

Complaints about UK government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations 2014-15





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Foreword

Every day public services make decisions that affect thousands of people and their families, jobs and businesses. Most of the time, this is done well. But when it is not and people complain, it is important that things are put right and that lessons are learnt, so that the same mistakes are not made again, and the quality of service improves for all.

When public services fall short, people complain not only to get things put right but also out of a sense of duty to play their part in preventing the same thing happening to others. It is the responsibility of every board of every UK government department and agency to recognise the profound impact of service failure on people's lives and make sure they use the insight from complaints to improve services for all.

We are publishing this annual overview of our casework about UK government departments and other UK public organisations to provide the leaders of those organisations with food for thought. It provides an overview of our casework about UK government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations in 2014-15. It also gives details of the number of complaints we received, the outcomes of those complaints, and the main reasons that led people to complain to us.

In April 2014 the Public Administration Select Committee published a report *More complaints please!*, making a number of recommendations intended to shift attitudes to the value of complaints in improving public services. We welcome the work that the Cabinet Office and other departments are doing to improve people's experience of complaining, complaint handling and learning from complaints across government. We will continue to support this work and hope that this report will help public organisations learn and improve.

Dame Julie Mellor, DBE
Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

November 2015

Introduction

Our *Complaints about UK Government departments and agencies and some UK public organisations 2014-15 report* provides a summary of the key statistics we have collected about the enquiries we handled, and the investigations we undertook in 2014-15 that involved UK government departments, agencies and some UK public organisations.

Our statistics

Two years ago we lowered the threshold for investigating unresolved complaints. This means we now investigate many more cases, and comparisons between the number of investigations in different years need to be read in that context. There are also many different factors that influence the number of complaints that we receive about an organisation, such as the specific function of the organisation, the nature of the services it provides, and the extent to which it has direct interaction with the public. This report should therefore not be seen as trying to rank departments on the number of complaints they receive; its purpose is to help organisations consider how they handle complaints and deliver public services.

Just over 21% (885) of all our investigations last year were about UK government departments, their agencies and other UK public organisations, compared to 79% (3,274) about the NHS in England. While people can bring their complaints about the NHS to us directly, people who want to complain to us about UK government departments, agencies and other UK public organisations need to have their complaint referred to us by a Member of Parliament.

Complaints about UK government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations

Our casework in 2014-15

21%
of all
investigations

were about government departments and other UK public organisations.



We resolved 252 cases

without the need for a full investigation.

We upheld 33% of the complaints that we investigated.

We completed 885 investigations into 981 complaints.

Four government departments and their agencies accounted for 85% of the investigations that we completed in 2014-15:



the Ministry of Justice, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Home Office and HM Revenue & Customs.

Reasons for complaints about UK government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations

No proper apology, no acknowledgment of mistake or no action by the organisation that provided the service to put things right:
we upheld four out of ten complaints.

Organisation arriving at an unsound conclusion or using the wrong guidance:
we upheld more than one in ten complaints.



Poor communication:
we upheld more than one in seven complaints.

Delays in the delivery of the service:
we upheld a quarter of complaints.

Wrong response to complaint:
we upheld one out of five complaints.

Overview of complaints about UK government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations

Increase in investigations

In 2013 we changed the way we handle complaints and the criteria for referring complaints for investigation. We moved from investigating hundreds to thousands of complaints so that we could give more people a final decision.

Some of our investigations involve complaints about more than one organisation. Last year (2014-15), we completed 885 investigations into 981 complaints about government departments. This was more than twice as many as in 2013-14, when we completed 421 investigations into 460 complaints, and nine times as many as in 2012-13 when we completed 84 investigations into 105 complaints.

The number of investigations we completed in 2014-15 into both the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), increased more than tenfold compared to 2012-13.

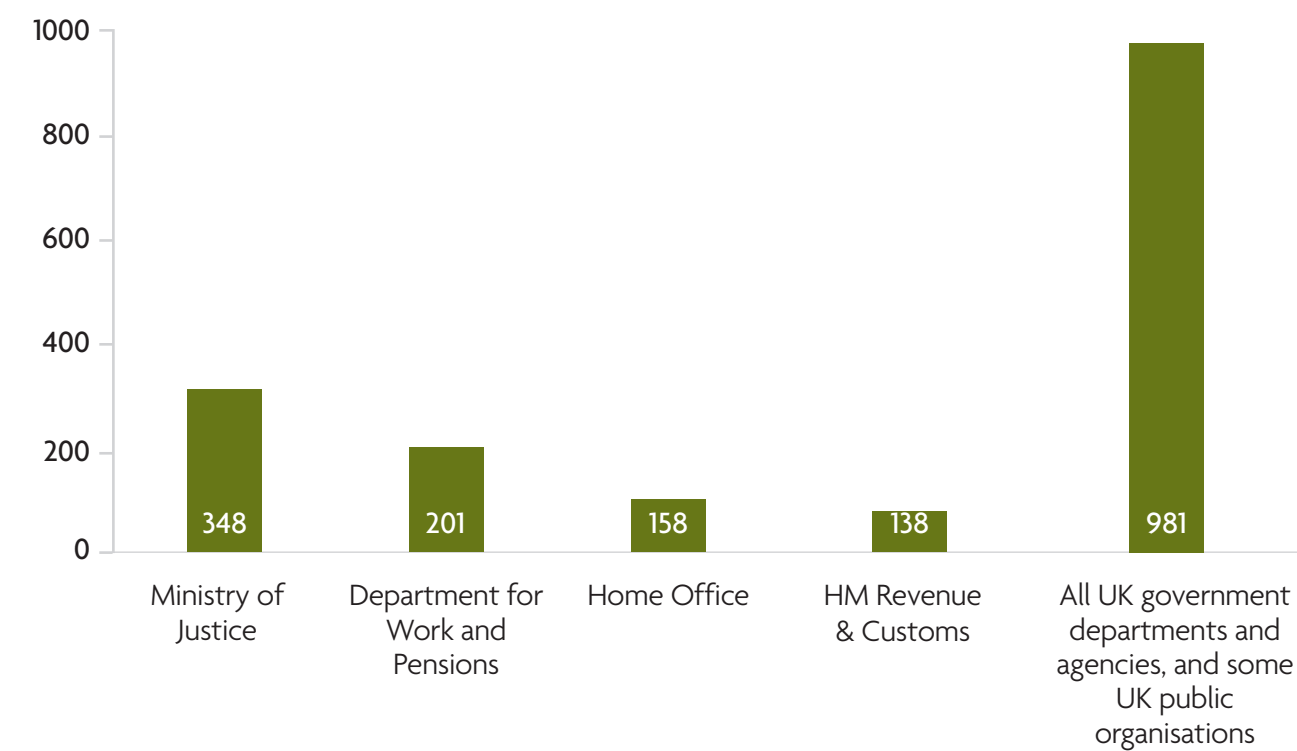
This increase is not in itself an indication of a problem. The data needs to be considered alongside the data on the outcomes of our investigations – see page 9, and also in the context of the responsibilities of different government departments and the nature of the services they provide.

Our investigation figures include complaints we investigated about the departments themselves, as well as about any agencies or other organisations for which they are responsible. This includes independent, second tier complaint handlers such as the Adjudicator’s Office or the Independent Case Examiner which look at complaints about HMRC and DWP as a second stage before the complaints are escalated to us.

Four government departments and their agencies accounted for 85% of the investigations that we completed in 2014-15: the Ministry of Justice, DWP, the Home Office and HMRC. The Ministry of Justice alone accounted for over a third of the investigations we completed. DWP, the Home Office and HMRC have in common that they deliver public services on a large scale directly to people through the benefit, immigration and tax systems. The Ministry of Justice delivers public services indirectly to a significant number of people through agencies that deal directly with the public such as HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass).



Number of completed investigations



Department	Number of completed investigations in 2012-13	Number of completed investigations in 2013-14	Number of completed investigations in 2014-15	Rate of increase, 2012-13 to 2014-15
Ministry of Justice	38	116	348	9.2
Department for Work and Pensions	16	83	201	12.6
Home Office	20	60	158	7.9
HM Revenue & Customs	11	55	138	12.5



Outcomes of our investigations in 2014-15

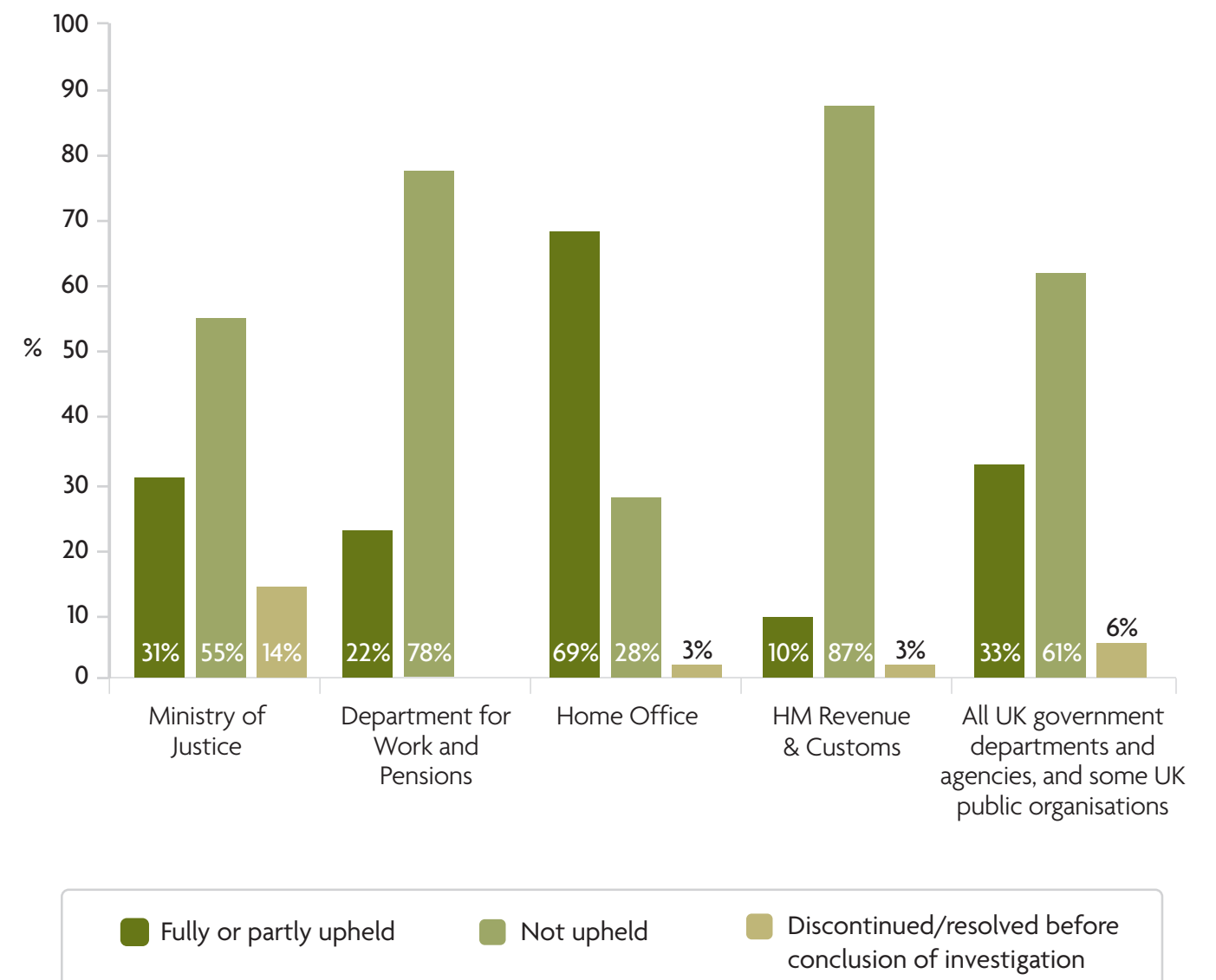
Overall, we upheld 33% of the complaints that we investigated about government departments, their agencies and other public organisations in 2014-15. There are significant variations in the proportion of investigations that we upheld about different departments.

