

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: 2014-69

4th February 2014

Dear Tom Evans,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 7th January 2014.
You asked:

“For ESA claimants whose claims have been decided on scrutiny, how many have been placed in the support group and how many in the work-related activity group?

(Scrutiny means the practice of deciding claims on the papers only, i.e. without a face to face medical assessment.)

A breakdown of these figures by year would also be appreciated, if available.”

In response to your query, statistics on the number of new claims to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) where the outcome was decided on scrutiny, for initial and repeat functional assessments and also Incapacity Benefit Reassessments, and how many of these were placed in the Support Group (SG) or Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) accordingly can be found in the tables below.

New claims – Initial Work Capability Assessments with an outcome of Support Group, Great Britain: October 2008 – March 2013

Year	All SG Outcomes	Of which: Paper-based
2008	6,500	3,700
2009	41,700	24,100
2010	49,900	28,900
2011	100,400	61,200
2012	137,000	84,300
2013	31,500	18,900
Total	367,100	221,000

New claims – Repeat Work Capability Assessments with an outcome of Support Group or Work Related Activity Group, Great Britain: October 2008 – March 2013

Year	All SG Outcomes	Of which: Paper-based	All WRAG Outcomes	Of which: Paper-based
2008	11,000	6,900	20,200	8,300
2009	79,900	50,100	136,900	57,600
2010	86,100	54,500	109,900	48,600
2011	121,400	83,000	97,500	51,500
2012	75,300	46,000	58,400	33,800
2013	3,200	1,600	1,800	1,100
Total	376,800	242,200	424,700	200,900

Incapacity Benefit Reassessments – Outcomes for Work Capability Assessments with an outcome of Support Group or Work Related Activity Group, Great Britain: October 2008 – March 2013

Year	All SG Outcomes	Of which: Paper-based	All WRAG Outcomes	Of which: Paper-based
Autumn 2010 (trial areas) ⁵	500	300	700	100
2011	96,200	55,700	157,400	71,500
2012	199,400	135,100	218,300	113,200
2013	65,000	52,400	43,500	29,100
Total	361,100	243,600	419,900	214,000

Source: Data in the above tables is derived from administrative data held by the DWP and assessment data provided by Atos Healthcare.

Notes:

1. Data is rounded to nearest 100. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. Figures exclude clerical cases.
3. Figures for 2008 only include data from 27th October 2008 and figures for 2013 only include data up to 31st March 2013.
4. ESA new claims initial and repeat assessments are tabled by year of claim start date, Incapacity Benefits Reassessments are tabled by year of referral.
5. The reassessment of existing incapacity benefits claimants started in October 2010 with a trial in the Burnley and Aberdeen areas. Previously published information on the reassessment trials is available on the DWP web-site at the following link:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/223107/wca_ib_reassessment_interim.pdf
6. No claimant can be found fit for work without undergoing a face-to-face assessment. In addition, for new ESA claims only SG recommendations can be made using paper evidence only. At repeat ESA assessments and for Incapacity Benefit Reassessments, both SG and WRAG recommendations can be made using paper evidence only.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk