



28 October 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.

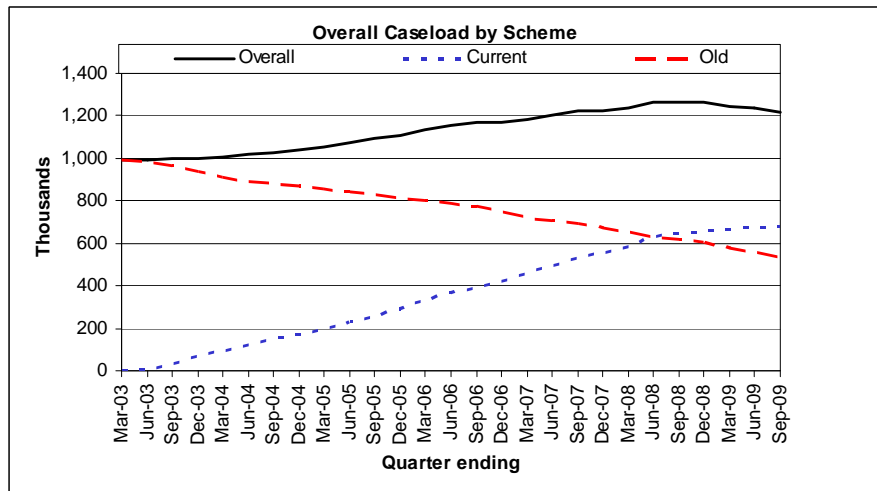
On 1 November 2008, the Commission took over responsibility for the Child Support Agency functions, staff and estate.

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.

The figures presented are inclusive of clerical case performance.

### Main Findings

- At the end of September 2009, the CSA live and assessed caseload stood at 1.22 million.



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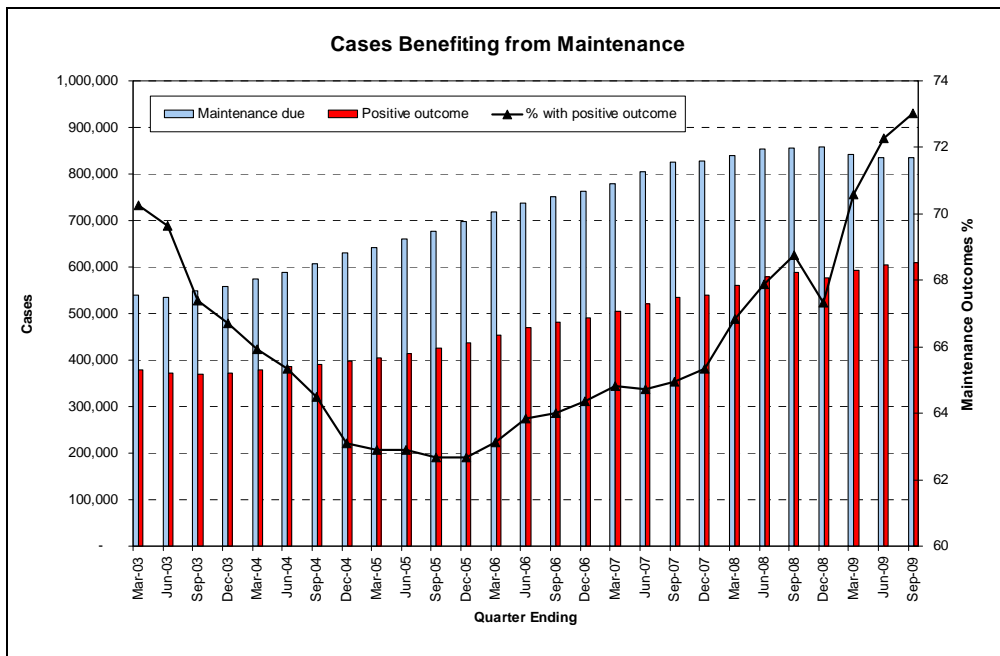
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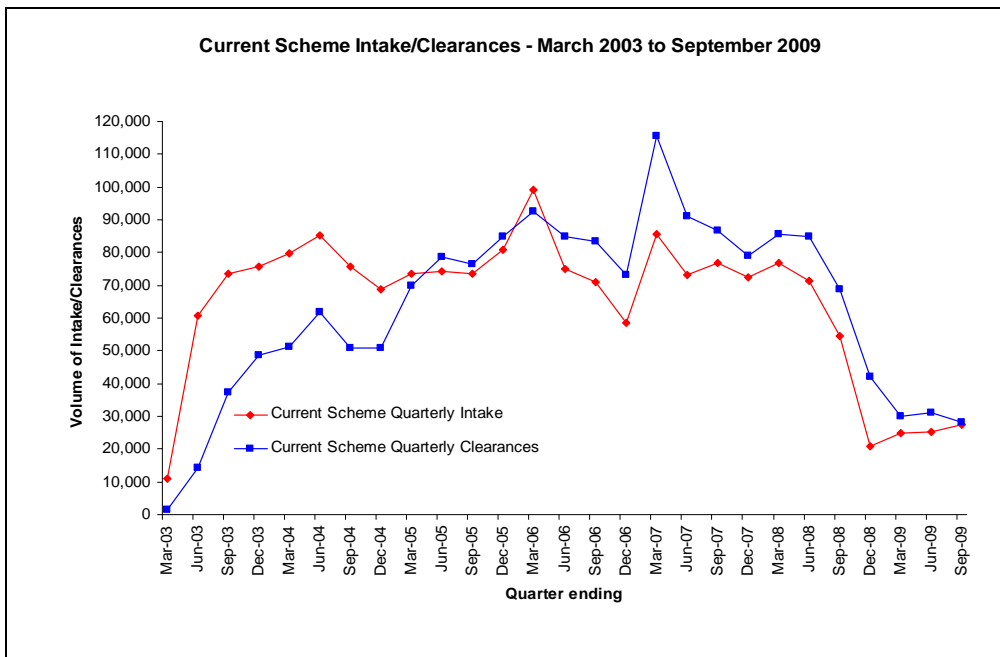
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- In the quarter ending September 2009, 73% of all cases in which maintenance was due had either received maintenance via the CSA collection service, or had a maintenance direct arrangement in place.
- In the three months to September 2009, maintenance had been collected or arranged by the CSA via the statutory maintenance service on behalf of 797,300 children.
- In the quarter to September 2009, the CSA collected or arranged £284m in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £36m was arrears. In the year to September 2009, the CSA collected or arranged £1,131m in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £152m was arrears.

