

<b>Report to:</b>	QSMTM Q4 2023-24
<b>Report by:</b>	Liz Brown, Finance and Administration Manager (FAM)
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	30 April 2024
<b>Subject/ Title:</b>	Enquiries Service Statistics Report 2023-24 VC205839
<b>Attached Papers</b>	N/A

## Purpose of report

1. This Committee Report (CR) is required under the Key Document C1 Governance Reporting Arrangements and its purpose is to inform the Senior Management Team (SMT) of the Enquiries Service Statistics for 2023-24.

## Recommendation and actions

2. I recommend that:
  - (i) the SMT notes the CR
  - (ii) this SMT agree the publications arrangements set out in paragraph 20.

## Executive summary

3. The Commissioner has a power to give advice on the operation of freedom of information (FOI) and uses this power to provide an Enquiries Service to the public and public authorities. Anyone with a question about FOI can contact us for advice and this service is one of the main points of contact with us. Since the introduction of FOI in 2005, we have answered almost 28,000 enquiries.
4. This CR covers the following:
  - the numbers of enquiries received in 2023-24 with comparative figures for 2022-23 and 2021-22.
  - the outcome of enquiries in 2023-24, with comparative figures for 2022-23.
  - analyses the number of enquiries responded to in 2023-24, within the timescales set down in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Performance and Quality Framework 2023-24 and with comparative figures for 2022-23.

### Enquiries received

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2021-22	178	208	137	160	<b>683</b>
2022-23	163	185	236	224	<b>808</b>
2023-24	228	209	186	236	<b>859</b>

5. There was a 6% increase in the number of enquiries received in 2023-24, compared to 2022-23.

## Enquiries closed by outcome

	2022-23		2023-24 Q1/Q2	2023-24 Q3/Q4	2023-24 total	
	No	%	No	No	No	%
Making / responding to a request/request for review/appeal	284	35%	125	122	247	29%
DPA / FOIA / UK EIRs referrals to ICO	127	16%	112	113	225	26%
Referred to other SIC website content	42	5%	32	33	65	8%
Not an FOI issue	38	5%	35	29	64	7%
Submitting statistics	143	18%	36	8	44	5%
No response needed	40	5%	22	18	40	5%
Body under jurisdiction	27	3%	14	20	34	4%
Sent Word appeal form	5	1%	5	22	27	3%
Assessing or improving practice	15	2%	6	17	23	3%
Press: request for comment/statement/interview	12	1%	5	13	18	2%
Other assistance given	5	1%	11	3	14	2%
Missing code	23	3%	9	4	13	2%
Signposted to another body	17	2%	5	8	13	2%
Publication scheme - advice	6	1%	7	4	11	1%
FOISA / EI(S)Rs / INSPIRE	2	0%	4	2	6	1%
Other	7	1%	2	2	4	0%
Governance/finance/resources	9	1%	3	1	4	0%
Sent YRTK	4	0%	3	0	3	0%
Intervention specific case	0	0%	0	3	3	0%
Intervention general enquiry	0	0%	1	1	2	0%
SAR/RFI consultation	2	0%	0	0	0	0%
Publication scheme/Gtl	1	0%	0	0	0	0%
Request for training	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>100%</b>

6. 1 enquiry was open at the end of the 2022-23 reporting year but is now closed and included in the 2023-24 Q1/Q2 figures above.
7. There were no open enquiries as at 31 March 2024.

## Response times

8. This CR analyses the number of enquiries responded to within the timescales set down in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Key Document C7 Performance and Quality Framework 2023-24 which are:
- 90% to be responded to within 5 working days
  - 95% to be responded to within 20 working days.

	2022-23 (Q1-4) Total			2023-24 (Q1-4) Total		
	No	%	%	No	%	%
≤ 5 days	788	97.4%	97.4%	818	95.1%	95.1%
> 5 days / ≤ 20 days	20	2.5%	99.9%	39	4.5%	99.6%
> 20 days	1	0.1%		3	0.4%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>809</b>			<b>860</b>		

9. Both KPIs were met in 2023-24.

## **Risk impact**

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10. We have policies and procedures providing guidance on how to respond to enquiries to ensure that such requests are appropriately managed and responded to. These policies and procedures mitigate against the risk of not complying with our duties and responsibilities.
11. This CR contributes towards the control measures aimed at reducing the likelihood and impact of risk relating to information governance and data protection.
12. This CR also helps us to monitor and report on organisational outcomes and helps us to mitigate the risk of not performing our statutory functions and duties to a high standard.

## **Equalities impact**

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13. The Enquiries Service is one of the main points of contact for our organisation and we aim to ensure that no one is unlawfully discriminated against when using this service.

## **Privacy impact**

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14. There is no direct privacy impact arising from this report.

## **Resources impact**

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15. As this area of work falls with “business as usual”, the work required is undertaken within current resources.

## **Operational/strategic plan impact**

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16. The management of and reporting on the Enquiries Service are undertaken as “business as usual” in the Operational Plan 2023-24.

## **Records management impact (including any key documents actions)**

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17. None.

## **Consultation and Communication**

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18. QSMTM Q4 minute.
19. A report on the Enquiries Service is included in the Annual Report.

## **Publication**

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20. I recommend that this CR is published in full.