We upheld only one in ten (10%) complaints about HMRC and one in five (22%) complaints about DWP, but upheld seven in ten (69%) complaints about the Home Office. The large proportion of complaints that we upheld about the Home Office can partly be explained by the high volume of old legacy immigration cases they are dealing with.

These are old cases that the newly established immigration directorates of the Home Office inherited from the UK Border Agency when the Agency was abolished in April 2013. In contrast, the low levels of complaints upheld against DWP and HMRC can to some extent be explained by the fact that both departments have an independent second tier through which complaints pass before coming to us – the Independent Case Examiner for DWP and the Adjudicator's Office for HMRC. We find that a lot of the issues raised in complaints are resolved at this stage.

We also know from our casework that the low uphold rate for HMRC could be evidence that it handled complaints well and put things right where necessary, or that it provided a good service in the first place.

Outcome of investigations, 2014-15





Reasons for complaints

When we undertake an investigation, we record the reasons that led to the initial complaint. We also look at the reasons for the complaints that we uphold. By doing this, we can get a useful insight into the elements of service that are failing members of the public. It also allows the departments or organisations in question to learn from their mistakes.

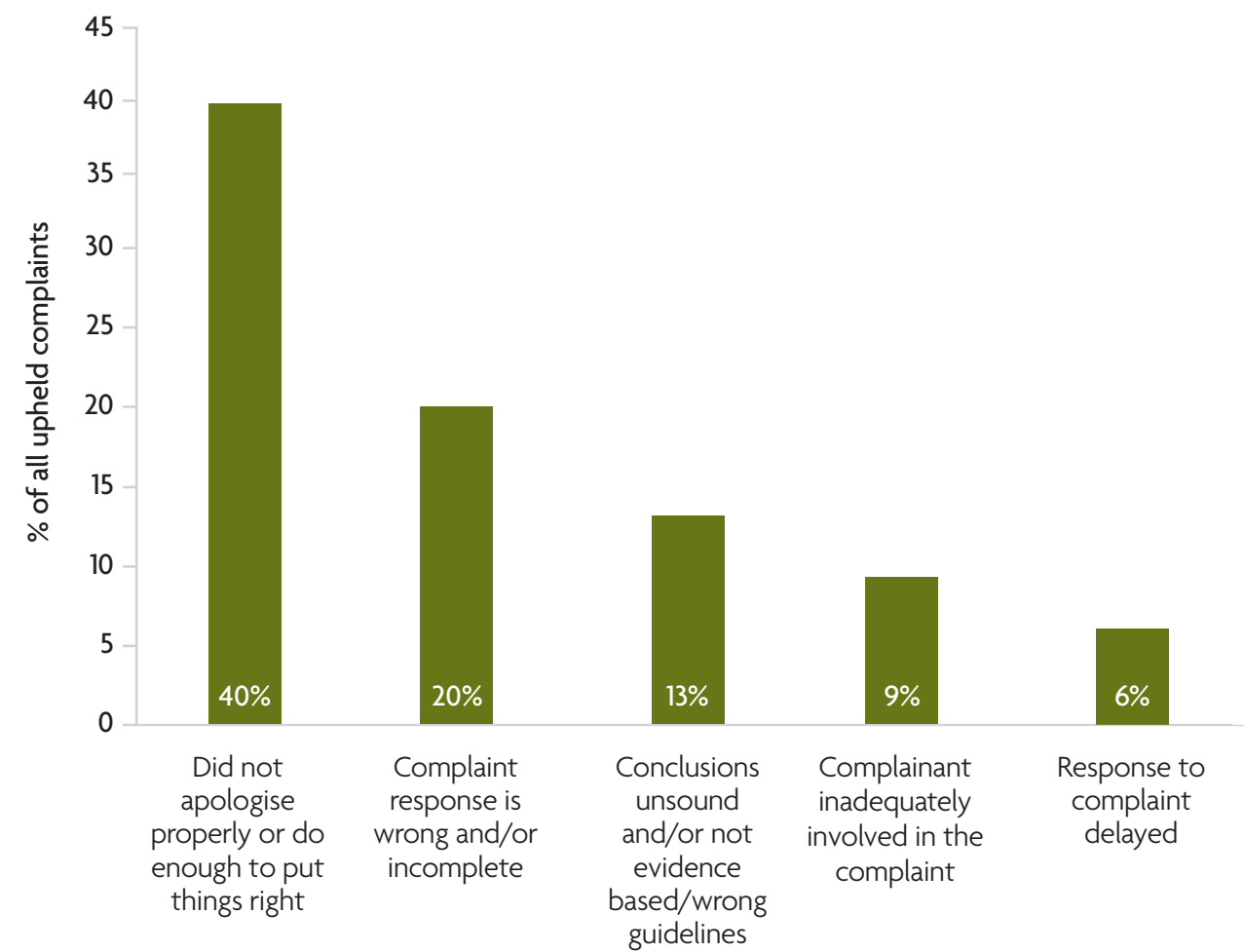
We record both people’s concerns about the way the public service was delivered, and their concerns about the way their complaint was handled. While it is difficult to accurately monitor trends in why people complain, because one complaint may be about multiple issues, the data does provide a good indication of the main reasons why people are dissatisfied with the way organisations deliver services or deal with complaints locally.

Most common concerns about complaint handling

Our casework shows clearly that there is more that local organisations can do to deliver good complaint handling. Most people escalate complaints to us because they don’t feel that the organisation that provided the service did enough to put things right, such as giving a proper apology, acknowledging mistakes or providing sufficient financial remedy. Four out of ten complaints that we upheld in 2014-15 were brought to us for these reasons.

Another reason why people complain to us is that they feel that the organisation in question made a mistake in their response to the complaint, or failed to provide a complete response. One out of five complaints (20%) that we upheld was escalated to us for these reasons in 2014-15. In a further 13% of upheld complaints, people felt that the organisation had come to an unsound conclusion in their decision, or had applied the wrong guidance. Not involving the complainant sufficiently in the complaints process, for example by updating them on progress or seeking their input, was given as the main reason for the complaint in 9% of all our upheld complaints. In 6% of our upheld complaints, people gave a delayed response to their complaint as the main reason for complaining.

Top five most common concerns about handling complaints raised in the complaints we upheld about government departments, agencies and some public organisations, 2014-15



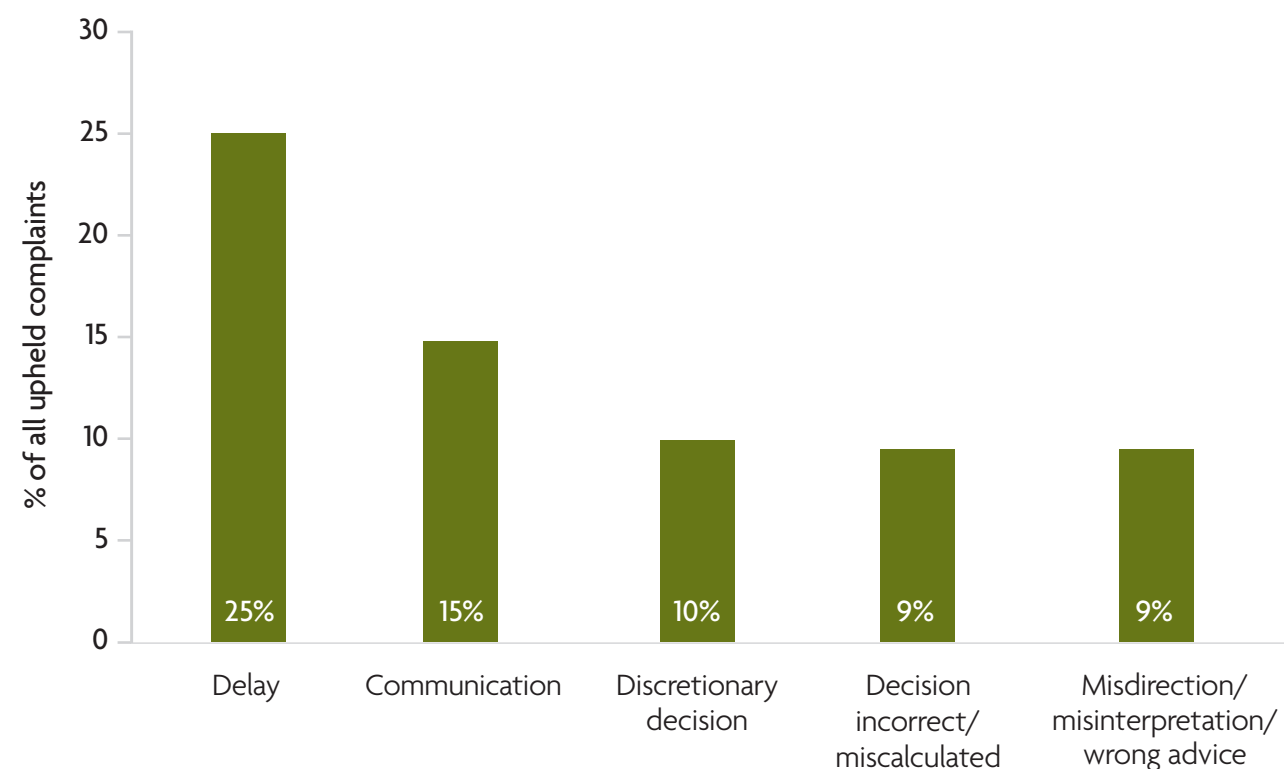


Most common concerns about service

Our casework shows which particular aspects of public services give rise to complaints. In 2014-15 the main reason why people complained to us about a public service was delay in delivering the service in question. This accounted for a quarter (25%) of all complaints that we upheld in 2014-15. Another important reason for complaints was poor

communication, which was the main factor in 15% of the complaints we upheld. One in ten of the complaints we upheld related to concerns about the way an organisation made decisions where it had room for discretion, 9% to concerns about an organisation making mistakes in decisions which were not discretionary, and another 9% related to the organisation misdirecting or giving wrong advice to the complainant.