**Next Publication:** 27 January 2010



- 84% of intake received in June 2009 was cleared within 12 weeks. This remains at the same level as 3 months earlier. 90% of intake received in April 2009 was cleared within 18 weeks. This is an increase from 88% 3 months earlier.
- The volume of uncleared current scheme applications has fallen by 1,500 since June 2009, and is currently at 39,300. This represents a fall of 4% since June 2009.



- Outstanding child maintenance arrears have decreased from £3,811m in June 2009 to £3,796m in September 2009<sup>1</sup>.
- At the end of September 2009, the average maintenance calculation was £21 per week (including zero calculations).
- The Agency answered 98.9% of the telephone calls they received in September 2009 within 60 seconds. This is up from 98.8% in June 2009.
- In September 2009, there were 8,700 staff employed by the Commission/Agency (measured on a full-time equivalent basis).

Latest statistical data available from <http://www.childmaintenance.org/en/publications/statistics.html>

<sup>1</sup> Outstanding Child maintenance arrears figures after March 2008 have not yet been audited and finalised.

## **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 in conjunction with DWP Information Directorate, 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 income based 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.

## **Changes in this QSS**

On 5<sup>th</sup> June, the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission launched an external consultation on proposals for revising the Quarterly Summary of Statistics (QSS) relating to the CSA, part of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission. The closing date for responses was 28<sup>th</sup> August 2009. The consultation document can be viewed at <http://www.childmaintenance.org/en/pdf/Consultationresponse.pdf>.

This quarter's QSS is in the revised format and takes account of consultation outcomes.

## **Forthcoming revisions**

These revisions will take effect from the next publication of the QSS, which will be released on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010. These represent relatively small changes to historical numbers to improve the coverage and accuracy of the tables concerned.

## **Live load**

Due to a change in business processes following a change in legislation in October 2008, it has been identified that methodology changes are required around the identification of cases which have been cancelled and withdrawn from the CS2 system and are therefore no longer classed as 'Live' cases, and the identification of cases which have been converted from old rules to new rules. Some cases are currently being included as 'Live' when they are actually cancelled and withdrawn. The methodology changes will alter this and lead to these cases being correctly classified. This impacts around 6,000 cases and affects all tables. These changes will be delivered in the December 2009 publication and will affect numbers for December 2009 and future publications. Due to the small nature of the change and the cost of implementing a back series revision, most historical data will not be revised. However, historical numbers for Intake, clearances and closures will be revised to a small degree.

## **Time to clear**

Time to clear applications currently includes applications that have been cleared while administered on the CS2 computer system and on the Agency's Clerical Case Database. From December 2009 this will also include applications that have been cleared by way of a manual payment being set up. This will make a small change (less than one percentage point) to the time to clear table/ chart across all quarters.

## **Annual Maintenance Outcomes/Children Benefiting**

The QSS consultation response document stated that the annual maintenance outcomes and children benefiting measures would exclude clerical case performance. This was because it was thought that the inclusion of clerical case performance was not technically possible. Since, then a viable methodology has been developed, but not in time for this publication. Hence, we have decided to delay the table and publish in the December 2009 publication. This will allow time to quality assure the methodology and figures.

## **New tables**

Following the publication of the consultation feedback, a request was made for a table showing a distribution of debt breakdown. We will publish this in the December 2009 publication.

## **Other changes**

Planned delivery of a new Legal Enforcement computer system is due at the end of November 2009. This may result in minor changes to the Legal Enforcement management information currently presented. Should such changes occur, they will be explained in detail in the next publication.