



29 April 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 Agency. 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 March 2009, the CSA caseload stood at 1.28 million.

DWP Department for Work and Pensions

Issued by:
Information Directorate
Department for Work and Pensions

Telephone:
Press Office: 0203 267 5144

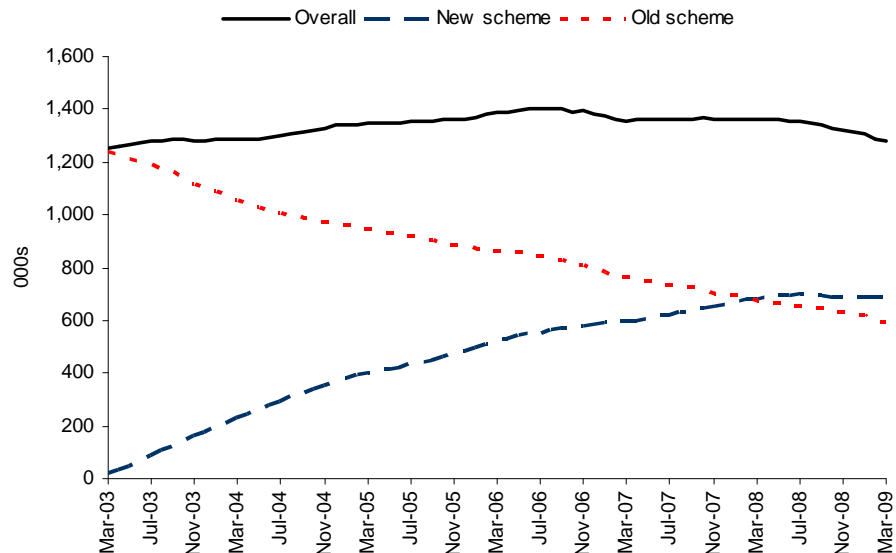
Website:
www.dwp.gov.uk

Statistician:
Lorna Morns-Stephenson
Information Directorate
Department for Work and Pensions
BP 5201
Benton Park View
Benton Park Road
Longbenton
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
NE98 1YX

Telephone: 0191 216 6101
Email: lorna.morns-stephenson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

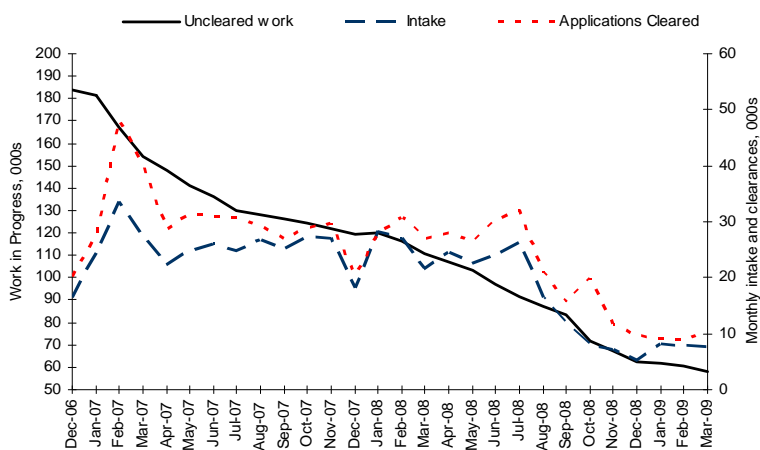
Next Publication: 29 July 2009

Overall caseload by scheme



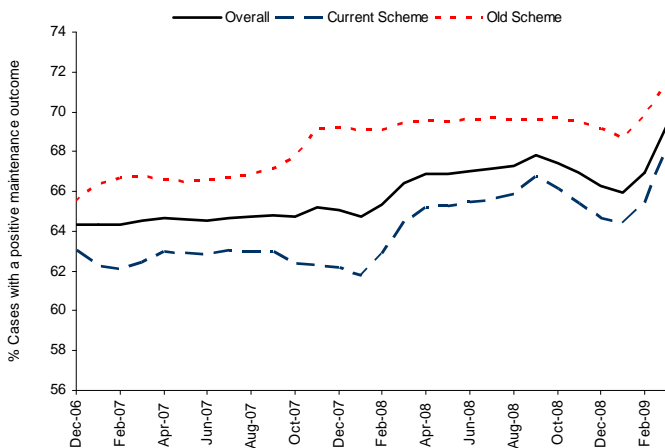
- At the end of March 2009, there were 64,900 uncleared applications across both schemes (not including clerical performance), a fall of 52% over the previous twelve months. The volume of uncleared current scheme applications has fallen by 57,700 since March 2008 and at 49,200 (including clerical cases) is at its lowest since May 2003. This represents a fall of 54% since March 2008.

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



- Excluding clerical case performance, 65% of applications received in December 2008 were cleared within 12 weeks, down from 77% a year earlier. 90% of applications received in September 2008 had been cleared within 6 months, up from 88% a year earlier. At end March 2009, 4% of all current scheme applications received had yet to be cleared. In March 2008, 8% of all current scheme applications were uncleared. '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.

Rolling Last Quarter positive Maintenance Outcomes for 'Live' and Assessed CS2 and CSCS Cases with a positive maintenance liability



- In the quarter ending March 2009, 71% 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 March 2009, maintenance had been collected or arranged by the Agency on behalf of 779,800 children.
- In the year to March 2009, the Agency collected or arranged £1,132M in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £158M was arrears.

- In the quarter ending March 2009, on average, where maintenance had been charged and then paid via the collection service, the Agency had collected 91% of the amount due.
- Of those current scheme applications where the Agency has made a calculation and set up a collection schedule on which payments were expected from the non-resident parent, 92% of cases have made at least one payment to the parent with care.
- 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 has slowed from £16 million to £10 million.
- At the end of March 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 March 2009, the Agency had answered 99% of telephone calls available to staff to answer. The average waiting time was 13 seconds. This is up from 98% answered with a waiting time of 20 seconds in the year ending March 2008.
- In March 2009, there were 9,200 staff employed by the CSA (measured on a full-time equivalent basis).

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

Table 29 (current scheme changes of circumstance) has been removed from this and future publications. Due to ongoing development following a change in computer system, accurate figures for change of circumstances are not currently available.

Table 12 of the QSS, measuring arrears collected as a percentage of arrears accrued has been suspended in the March 2009 QSS, pending a more robust measure being developed. Arrears accrued has previously been measured by calculating the difference between regular maintenance collected and regular maintenance requested each month. Arrears accruing should be measured by calculating the difference between regular maintenance collected and the maintenance liability of the non resident parent.

The summary table now includes clerical performance in the throughput and maintenance direct figures.

Last quarter an issue was identified regarding nil liability cases. Following an investigation it has been decided that no adjustment or changes to figures is required.

Changes in the June 2009 QSS

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.

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

Future Changes

Following the introduction of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission on 1st November 2008, we will be conducting a full review of the Quarterly Summary of Statistics. This will commence over the coming months with a consultation period.

From 27 October 2008, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claimants. As a result, tables 13.1 and 13.2 will be reviewed as part of the forthcoming review of the whole QSS.