Top five most common concerns about service raised in the complaints we upheld about government departments, agencies and some public organisations, 2014-15



Insight into selected government departments

Complaints about the Ministry of Justice, DWP, the Home Office and HMRC make up over 85% of the investigations we undertook into government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations in 2014-15. In total, we conducted 845 investigations into these four departments and their agencies. The following sets out some of the insight we gained from dealing with complaints about these government departments.

Ministry of Justice

Number of investigations tripled from 116 in 2013-14 to 348 in 2014-15 because the Ministry of Justice took over responsibility for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)

We upheld 31% of investigations

Delays, communication, professional judgement and inaccurate reports are key issues in complaints.

We investigated 348 complaints about the Ministry of Justice in 2014-15. This is equivalent to more than a third of all the complaints about government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations we investigated in 2014-15, and continues the trend of previous years. This is also triple the number of investigations we completed in 2013-14 (116).

The reason for the large increase in the number of investigations into the Ministry of Justice and its agencies is that in April 2014 it took over responsibility for Cafcass from the Department for Education. We conducted a total of 121 investigations into Cafcass in 2014-15 - more than a third of all our investigations in relation to the Ministry of Justice that year. Correspondingly, the number of complaints that we investigated into the Department for Education dropped from 39 in 2013-14, when Cafcass was still part of its remit, to just five in 2014-15.



We fully or partly upheld 107 of the 348 complaints we investigated about the Ministry of Justice and its agencies in 2014-15, an overall uphold rate of 31% - close to the average uphold rate of 33% for all government departments and agencies, and some UK public organisations. In more than half of investigations (55%) we did not uphold the complaint: in 42% of complaints we investigated we found no maladministration or service failure, while in 13% of complaints we investigated we found that there had been failings but that these had already been accepted by the organisation concerned and remedied. In 12% of all complaints we investigated into the Ministry of Justice we were able to resolve the complaint without having to complete an investigation, or we discontinued the investigation, for example, because the complainant asked us to do so.

There are significant variations in the uphold rates of individual organisations within the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. We upheld just over half (51%) of all complaints we investigated about Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) in 2014-15, compared to 31% of complaints about Cafcass, and just 13% of our investigations into the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Most of the investigations into the ICO were about the actions the ICO undertakes when it receives complaints about breaches of the Data Protection Act 1998. The ICO's primary role in this area is that of a regulator, not of a complaint handler. In most cases we did not uphold complaints about the ICO because we found that the ICO had carried out its role reasonably and that people were seeking results that could only be achieved in other places, such as the courts.

Delays and communications issues were the largest factors cited in complaints we upheld about the Ministry of Justice in 2014-15. Delays were given as a factor in almost a quarter of the complaints we upheld (22%), and one out of five (20%) complaints we upheld included communication issues.

We noticed that delays were a theme in the complaints we investigated about HMCTS last year. We saw a number of cases about delays in processing documents that had been passed to the court, or delays as a result of documents being lost. These issues led to complaints about documents not being passed to judges in good time and so creating a delay in hearings. We also saw a number of complaints about wrong and/or confusing advice being given at the court, and we also have some concerns about HMCTS's complaint handling. While complaint handling by the central team at HMCTS was good, complaint handling at local level appeared to be less effective, and that resulted in the central team of HMCTS having to sort out issues that should have been dealt with locally.

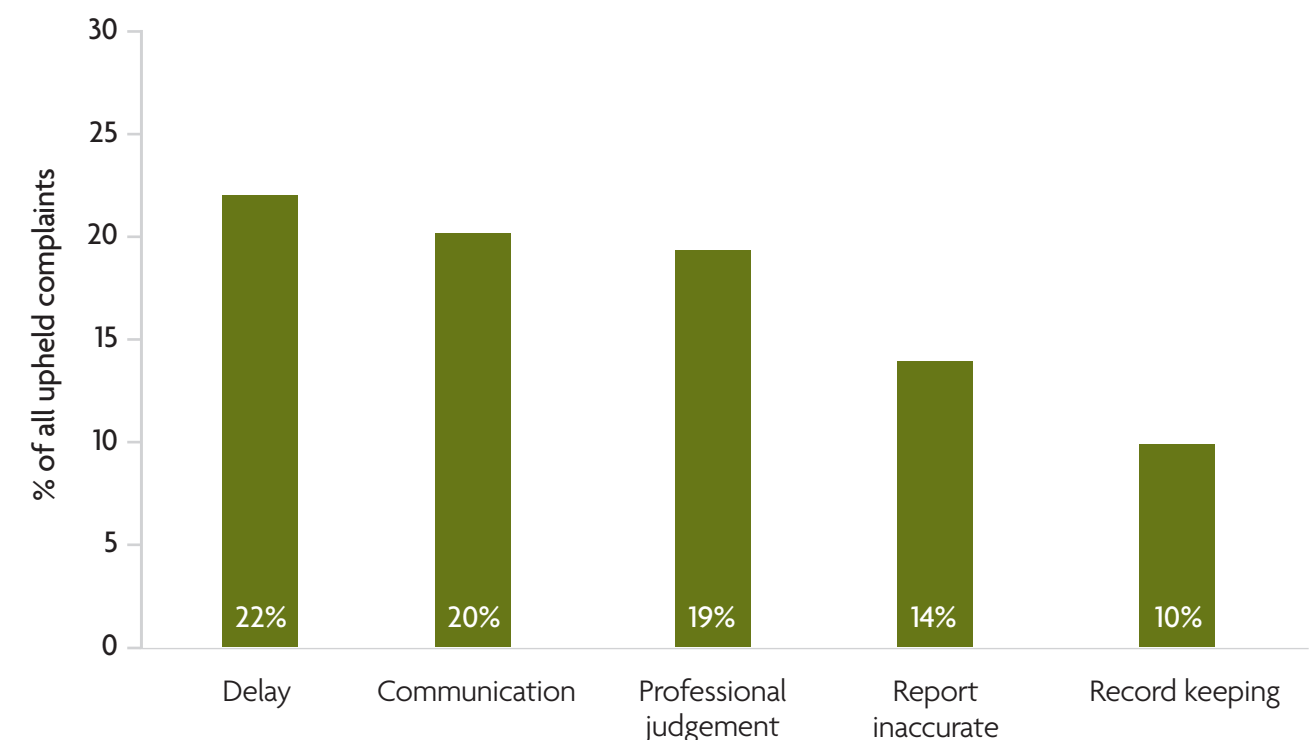
The main issues we saw in our casework in relation to the Legal Aid Agency (the Agency) were delays and poor complaint handling. Our casework suggests that at times, the Agency seemed to be struggling to respond to our requests because of being overstretched.

Aspects of professional judgement (almost one out of five upheld complaints - 19%) and inaccurate reports (14% of upheld complaints) were other important factors in complaints about the Ministry of Justice.

Complaints about inaccurate reports were particularly an issue in the complaints we investigated about Cafcass, specifically where parents complained about court reports. We found that in most of these complaints these were matters to be raised appropriately in court rather than with us, but we did uphold a number of investigations where reports to the courts had contained wrong or inappropriate information.

In these cases we recommended that Cafcass write to the court to resolve the issues in the form of a letter to be kept in the court file. There were also a number of complaints about Cafcass where delay was an issue both in writing reports, submitting reports and in responding to complaints. We also saw complaints about reports having been sent in error to third parties.

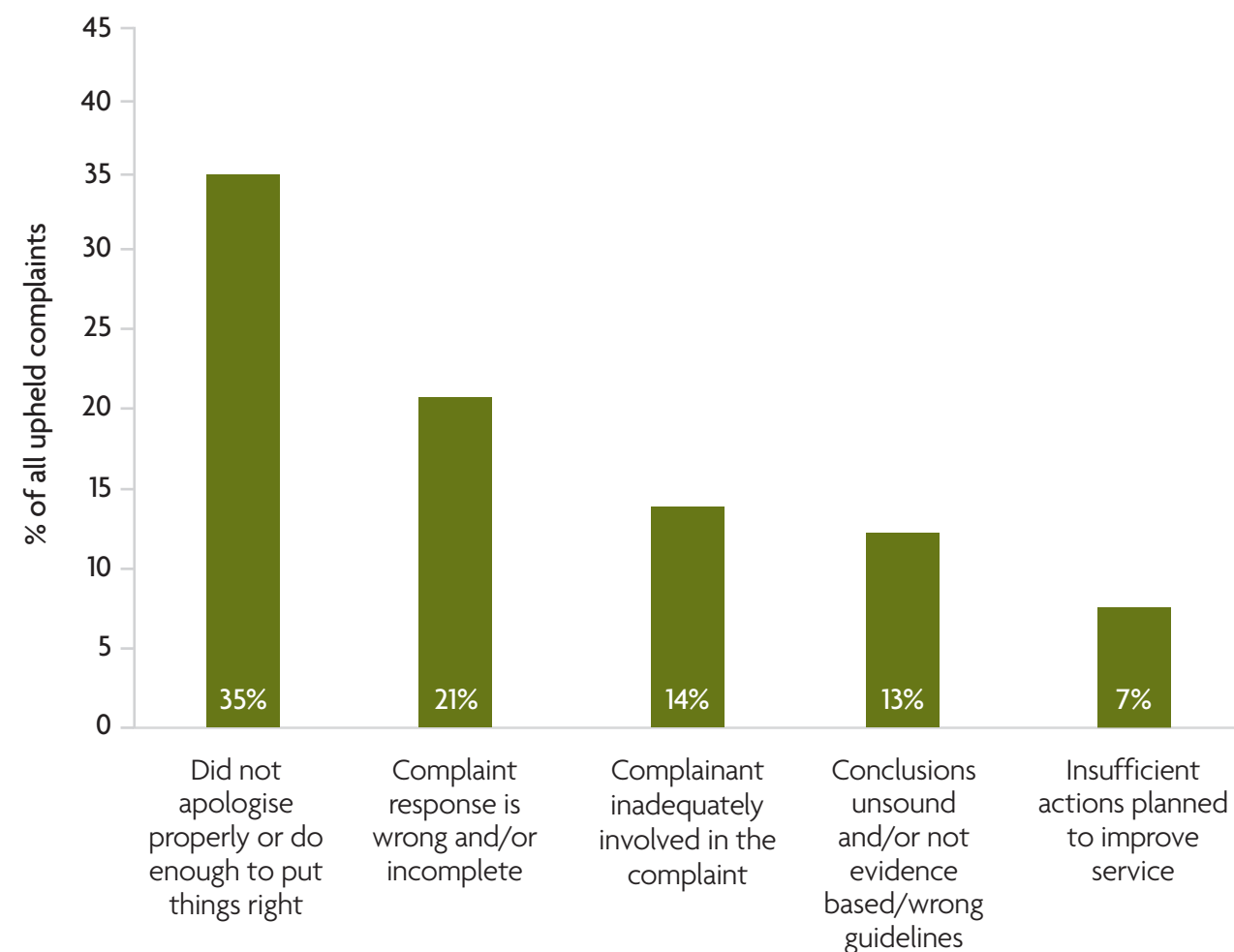
Top five most common concerns about service raised in the complaints we upheld about the Ministry of Justice, 2014-15



Not apologising properly or not doing enough to put things right was the key reason for complaining in 35% of our upheld complaints into the Ministry of Justice and its agencies.

