

29 July 2009

Coverage: Great Britain

Theme: Social and Welfare

## CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

### Introduction

The CSA is responsible for tracing Non-Resident Parents, working out how much maintenance they should pay, and collecting and enforcing payments.

Following the Royal Assent of The Child Maintenance and Other Payments Act in June 2008, the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission was set up as a crown non departmental public body.

On 1 November 2008, the Commission took over responsibility for the Child Support Agency functions, staff and estate.

Changes introduced in October 2008 removed the compulsion for parents with care on income based benefit (Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based)) to pursue a claim for child support through the CSA. After this date, some parents with care have opted to end their child support claim with CSA. This can be seen as a fall in overall caseload after October 2008.

### Main Findings

- At the end of June 2009, the CSA caseload stood at 1.26 million.

**DWP** Department for Work and Pensions

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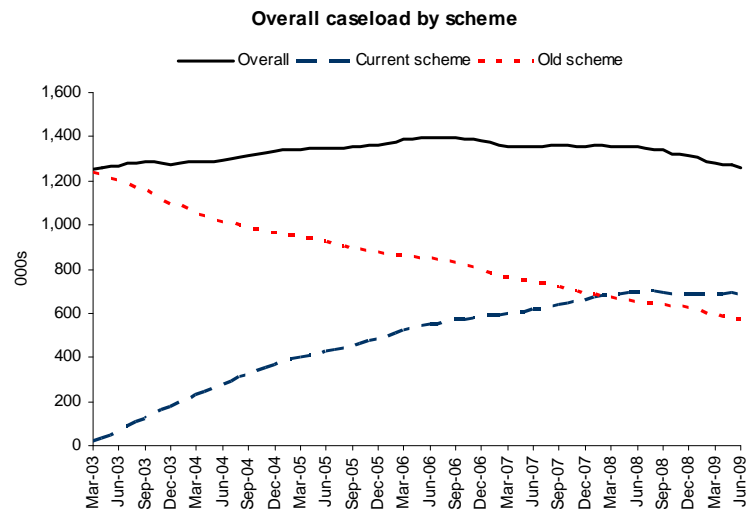
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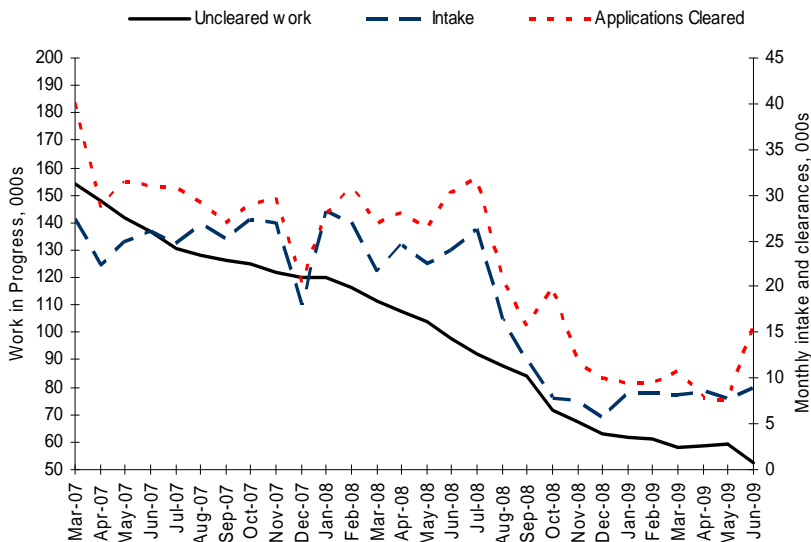
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- In the quarter ending June 2009, 72% of all cases in which maintenance was due had either received maintenance via the CSA collection service, or had a maintenance direct arrangement in place.
- In the three months to June 2009, maintenance had been collected or arranged by the CSA via the statutory maintenance service on behalf of 793,900 children.
- In the year to June 2009, the CSA collected or arranged £1,136M in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £157M was arrears.

**Current scheme application intake, clearances and work on hand: monthly**



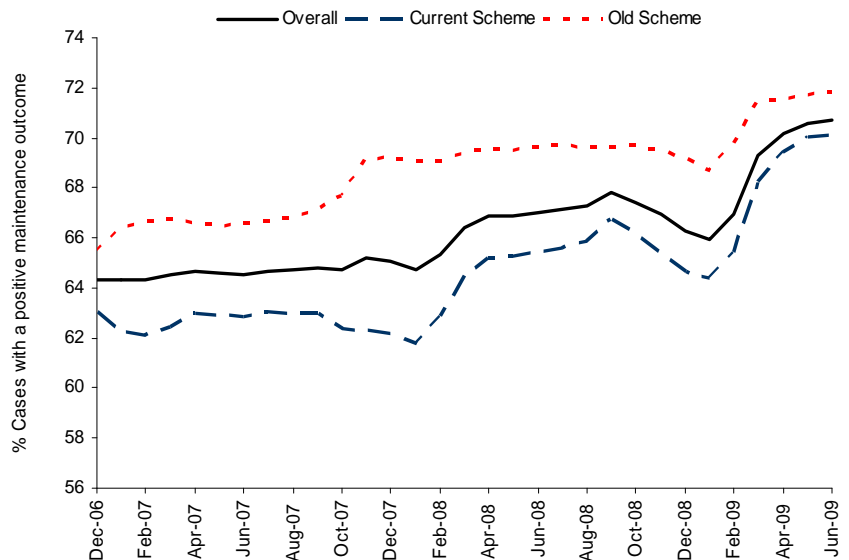
Including clerical case performance, 84% of applications received in March 2009 were cleared within 12 weeks, up from 81% a year earlier.

