–20 working days | 17% |
| | >20 working days | 0% |
| Provision of Information | | Exemptions used |
| Requests which were granted in full | 17 | |
| Requests where only part of the information was provided | 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not held • Manifestly |

| | | |
|--|------------|---|
| | | unreasonable (request over appropriate limit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal data which includes data about third parties • International relations, defence, national security or public safety |
| Requests which were refused in full | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not held • Volunteered information |
| Requests which have been transferred to The National Archives | 0 | |
| Requests which have been transferred to another public body | 0 | |
| Requests we've been unable to complete as we do not hold the information | 0 | |
| Requests we've been unable to complete due to no further information being provided by the applicant for us to complete the request | 0 | |
| Requests outstanding at the end of the quarter, but within deadlines. | 2 | |
| Requests where we are waiting for further information before we can proceed | 0 | |
| Advice, Referrals and Appeals | | |
| Requests where we have taken external legal advice | 0 | |
| Requests we have referred to the Department of Constitutional Affairs, Clearing House as the request could have potential to affect other public bodies. | 0 | |
| Requests we have referred to Defra, as the request could have potential to affect the wider Defra family. | 0 | |
| Requests where the applicant has requested an internal review | 0 | |
| Information Requested | | |
| % of requests related to SSSIs, species or habitat related. | 61% | |
| % of requests related to corporate services | 13% | |
| % of requests related to planning development | 3% | |
| % of requests related agri-environment schemes | 17% | |
| % other types of requests, grants and environmental impact assessment regulations | 6% | |

Commentary

The number of requests received this quarter was up 7% on the previous quarter.

During this quarter we responded to 100% of the requests we received within the 20 day legal deadline. Pleasingly 59% of these requests were dealt with inside 2 weeks which continues to be a positive trend.

RTRACK continues to operate successfully with no issues reported.

Complaints at the Information Commissioner's Office

At the start of the quarter we had 4 complaints at the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). During the quarter we had one case informally closed. This request related to the release of detailed address information of HLS agreement holders in three counties in the South and West. We had previously refused to supply this information as we considered it to be personal information. However, by the time of the ICO investigation, we were able to distinguish between business and private individuals. We agreed with the ICO that we now could provide address information for those HLS agreement holders that were businesses, so there were no privacy issues.

Requests refused this quarter

We partially withheld information for 10 requests this quarter. This information was withheld because it contained personal data, was manifestly unreasonable (being over the appropriate cost limit), was information we did not hold or was for public safety reasons. We also refused to deal with 2 requests this quarter. One request was for a name of someone who had volunteered information and the other was for information we did not hold.

Appeals decisions this quarter

We received no requests for internal review this quarter

A full list of complex requests received this quarter is available on Natural England's disclosure log <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/foi/disclosure-log.htm>

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