Other important reasons for complaints were organisations giving a wrong or incomplete response to a complaint (21%), not involving the complainant sufficiently in the complaint (14%), and organisations providing an unsound decision on a complaint or applying the wrong guidelines (13%).

Top five most common concerns about handling complaints raised in the complaints we upheld about the Ministry of Justice, 2014-15



Case Study: Errors when HM Courts & Tribunals Service handled a claim

What happened

Mr P made a county court claim against two private organisations. The first defendant filed a defence within the deadline but the second defendant did not. Mr P requested a default judgment against the second defendant, but HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) did not deal with this immediately and the second defendant filed a defence in the meantime. Mr P's request for a default judgment was not granted.

Mr P contacted HMCTS to point out that it had failed to handle his correspondence when it was first received by the court before the defence. HMCTS initially did not realise that it had made a mistake but after further correspondence, it apologised and told Mr P he could make an application to strike out the defence free of charge. It said that this would be handed to a senior officer to deal with as a priority.

In the meantime, Mr P was asked to pay a hearing fee for his claim. He did not pay because he did not know what was happening to his application to strike out the defence. His claim was struck out.

It later came to light that the application to strike out the claim was lost in a file of paperwork on a senior officer's desk. HMCTS apologised for this and told Mr P he could apply to reinstate his claim free of charge. It offered him £75 compensation for distress and inconvenience.

What we found

We found that HMCTS had made a number of mistakes in handling Mr P's claim. Although we could see that it had tried to put the matter right, the attempts had been unsuccessful.

Putting it right

On our recommendation HMCTS raised its offer of compensation to £200. This was to reflect the fact that Mr P had been inconvenienced and would have to go to some trouble to reinstate his claim. We also took into account the fact that Mr P had been recovering from a stress-related illness while this was happening.



Department for Work and Pensions

201 investigations in 2014-15

We upheld 22%

Many complaints resolved by the Independent Case Examiner before they come to us

The way that DWP interacts with customers and insufficient personal remedy are the key issues in complaints about DWP

DWP continue to demonstrate leadership on learning from complaints.

We investigated 201 complaints about Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in 2014-15, of which we fully or partly upheld 45 - a relatively low uphold rate of 22%. We did not uphold 78% of our investigations into DWP: in 73% of complaints we investigated we found no maladministration or service failure, while in a further 5% of complaints we investigated, we found that there had been failings, but that these had already been accepted by DWP and been put right.

The relatively low uphold rate for investigations into DWP can partly be explained by the existence of an independent, second tier complaint handling stage. Complaints about DWP go to the Independent Case Examiner (ICE) before coming to us, and our casework suggests that many

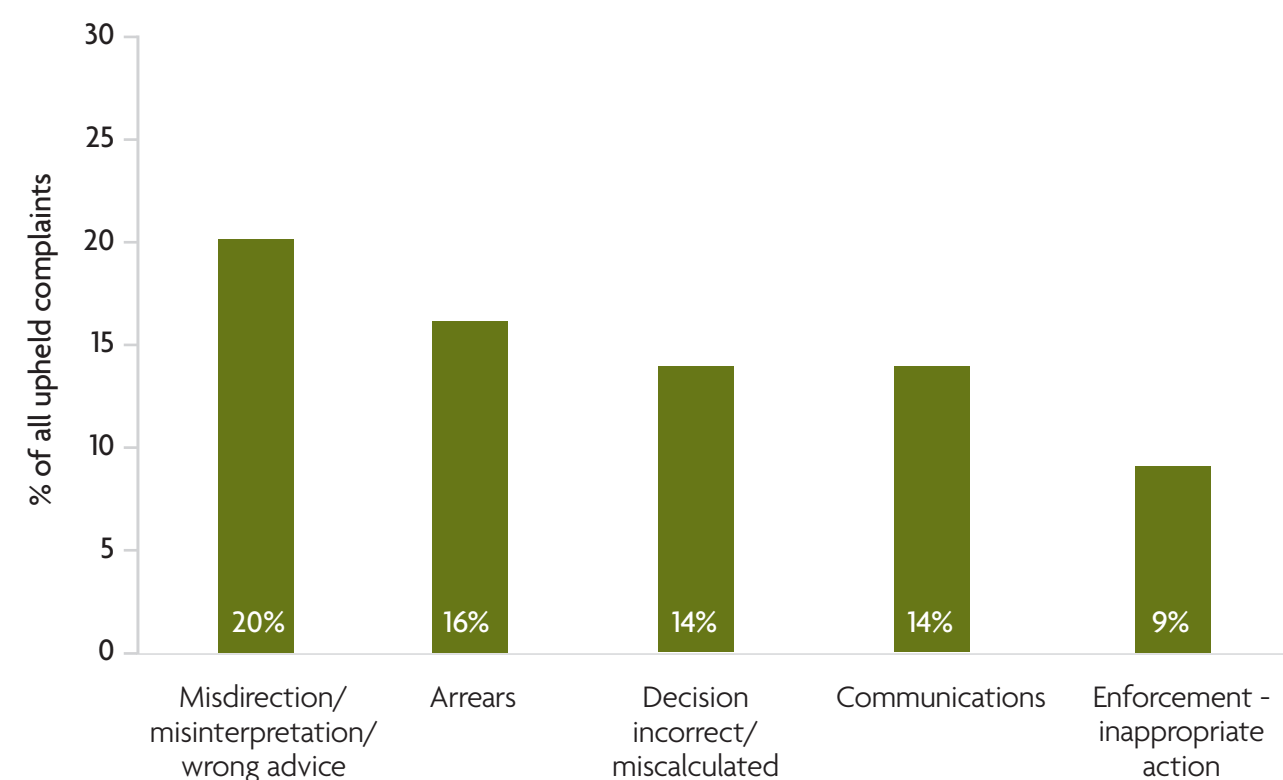
issues that are raised in complaints about DWP are resolved at this stage, so that we only find unresolved issues in a small proportion of more complex or enduring complaints.

Our casework shows that where we do uphold complaints, the way DWP and ICE interact with their customers is a significant factor. The most commonly cited reasons in 2014-15 were misdirection, or providing wrong or conflicting advice or confusing information. This featured in one out of five (20%) of the complaints we upheld. Communication with the customer was an issue in 14% of the complaints we upheld.

The second most commonly cited factor in 2014-15 was arrears which, featured as the main reason for the complaint in 16% of the complaints we upheld about DWP and/or ICE. These included, for example, complaints about errors by DWP leading to arrears; complaints about decisions by DWP not to waive arrears; or complaints about DWP seeking payment of arrears in an unreasonable timescale.

Incorrect decisions and miscalculations were the main reasons for complaining in 14% of the complaints we upheld, with 9% of upheld complaints being about inappropriate enforcement action. Importantly, complaints about staff attitude declined significantly in 2014-15. From being the second most commonly cited factor in upheld complaints in 2013-14, we did not uphold any cases featuring staff attitude in 2014-15.

Top five most common concerns about service raised in the complaints we upheld about DWP, 2014-15



Not providing a sufficient personal remedy or apology was the key reason for complaining in more than half (55%) of our upheld investigations into DWP and ICE. We noticed that at times DWP and ICE failed to identify when things had gone wrong and thus missed opportunities to put matters right earlier. Other important drivers of complaints were DWP, and/or ICE providing an unsound decision on a complaint, or applying the

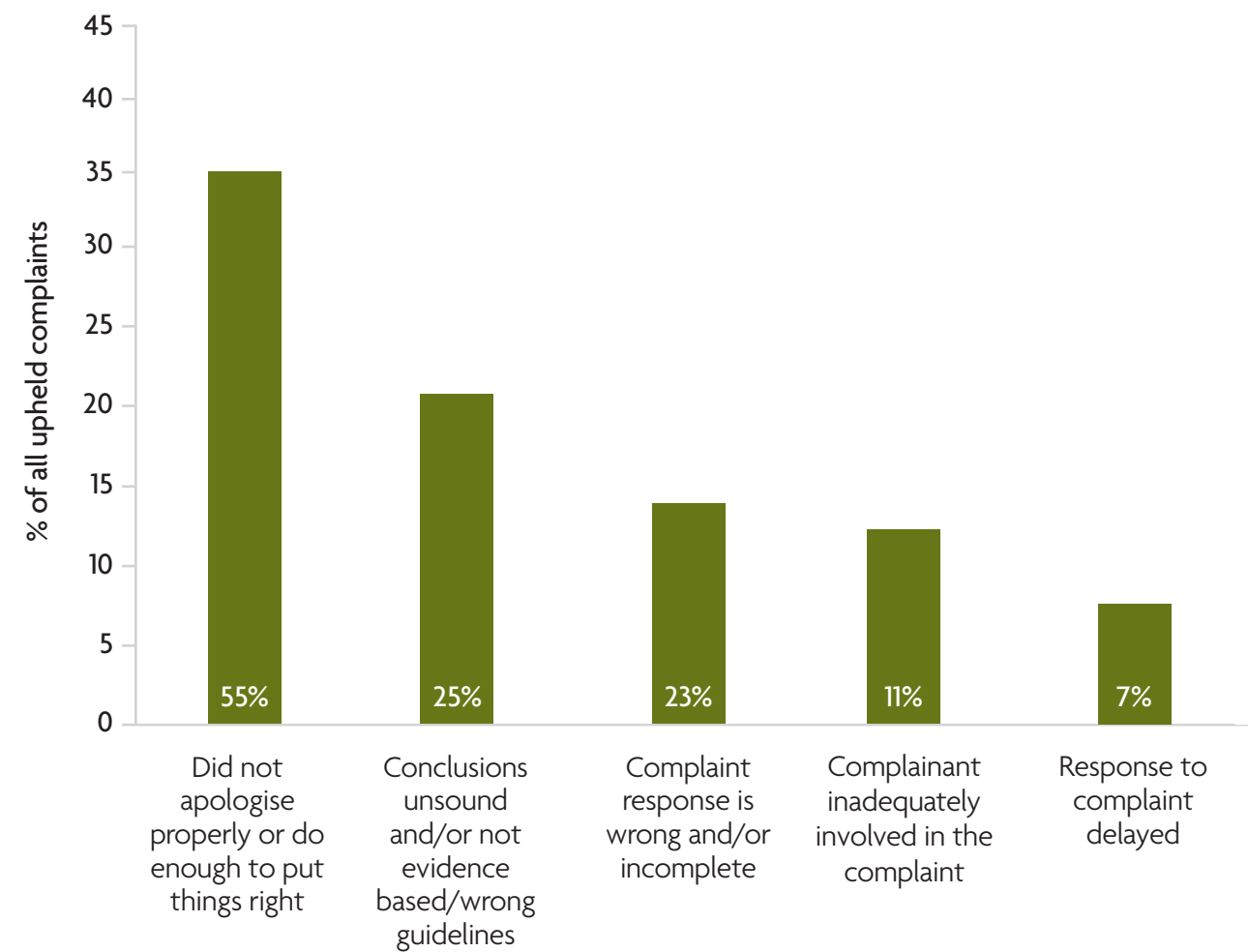
wrong guidelines (15%); DWP and/or ICE giving a wrong or incomplete response to a complainant (23%); and not involving the complainant sufficiently in the complaint (11%). In a number of cases we also found that ICE, either did not take all relevant information into account and obtain enough information to make a robust decision, or did not fully recognise and address the impact of the maladministration they had identified.

A delayed response to their complaint was the main reason for people making a complaint in 7% of our upheld investigations.

We have a good working relationship with DWP and ICE and they have shown a clear desire to learn from the failings we identify through our work.

We welcome the continued leadership that the Department have shown with their role in chairing and managing the Cross Government Complaints Forum.

Top five most common concerns about handling complaints raised in the complaints we upheld about DWP, 2014-15



Case Study: Break in benefit claim due to Jobcentre Plus’ failings

What happened

Jobcentre Plus gave Ms K wrong information about claiming benefits when she was ill while claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance. As a result, there was a break in her benefit record. This meant that when she started work, she was unable to claim financial support for the transition from receiving benefits to working, in the form of a job grant and in work credit.

Ms K complained to Jobcentre Plus and then to the Independent Case Examiner (ICE) that Jobcentre Plus had given her incorrect advice. She sought a payment to cover the job grant and in work credit that she lost out on because of the break in her benefit record. Jobcentre Plus and ICE did not uphold her complaint.

What we found

We found that Jobcentre Plus had failed to adhere to its data retention policy and to advise Ms K correctly; that these failings were responsible for the break in Ms K’s benefit record that meant she could not claim Employment and Support Allowance. Ms K lost out on over £3,000. This was a significant loss to her that had put her under financial strain. Moreover, in addition to these errors, Jobcentre Plus gave Ms K a poor explanation about a £100 consolatory payment, and ICE made things worse by not considering evidence properly, when looking at Ms K’s complaint.

These failings added to Ms K’s time, costs, confusion and frustration in seeking a resolution to her complaint and the in work benefits that she expected but which, at the time of our investigation, some years later, she had yet to receive.

Putting it right

Jobcentre Plus paid Ms K over £3,000 in compensation plus interest for the benefits that she lost out on. It apologised to Ms K for the failings we identified and their impact. It also paid Ms K a total of £500 for its poor complaint handling and for the financial strain Ms K felt when she did not receive the benefits she was entitled to. Importantly, Jobcentre Plus used this case to remind employees about the importance of keeping evidence for complaints, and how to identify what counts as evidence. ICE paid Ms K £150 for compounding Jobcentre Plus’ poor complaint handling by failing to consider properly the evidence in this case. ICE also apologised to Ms K for the failings we identified in its investigation and for their impact on Ms K.

Home Office

158 investigations in 2014-15

High uphold rate of 69% due to large numbers of old immigration complaints

Delays, poor decision making and not doing enough to address the injustice caused to individuals and their families are the key issues in complaints about the Home Office.

We investigated 158 complaints about the Home Office in 2014-15, of which 109 were fully or partly upheld - a high uphold rate of 69%. We did not uphold 29% of our investigations: in 23% of complaints we investigated we found no maladministration or service failure, while in a further 6% of complaints we investigated we found that there had been failings, but that these had already been accepted by the Home Office and been put right. In 3% of complaints we investigated we were able to resolve the complaint without having to complete the investigation, or we discontinued our investigation, for example, because the complainant asked us to do so.

It is noticeable that there has been no major change in the high uphold rate for the Home Office, despite an almost eight fold increase in investigations since 2012-13 due to the lowering of our threshold for investigating unresolved complaints.

Elsewhere in our casework, the large increase in investigations has led to a significant drop in the uphold rate from 84% in 2012-13 to 37% in 2014-15.

The persistently high uphold rate for the Home Office can partly be explained by the high volume of old legacy immigration cases the Home Office have been dealing with. These are old cases that the newly established immigration directorates of the Home Office inherited from the UK Border Agency when the Agency was abolished in April 2013. These cases were the single biggest issue in our casework about the Home Office last year, making up 21% of all our Home Office investigations, and we upheld all of them.

The high uphold rate for complaints about the Home Office was similar across all of its immigration directorates. In fact, the Border Force uphold rate increased from 25% to 63% between 2013-14 and 2014-15, although the 25% rate in 2013-14 was based on a small number of investigations. Our casework suggests that there have been weaknesses in the way the Home Office handled immigration related complaints and engaged with the consequences of administrative errors over the last couple of years, leading to a 'spike' in cases coming to us, and to an increased chance of us upholding these cases.

The most common reason for upholding complaints about the Home Office in 2014-15 was delay: almost half (48%) of all of the complaints we upheld included delays as a factor. This marks a significant increase from 31% in 2013-14 and again, may be the result of the high volumes of old legacy immigration cases that the Home Office dealt with last year and that were escalated to us.

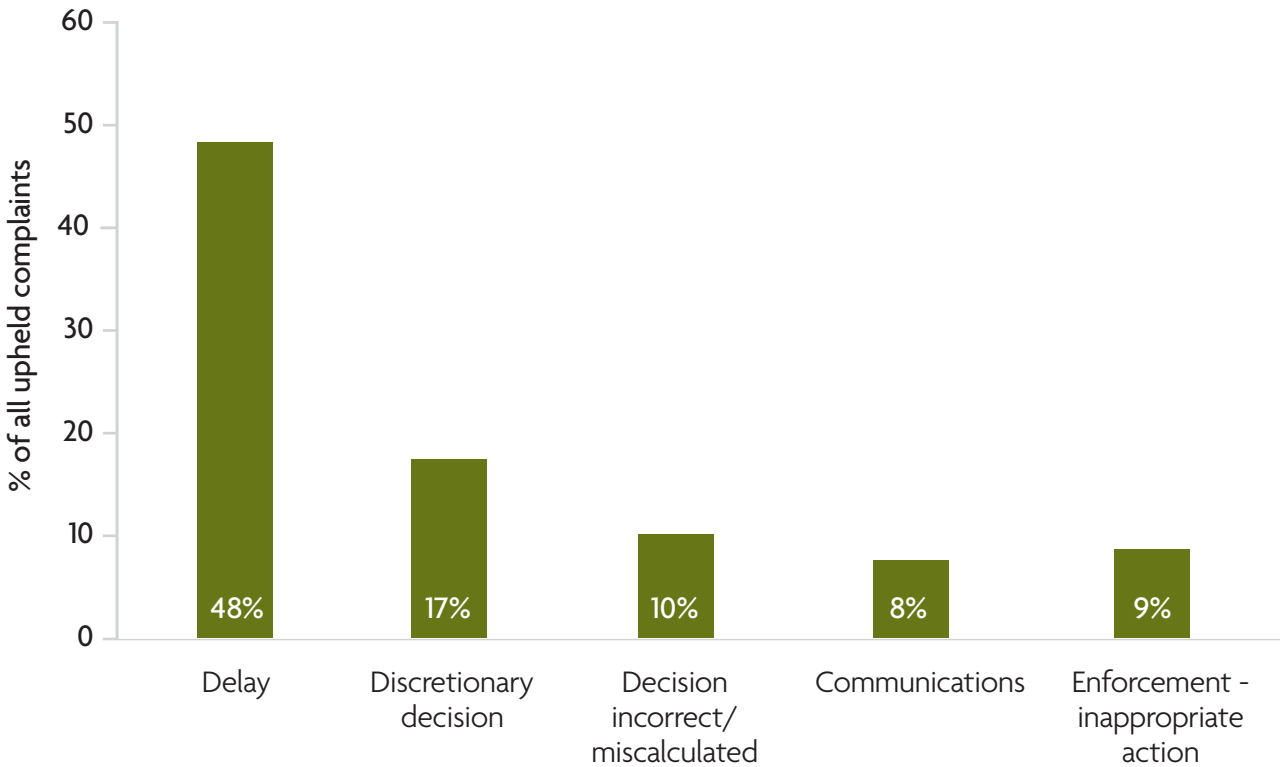


The second most cited factor in complaints we upheld were concerns about the way the Home Office made decisions where it had room for discretion. This featured in 17% of upheld complaints in 2014-15. In one in ten investigations we upheld, there were concerns about Home Office mistakes in decision-making which was not discretionary.

In relation to the way the Home Office handles complaints, the main reason why people complained was that they didn't feel that the

Home Office had done enough to put things right or apologise properly. This was the main factor in 39% of the investigations we upheld. Other important reasons for complaints were that the Home Office gave the complainant a wrong or incomplete response (13%), or made an unsound decision on a complaint, or applied the wrong guidelines (7%). Other reasons people complained were delayed responses to complainants (5%), and not involving complainants enough in the complaints process (4%).