88% of applications received in January 2009 were cleared within 18 weeks, up from 86% a year earlier.

At end June 2009, 3% of all current scheme applications received had yet to be cleared. 'Uncleared' applications may be at any stage in the application process, such as tracing the non-resident parent; only a minority will be completely unprocessed. A comprehensive definition of a clearance is provided within the QSS itself.

- The volume of uncleared current scheme applications has fallen by 51,600 since June 2008 and at 40,500 (including clerical cases) is at its lowest since April 2003. This represents a fall of 56% since June 2008.
- In the quarter ending June 2009, on average, where maintenance had been charged and then paid via the collection service, the CSA had collected 90% of the amount due.
- Of those current scheme applications where the CSA has made a calculation and set up a collection schedule on which payments were expected from the non-resident parent, 91% of cases have made at least one payment to the parent with care.

**Rolling Last Quarter positive Maintenance Outcomes for 'Live' and Assessed CS2 and CSCS Cases with a positive maintenance liability (excluding clerical performance)**



- At the end of the 2007/08 financial year (latest available), the total amount of outstanding money owed by non resident parents to parents with care stood at £3.8 billion, whilst this represented an increase of £120 million since 2006/07, the average monthly rate of increase had slowed from £16 million to £10 million.
- At the end of June 2009, the average current scheme maintenance calculation was £23 per week (including zero calculations), and that for old scheme assessments was £18.
- At the end of June 2009, the CSA had answered 99% of telephone calls available to staff to answer within the quarter. The average waiting time was 8 seconds, this is an improvement from a waiting time of 13 seconds in the year ending March 2009 whilst the percentage of calls answered has remained constant at 99%
- In June 2009, there were 8,900 staff employed by the CSA (measured on a full-time equivalent basis) this is down from 9,500 in June 2008.

## Notes to Editors

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, established as a crown non-departmental public body under the Child Maintenance and Other Payments Act 2008, is responsible for the child maintenance system in Great Britain.

The Commission assumed responsibility for the Child Support Agency (CSA) from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on 1 November 2008.

This publication, produced by the DWP Information Directorate on behalf of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, contains the most up-to-date tables and breakdowns on the CSA's two existing statutory child maintenance schemes.

The data covers the period both before and after the Commission assumed responsibility for the CSA on 1 November 2008. The data also covers the period both before and after the removal of the compulsion on parents with care who are claiming benefits to use the CSA to collect or arrange maintenance payments. The change, which came into force on October 27th 2008, affects CSA clients who can now choose to make private maintenance arrangements with the non-resident parent.

After this date, some parents with care have opted to end their child support claim with CSA. This can be seen as a fall in overall caseload after October 2008.

The effect within QSS is:

### *Benefit recipients*

Table 13.1 and Table 13.2 remain unchanged (benefit receipt for non-resident parents and parents with care)

### *New Applications*

Tables 2.1 – 2.4 (new application process) continue to show "Applications received directly via Jobcentre Plus" rows, but the numbers show the falls indicated above. From October onwards, there is no Jobcentre plus intake and parents with care on benefit opting to claim for maintenance via the CSA are shown as "Private applications"

## **Changes in this edition**

Clerical performance will be included in the Maintenance Direct figure of table 19.5 in the June 2009 QSS onwards. This will provide consistency as clerical performance is already included in the total collected column of this table.

## **Changes in the September 2009 QSS**

Owing to Local Authority boundary amendments, which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, the supplementary tables will be displayed slightly differently in the next QSS to reflect these changes.

Following the introduction of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission on 1st November 2008, the Commission are conducting a review of the Quarterly Summary of Statistics. This review commenced in June 2009 and the full consultation period finishes at the end of August. The consultation document can be found at [http://www.childmaintenance.org/pdf/CSAQSS\\_consultation\\_documentation.pdf](http://www.childmaintenance.org/pdf/CSAQSS_consultation_documentation.pdf)

A response to the review will be released in Autumn 2009 and changes based on the review may be included in the September 2009 QSS, due to be published on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Owing to an improvement in clerical integration methodology, the next QSS will include very small revisions to the children benefiting and maintenance outcomes from April 2008 onwards, where clerical performance is included.