

### Background

This report is based on the actual information on the Teams Request Trackers, at the end of Quarter 3 2008-09. We only track complex requests, which are defined as:

1. requests which fall outside our normal course of business;
2. requests for information where we might refuse eg sensitive, confidential information or a repeat request;
3. requests for information related to the policy making process;
4. requests on which it may be necessary to consult with others either within Natural England or outside;
5. requests for large amounts of information or information which may be difficult to locate;
6. requests which seem unclear or too general to deal with, and where we will need to seek clarification from the applicant;
7. requests for information where a search is made, but none is found.

| <b>Requests and Applicants</b>  |                    |   |
|---|--------------------|---|
| No of requests for information which have been logged on to the Natural England request trackers                    |                    | <b>40</b>   |
| % of requests identified as falling under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.                           |                    | <b>85%</b>  |
| % of requests identified as falling under the Freedom of Information Act 2000                                       |                    | <b>13%</b>  |
| % of requests identified as falling under the Data Protection Act 1998  |                    | <b>2%</b>   |
| % of requests that were from private citizens   |                    | <b>50%</b>  |
| % of requests that were from business   |                    | <b>20%</b>  |
| % of requests that were from academics, NGOs, media and politicians   |                    | <b>10%</b>  |
| % of requests that were from charities, lobby groups or others  |                    | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Timeliness</b>   |                    |   |
| Requests completed within the 20 working day legal deadline   |                    | <b>35</b>   |
| Requests completed within the extended deadline of 40 working days.   |                    | <b>3</b>  |
| % completed within the deadlines  |                    | <b>97.5%</b>  |
| Requests still ongoing but still within 20 working day legal deadlines  |                    | <b>1</b>  |
| Requests completed beyond the legal deadline.   |                    | <b>1</b>  |
| Requests completed beyond the extended deadline.  |                    | <b>0</b>  |
| Requests with an extended deadline due to the complexity of the request or the need to consider the public interest |                    | <b>3</b>  |
| The timeliness for responding to requests:  |                    |   |
|   | 0–5 working days   | <b>20%</b>  |
|   | 6–10 working days  | <b>13%</b>  |
|   | 11–15 working days | <b>18%</b>  |
|   | 16–20 working days | <b>39%</b>  |
|   | >20 working days   | <b>10%</b>  |
| <b>Provision of Information</b>   |                    | <b>Exemptions used</b>  |
| Requests which were granted in full   | <b>22</b>          |   |
| Requests where only part of the information was provided  | <b>14</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal data which includes data</li> </ul> |

|  |            |  |
|--|------------|--|
|  |            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about third parties.</li> <li>• Internal communications.</li> <li>• Course of justice and criminal proceedings.</li> <li>• International relations, defence, national security or public safety.</li> <li>• Manifestly unreasonable (request over appropriate limit)</li> <li>• Information not held</li> <li>• Environmental protection</li> </ul> |
| Requests which were refused in full  | <b>1</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manifestly unreasonable</li> </ul>  |
| Requests which have been transferred to The National Archives  | <b>0</b>   |  |
| Requests which have been transferred to another public body  | <b>0</b>   |  |
| Requests we've been unable to complete as we do not hold the information   | <b>2</b>   |  |
| Requests we've been unable to complete due to no further information being provided by the applicant for us to complete the request                      | <b>0</b>   |  |
| Requests outstanding at the end of the quarter, but within deadlines.  | <b>1</b>   |  |
| Requests where we are waiting for further information before we can proceed  | <b>0</b>   |  |
| <b>Advice, Referrals and Appeals</b>   |            |  |
| Requests where we have taken external legal advice   | <b>0</b>   |  |
| Requests we have referred to the Department of Constitutional Affairs, Clearing House as the request could have potential to affect other public bodies. | <b>0</b>   |  |
| Requests we have referred to Defra, as the request could have potential to affect the wider Defra family.  | <b>0</b>   |  |
| Requests where the applicant has requested an internal review  | <b>1</b>   |  |
| <b>Information Requested</b>   |            |  |
| % of requests related to SSSIs, species or habitat related.  | <b>60%</b> |  |
| % of requests related to corporate services  | <b>8%</b>  |  |
| % of requests related to agri-environment schemes  | <b>10%</b> |  |
| % of requests related to access  | <b>10%</b> |  |
| % other types of requests - subject access request, organisational resource management, planning and environmental impact assessment regulations         | <b>13%</b> |  |

### Commentary

The number of requests received this quarter went up significantly by 30% on the previous quarter.

We responded to 97.5% of the requests we received within the legal deadline. Of these 90% were completed within the 20 day limit and 7.5% needed to be extended due to the complex nature of the requests. The extended requests were all completed within the extended deadline. During this quarter 32.5% of our requests were dealt with inside 2 weeks which is slightly down on the previous quarter. One of the reasons for this was due to the amount of particularly complex requests we received during the quarter.

RTRACK continues to operate successfully with no issues reported.

### **Complaints at the Information Commissioner's Office**

At the start of the quarter we had 4 complaints at the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

### **Requests refused this quarter**

We partially withheld information for 14 requests this quarter. This information was withheld because it contained personal data which included data about third parties, for health and safety reasons, legal professional privilege, was manifestly unreasonable (request over appropriate limit), was information we do hold and for environmental protection

We also refused to deal with 1 requests this quarter as this request was manifestly unreasonable

### **Appeals decisions this quarter**

We received 1 request for an internal review this quarter

A full list of complex requests received this quarter is available on Natural England's disclosure log <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/foi/disclosure-log.htm>

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