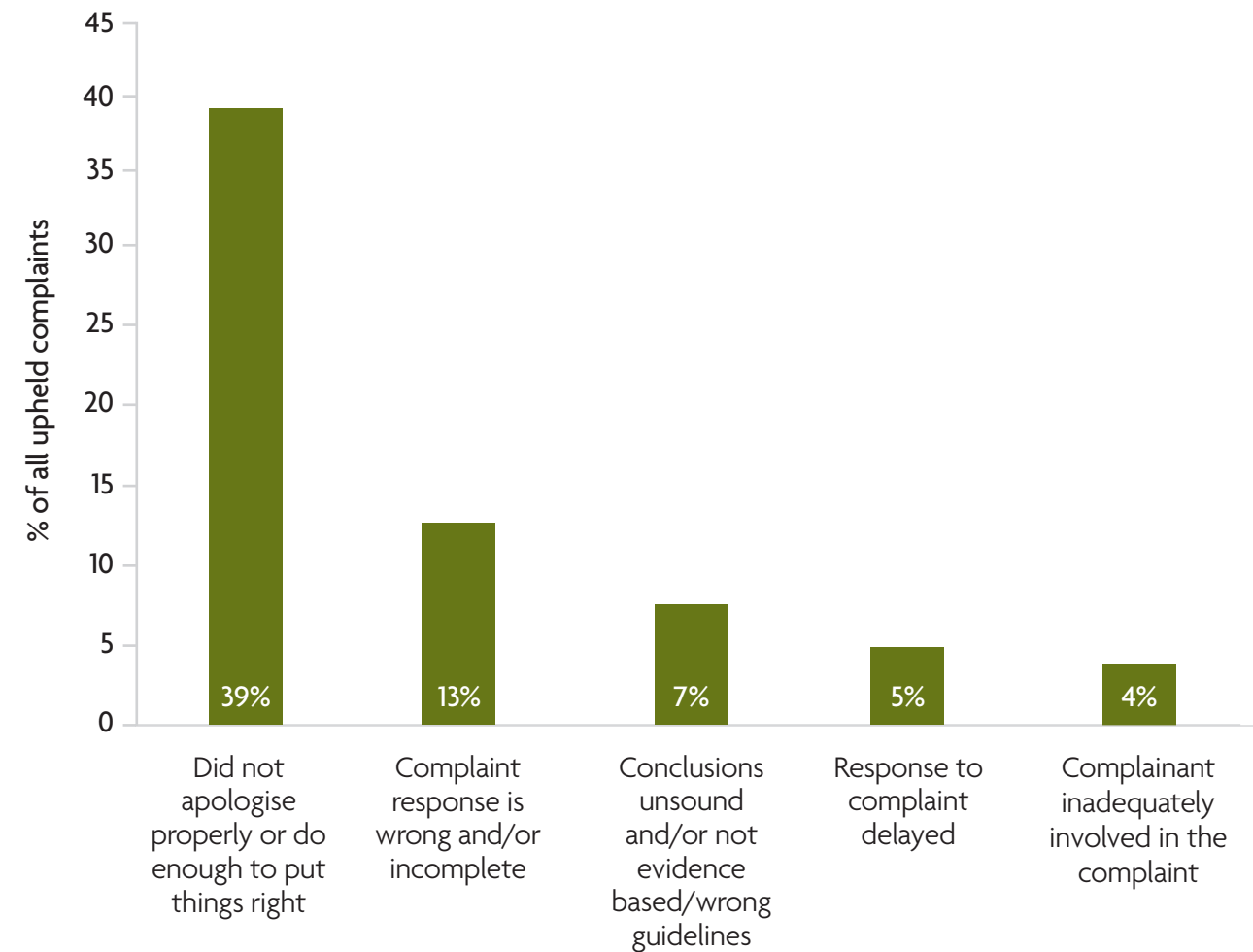
Top five most common concerns about service raised in the complaints we upheld about the Home Office, 2014-15



Our casework shows clearly that the Home Office failed to address delays and poor decision making in the immigration system last year and did not deal adequately with the impact these failings may have had on individuals and their families. The delays and poor decision making meant that people had to endure prolonged uncertainty, were not able to be with their loved ones, were denied access to education or unable to work, or had

to pay unnecessary legal fees and/or application fees. The impact on them was exacerbated by poor complaint handling, which meant that opportunities were lost to put things right and to learn from mistakes. We would expect the Board of the Home Office to use this information as part of their scrutiny of the quality of the department's performance to ensure that they harness learning from complaints.

Top five most common concerns about handling complaints raised in the complaints we upheld about the Home Office, 2014-15



Case Study: Teenager waited ten years for a Home Office decision

Separated from his mother after she had to flee her home country, a 17 year old was able to rejoin her after the UK gave her asylum. But he spent all but two weeks of the next 10 years without legal status in the UK, waiting for the Home Office to decide his case.

What happened

The Home Office accepted Mr D's mother as a refugee, giving her permission to stay permanently in the UK. The family reunion policy meant that her children, Mr D and his sister, could join her. Mr D came to the UK later in the year, just before his 18th birthday. He needed to ask the Home Office for fresh permission to stay in the UK after he turned 18 and he applied in time. But the Home Office was unable to accept his forms as a valid application until later in the year, after his 18th birthday. This put Mr D into an administrative limbo. His application travelled with his mother's Home Office file for the next nine-and-a-half years. Officials made decisions on citizenship applications from Mr D's mother and his younger sister but continued to overlook his application until his MP sent his case to us. They also overlooked most of his requests for updates.

What we found

The Home Office should have given Mr D a decision much sooner. We decided that, taking all his circumstances into account, it would have given him permission to stay permanently in the UK. The Home Office should also have had a way for staff to put things right when they came across delayed cases, like Mr D's. We said that the serious delay limited Mr D to unstable and short-term jobs. He missed out on the support that other 18 year olds could have had and from completing his education as he saw fit. The lack of response to his requests for updates must have been frustrating in its own right.

Putting it right

The Home Office apologised to Mr D and paid him £7,500 as an apology for the effect of its serious mistakes, particularly the frustration and uncertainty we identified.



HM Revenue & Customs

138 complaints investigated in 2014-15

Low uphold rate of 10% suggest that many issues are resolved by the Adjudicator before they come to us and that HMRC handles complaints well

HMRC and the Adjudicator continue to demonstrate clear willingness to learn from complaints.

We investigated 138 complaints about HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) in 2014-15, of which 14 were fully or partly upheld. This meant a low uphold rate of 10%. Almost nine out of ten (87%) complaints about HMRC were not upheld: in 82% of complaints we investigated we found no maladministration or service failure, while in a further 5% of complaints we investigated, we found that there had been failings, but that these had already been accepted by HMRC and been put right. In 3% of complaints that we investigated, we were able to resolve the complaint without completing the investigation, or we discontinued the investigation, for example, because the complainant asked us to do so.

Complaints about HMRC pass through a second tier of complaint handling, the Adjudicator's Office, before they come to us, and it is likely that as a result, a lot of the issues raised in complaints are resolved at that stage.

The complaints that we upheld about HMRC featured issues with process rather than with staff communication or attitudes. Misdirection or wrong advice was the main factor in more than four out of ten (43%) complaints that we upheld about HMRC in 2014-15. Where the complaint related to HMRC's handling of the complaint, not apologising properly or doing enough to put things right was the main reason for complaining in half of our upheld investigations. However, with a total of only 14 upheld investigations in 2014-15 the numbers are so small that it is difficult to draw robust conclusions from the data about service failures at HMRC.

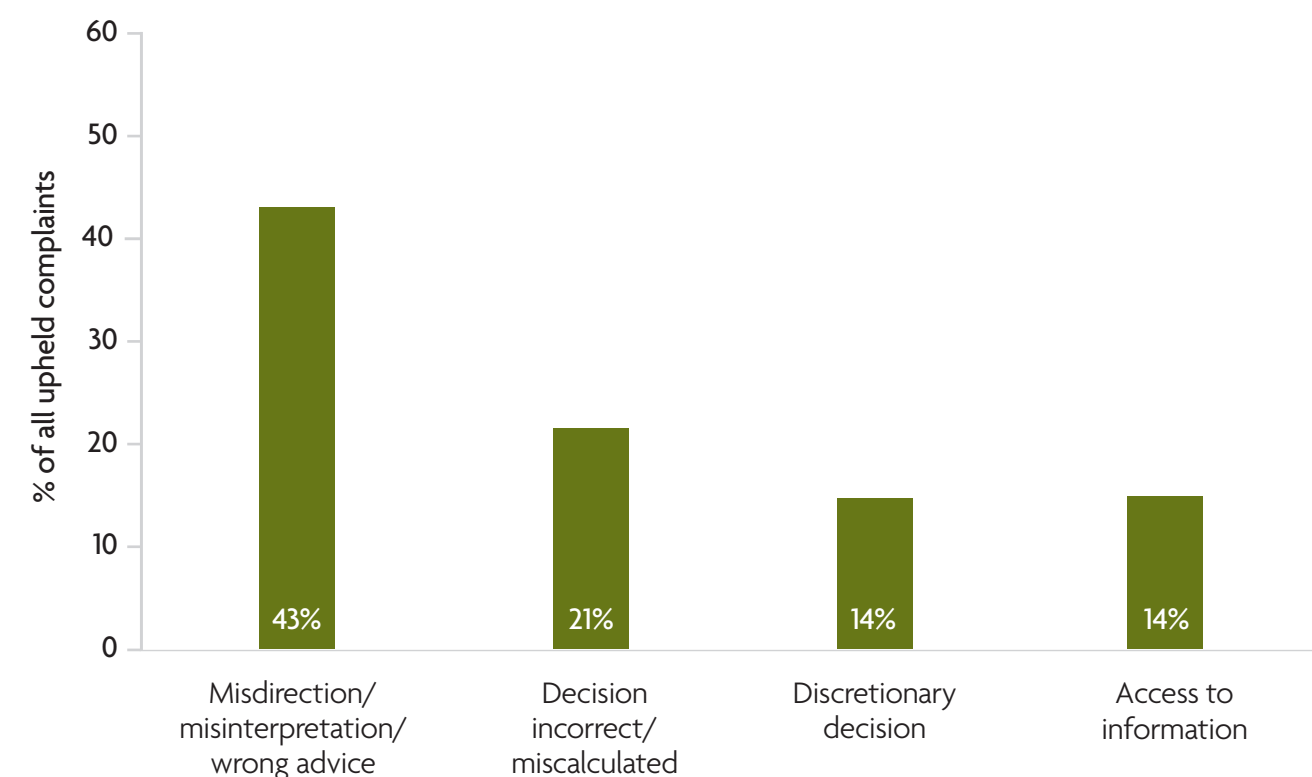
However, by looking at the large number of investigations that we did not uphold, we can get an understanding of where HMRC may be doing well. Over a quarter (28%) of all complaints brought to us about HMRC in 2014-15 included a claimed incorrect decision as a factor in the complaint. One of the main issues that featured in our investigations was the way HMRC applied their concessions before deciding not to waive either an overpayment of tax credits (under Code of Practice 26) or an underpayment of personal tax (under Extra Statutory Concession A19).

The strong theme running through our cases was that while HMRC generally applied the relevant concession reasonably and correctly, they did not always explain their decision very well or otherwise provided a poor service to the complainant. Overall, we were impressed with the quality of the Adjudicator's reports, which were clear, robust and correct, and we were generally satisfied with the action they took to put matters right. As a result, of all the complaints in which incorrect decisions were a factor, 92% were ultimately not upheld.

Other reasons why people brought complaints about HMRC to us included overpayments (cited in 22% of complaints) and underpayments (18%). However, we did not uphold 100% and 96% respectively of these investigations, suggesting that we either found no evidence of maladministration or failure of service, or that there had been failings, but these had already been accepted by HMRC and been put right.

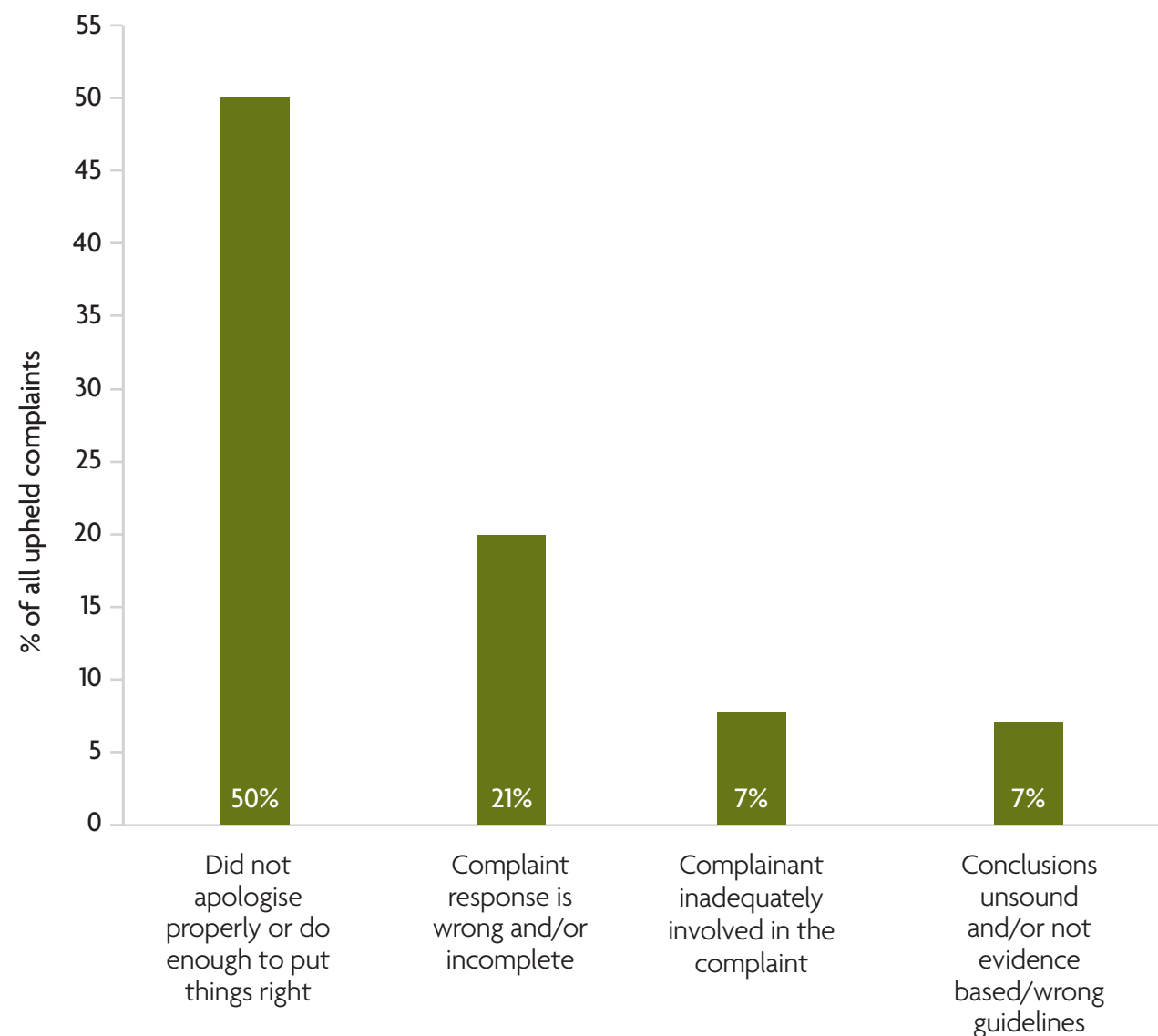
Both HMRC and the Adjudicator's Office indicated a clear willingness to learn from the complaints we investigated last year, and we found that they usually responded positively to our recommendations. We have a good relationship with HMRC and the Adjudicator's Office and meet on a regular basis with both to keep up to date with developments and to iron out any difficulties.

Most common concerns about service raised in the complaints we upheld about HMRC, 2014-15





Most common concerns about handling complaints raised in the complaints we upheld about HMRC, 2014-15



Case Study: Pensioner paid too much tax and HM Revenue & Customs refused to refund it

What happened

Mr D was entitled to an age-related allowance but this was not added to his pension's tax code. This meant that he paid more tax than he needed to for nearly 20 years during his retirement until he died. After Mr D's death, his son Mr C, who was the executor of his estate, found out about the overpayment. He asked HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) to refund it to Mr D's estate. HMRC refunded the tax overpaid for the previous five years in line with tax law's statutory deadline for overpayment claims. However, it said it could not refund most of the overpayment, which was before that time, because the claim was out of time.

Mr C asked HMRC to decide whether it had made an error that caused the overpayment and to consider repaying earlier years' tax. He felt that if HMRC had caused the overpayment, it would be able to consider refunding the tax overpaid. HMRC said that it had no evidence it had made an error and therefore it could not refund the remaining overpaid tax. It also said that, in order to add age-related allowances to a taxpayer's pension code, the taxpayer must make a claim for it. This is because HMRC does not add those allowances automatically unless asked to do so. It also has no legal obligation to do so.

What we found

We did not uphold this complaint. HMRC's explanation and decision about the overpayment were correct. There was no evidence that Mr D had made a claim for age-related allowances or returned a pension form while he was alive. Because of the passage of time and HMRC's data retention policy, it was now impossible for us to say that HMRC had made an error that caused the overpayment.

We concluded that, without evidence of error by HMRC, it was correct to say that the tax law must prevail and the refund could not be given. HMRC's complaint handler, the Adjudicator's Office, had investigated the complaint before us. The Adjudicator found that, although HMRC's decision had been correct, it had not handled Mr C's enquiries well. HMRC had delayed responding to him and had sent confusing letters that made the issue drag on for an unnecessary length of time and caused distress. The Adjudicator recommended that HMRC apologise to Mr C and pay him a £125 consolatory payment.

Putting it right

We agreed with the Adjudicator's recommendation and considered that it was in line with what we would have recommended. We therefore had no grounds to make further recommendations.

Annex A: Data considerations and caveats

Using this information

It is important to recognise that our data should not be seen as a measure to rank organisations on their performance or the quality of their service. The purpose of this report is to provide statistical insight into the complaints that we receive, and to help organisations and their Boards consider what this data says about how they handle complaints and deliver public services.

When interpreting the information contained within this report, it is important to consider the following caveats.

The number of complaints we receive about different government departments varies significantly, reflecting the very different nature of the work undertaken by them. Some parts of government, such as DWP or HMRC, deliver services for millions of people and as a result, we receive a significant number of complaints about them. Other departments, such as the Cabinet Office, have a different role and more limited interaction with the public, and the number of complaints we receive about them is correspondingly small. The number of complaints we receive is also influenced by the accessibility of the complaints system; some organisations are better at explaining their complaints processes and encouraging feedback from their customers. They may generate more complaints than organisations where complaints and feedback mechanisms are less clear.

The level of complaints about individual departments or organisations therefore should not be looked at in isolation, as taken on its own it is not an effective measure of organisational performance. Complaints need to be seen in the context of the relevant organisation, its role and the nature of the services it delivers.

Some complaints we receive relate to more than one organisation or business area. In these cases, we count the complaint more than once. For example, if a single complaint from an individual relates to three separate organisations or business areas in a department, we count this information three times in order to get an accurate picture of what the complaint is about. This may differ from how we report our casework in other reports, including our Annual Report, where information is reported on the basis of individual complainants. This should be considered when comparing the findings of this report to other reports we publish, including our Annual Report.

Reasons for complaints

There can be many reasons for a complaint, both in relation to the service that people experienced and the way that their complaint was handled. In addition, we update from year to year our methodology for collecting data, including in relation to the way we categorise and record the reasons why people bring their complaints to us. This means that our data on the reasons for complaints does not give a complete picture of why people may complain about public services, and that readers should be cautious in comparing this year's data to data used in previous reports.

Annex B: Complaints about UK government departments, agencies and some UK public organisations – summary data table

Figure: 1. Complaints about government departments and agencies and other public organisations in 2014-15

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Cabinet Office	14	3	0	1	0	1	0	0
Cabinet Office	13	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Boundary Commission for England	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charity Commission	30	5	0	4	0	2	0	0
Crown Estate Office	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	403	38	0	22	3	18	0	0
Adjudicator to HM Land Registry	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Companies House	10	2	0	1	0	2	0	0
Competition and Markets Authority	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Construction Industry Training Board	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	17	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Economic and Social Research Council	4	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Higher Education Funding Council for England	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Independent Complaints Reviewer (for the Land Registry)	9	6	0	3	0	4	0	0
Insolvency Service	16	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Land Registry	17	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Official Receiver	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Ordnance Survey	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Science & Technology Facilities Council	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Skills Funding Agency	8	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Student Loans Company Ltd	297	14	0	11	3	4	0	0
Technology Strategy Board	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
UK Intellectual Property Office	7	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Department for Communities and Local Government	70	23	0	3	0	1	0	0
Department for Communities and Local Government	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homes and Communities Agency	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leasehold Advisory Service	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Government Boundary Commission for England	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning Inspectorate	49	19	0	3	0	1	0	0
Valuation Tribunal Service	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	32	16	1	8	1	6	1	0
Arts Council of England	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Big Lottery Fund	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
British Library Board	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gambling Commission	5	6	0	4	1	3	1	0
Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Museum of Science and Industry	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sport England	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
The Equality and Human Rights Commission	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Department for Education	24	7	0	4	2	2	1	0
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service***	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Department for Education	13	2	0	1	1	1	0	0
Education Funding Agency	8	4	0	3	1	1	0	0
Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
National College for Teaching & Leadership	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Office of the Children's Commissioner	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	99	29	0	17	17	7	0	0
Animal and Plant Health Agency	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Consumer Council for Water	13	3	0	1	0	2	0	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	11	1	0	0	1	0	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Drinking Water Inspectorate	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environment Agency	36	14	0	7	3	0	0	0
Natural England	17	6	0	5	0	3	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	13	4	0	4	13	2	0	0
Marine Management Organisation	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for International Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for International Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Transport	383	57	2	29	12	20	1	0
Civil Aviation Authority	9	4	0	3	1	1	0	0
Department for Transport	10	3	0	2	4	0	0	0
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	298	35	2	15	3	10	1	0
Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency	34	8	0	4	2	4	0	0
High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highways Agency	23	6	0	4	1	4	0	0
Independent Complaints Assessor	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office of Rail Regulation	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Office of the Traffic Commissioner	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle Certification Agency	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Department for Work and Pensions	2,162	329	7	235	45	156	0	0
ATS Community Employment***	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capita Business Services Ltd***	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Child Support Agency	434	15	0	12	10	6	0	0
Debt Management Unit	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Work and Pensions	285	13	1	11	2	0	0	0
Health and Safety Executive	24	9	0	5	0	3	0	0
Independent Case Examiner	303	202	2	145	18	137	0	0
Independent Living Fund	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jobcentre Plus	801	58	0	53	10	8	0	0
Medical Services ATOS Healthcare***	17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pension Protection Fund	12	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pensions Ombudsman	18	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Pension, Disability and Carers Service	245	13	3	8	5	2	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
The Pensions Regulator	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	34	15	0	7	5	0	0	0
Carillion Energy Services	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coal Authority	4	4	0	4	4	0	0	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	26	9	0	3	1	0	0	0
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department of Health	179	30	0	12	1	6	0	0
Care Quality Commission	70	21	0	10	0	6	0	0
Department of Health	35	5	0	1	0	0	0	0
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Public Health England	71	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
Electoral Commission	8	2	0	1	1	1	0	0
Food Standards Agency	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	37	6	0	5	0	2	0	0
British Council	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	35	6	0	5	0	2	0	0
Forestry Commission	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Revenue & Customs	1,000	163	5	125	14	120	2	2
Child Benefit Office	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Revenue & Customs	790	29	4	19	11	12	0	0
National Insurance Contributions Office	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Adjudicator's Office	163	132	1	106	3	108	2	2
Valuation Office Agency	28	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Treasury	30	10	0	3	0	3	0	0
Equitable Life Payment Scheme	9	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Treasury	19	6	0	2	0	3	0	0
Royal Mint	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Home Office	851	145	9	68	109	45	3	1
Government Equalities Office	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Passport Office	123	11	1	6	4	4	0	0
Home Office	66	3	0	1	3	0	0	0
Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner	8	3	0	0	0	1	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Police (Under Victims' Code)	8	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
Security Industry Authority	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Disclosure and Barring Service	44	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Learn Direct	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Border Agency	62	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Border Force	89	20	0	15	17	10	0	0
UK Immigration Enforcement	16	9	1	4	4	5	1	0
UK Visas and Immigration	422	94	7	41	79	24	2	1
Monitor	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Law Officers	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Treasury Solicitor	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Defence	39	4	0	1	1	0	0	0
Ministry of Defence	26	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Service Personnel and Veterans Agency	13	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Justice	1,450	467	10	319	107	192	40	9
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service****	327	131	3	115	37	49	33	2
Court Funds Office	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority	15	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Crown Prosecution Service (Under Victims' Code)	13	2	0	2	0	1	0	0
Cumbria Probation Trust	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Devon and Cornwall Probation Trust	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gloucestershire Probation Trust	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Manchester Probation Trust	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
HM Courts & Tribunals Service	589	146	5	81	36	31	2	1
HM Prison Service	40	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independent Complaints Reviewer (for The National Archives)	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Information Commissioner's Office	149	69	0	52	8	55	1	0
Legal Aid Agency	77	37	2	26	11	23	1	1
Legal Services Complaints Commissioner	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merseyside Witness Care Unit	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Ministry of Justice	33	10	0	3	2	2	0	0
National Offender Management Service	46	12	0	9	6	6	1	1

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
National Probation Service	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Parole Board	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman	97	33	0	18	4	16	1	2
South Yorkshire Probation Trust	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trust	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Surrey and Sussex Probation Trust	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
The National Archives	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Office of the Public Guardian	37	15	0	6	1	3	1	1
The Official Solicitor to the Supreme Court	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown Probation Trust	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wales Probation Trust	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth Justice Board for England and Wales	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)	25	14	0	9	1	5	0	0
Office of Communications (Ofcom)	7	5	0	5	1	4	0	2
Office of Fair Trading	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	12	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)	8	5	0	2	0	2	0	0
The Supreme Court	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Statistics Authority	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown Government Department*****	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0

* These are complaints where we start an investigation but are able to resolve the complaint without having to formally complete the investigation.

** These are complaints where we end the investigation for a variety of reasons, for example, because the complainant asked us to.

*** These organisations are not in our jurisdiction, but their actions on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions are.

**** Sponsorship of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) transferred from the Department for Education to the Ministry of Justice in April 2014.

***** Enquiries where we are unable to determine the department or organisation concerned.

Figure: 2. Complaints about government departments and agencies and other public organisations in 2013-14

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Cabinet Office	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cabinet Office	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charity Commission	23	10	0	4	0	2	0	0
Crown Estate Office	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	136	53	0	21	2	9	0	0
Adjudicator to HM Land Registry	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service	4	5	0	3	0	3	0	0
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Certification Officer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Companies House	10	3	0	3	0	1	0	0
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	17	6	0	3	0	1	0	0
Higher Education Funding Council for England	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Independent Complaints Reviewer (for the Land Registry)	12	12	0	4	0	2	0	0
Insolvency Service	16	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
Land Registry	27	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Research Council	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Science & Technology Facilities Council	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Skills Funding Agency	4	3	0	1	0	1	0	0
Student Loans Company Ltd	31	5	0	2	2	0	0	0
Technology Strategy Board	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Intellectual Property Office	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Department for Communities and Local Government	70	41	1	10	3	9	0	1
Department for Communities and Local Government	12	9	0	2	0	2	0	0
Homes and Communities Agency	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Planning Inspectorate	56	31	1	8	2	7	0	1
Valuation Tribunal Service	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	40	17	3	6	2	6	0	0
Arts Council of England	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Big Lottery Fund	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	9	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Gambling Commission	13	7	2	2	2	2	0	0
Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England	4	3	0	1	0	1	0	0
Sport England	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Equality and Human Rights Commission	5	3	0	3	0	3	0	0
Department for Education	284	133	0	89	16	15	8	0
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service***	255	126	0	86	16	15	8	0
Department for Education	23	6	0	2	0	0	0	0
Education Funding Agency	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National College for Teaching & Leadership	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Standards and Testing Agency	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	143	78	1	49	3	20	0	0
Consumer Council for Water	23	4	0	4	0	3	0	0
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	27	17	0	3	1	1	0	0
Drinking Water Inspectorate	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environment Agency	52	25	1	21	1	14	0	0
Natural England	5	4	0	2	0	0	0	0
Rural Payments Agency	34	27	0	18	1	1	0	0
Marine Management Organisation	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Department for International Development	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Department for International Development	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Department for Transport	360	60	0	37	9	13	0	0
Civil Aviation Authority	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Department for Transport	11	6	0	2	0	0	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	260	34	0	17	4	6	0	0
Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency	36	9	0	9	5	4	0	0
High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Highways Agency	38	6	0	5	0	2	0	0
Independent Complaints Assessor	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Office of Rail Regulation	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office of the Traffic Commissioner	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle Certification Agency	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Department for Work and Pensions	2,474	250	3	162	18	63	0	2
Child Support Agency	542	13	2	7	3	0	0	0
Civil Service Appeal Board	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Debt Management Unit	28	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Department for Work and Pensions	177	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health and Safety Executive	37	6	0	5	1	4	0	0
Independent Case Examiner	253	186	0	132	7	51	0	2
Independent Living Fund	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independent Review Service for the Social Fund	3	3	0	1	0	1	0	0
Jobcentre Plus	1,094	23	1	14	6	5	0	0
Medical Services ATOS Healthcare***	34	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pension Protection Fund	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pensions Ombudsman	11	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Remploy Ltd	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Pension, Disability and Carers Service	291	7	0	2	0	2	0	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	38	15	2	9	4	4	0	0
Coal Authority	5	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Department of Energy and Climate Change	33	11	2	6	4	4	0	0
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department of Health	137	28	1	6	0	1	0	0
Care Quality Commission	53	10	1	3	0	0	0	0
Department of Health	47	10	0	1	0	1	0	0
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	32	6	0	1	0	0	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Public Health England	5	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Electoral Commission	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	23	3	0	2	1	2	0	0
British Council	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	21	3	0	2	1	2	0	0
UK Trade & Investment	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forestry Commission	8	2	0	2	0	1	0	0
Government Actuary's Department	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Revenue & Customs	1,014	167	1	103	9	45	0	1
Child Benefit Office	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Revenue & Customs	791	32	1	13	6	6	0	0
National Insurance Contributions Office	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Adjudicator's Office	159	133	0	89	2	38	0	1
Valuation Office Agency	41	2	0	1	1	1	0	0
HM Treasury	41	10	0	5	0	3	0	0
Equitable Life Payment Scheme	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Treasury	32	9	0	5	0	3	0	0
Home Office	1,048	519	52	164	36	21	3	0
Government Equalities Office	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Passport Office	64	13	0	7	1	2	0	0
Home Office	33	8	0	5	1	0	1	0
Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner	8	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Police (Under Victims' Code)	7	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Security Industry Authority	18	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
The Disclosure and Barring Service	21	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
UK Border Agency	517	146	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Border Force	56	44	2	26	2	6	0	0
UK Immigration Enforcement	17	17	1	10	3	1	0	0
UK Visas and Immigration	305	283	48	112	29	11	2	0
Monitor	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Law Officers	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Treasury Solicitor	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Defence	39	5	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Defence	30	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
Service Personnel and Veterans Agency	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Justice	1,044	329	9	195	43	72	1	0
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service****	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Court Funds Office	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority	16	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crown Prosecution Service (Under Victims' Code)	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Devon and Cornwall Probation Trust	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Manchester Probation Trust	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HM Courts & Tribunals Service	597	138	6	72	27	25	0	0
HM Prison Service	56	4	0	3	1	0	0	0
Information Commissioner's Office	116	64	1	42	2	23	0	0
Legal Aid Agency	87	48	1	31	4	7	0	0
London Probation Trust	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Justice	24	7	0	4	1	1	0	0
Her Majesty's Stationery Office	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Offender Management Service	28	14	0	9	4	2	0	0
Parole Board	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman	71	36	0	27	1	12	1	0
South Yorkshire Probation Trust	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trust	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Surrey and Sussex Probation Trust	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Tameside Youth Offending Team (Under Victims' Code)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
The National Archives	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Office of the Public Guardian	21	8	1	5	2	2	0	0
The Official Solicitor to the Supreme Court	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trafford Youth Offending Team (Under Victims' Code)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
West Mercia Probation Trust	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Yorkshire Probation Trust	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland Office	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Organisation	Enquiries received	Complaints assessed	Complaints resolved through intervention	Complaints accepted for investigation	Investigations upheld or partly upheld	Investigations not upheld	Investigations resolved without a finding*	Investigations discontinued**
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)	21	11	0	5	1	2	0	0
Office of Communications (Ofcom)	16	7	0	5	1	1	0	0
Office of Fair Trading	17	6	0	5	0	3	0	0
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)	3	2	0	2	1	1	0	0
UK Statistics Authority	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office for National Statistics	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown Government Department*****	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	10	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
National Heritage Memorial Fund	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Royal Museums Greenwich	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

* These are complaints where we start an investigation but are able to resolve the complaint without having to formally complete the investigation.

** These are complaints where we end the investigation for a variety of reasons, for example, because the complainant asked us to.

*** These organisations are not in our jurisdiction, but their actions on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions are.

**** Sponsorship of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) transferred from the Department for Education to the Ministry of Justice in April 2014.

***** Enquiries where we are unable to determine the department or organisation concerned.

If you would like this report in a different format, such as DAISY or large print, please contact us.

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