



First Release

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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.

Main Findings

- In the year to September 2008, the Agency collected or arranged £1,088M in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £149M was arrears.
- In the three months to September 2008, maintenance had been collected or arranged by the Agency on behalf of 778,200 children.
- At the end of September 2008, the CSA caseload stood at 1.3 million.

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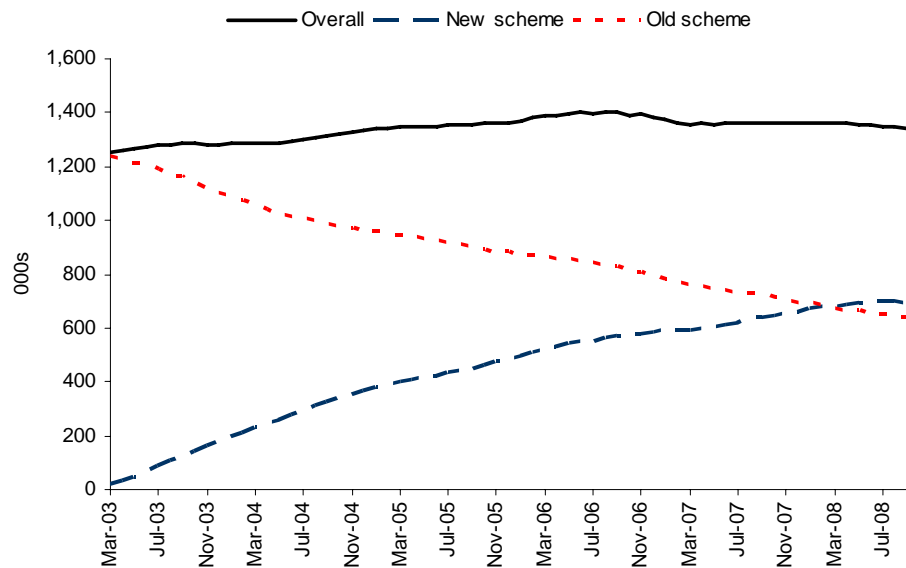
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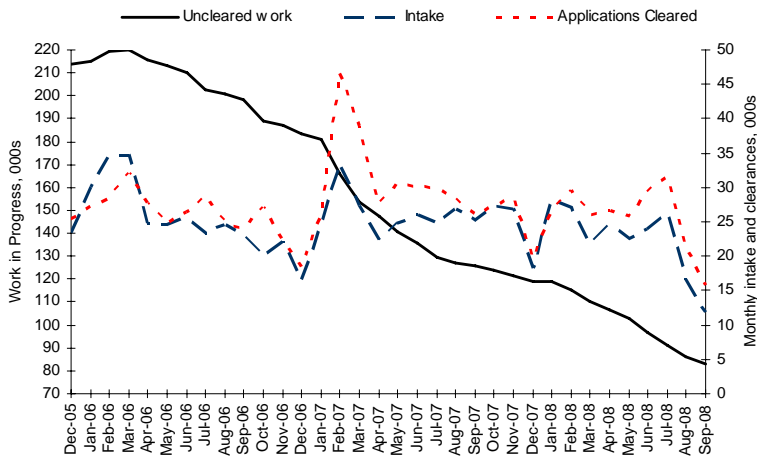
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Overall caseload by scheme



- Of all current scheme applications received in June 2008, 85% had been cleared within 12 weeks, compared to 75% of applications received in June 2007. Of those applications received in March 2008, 92% had been cleared within 6 months, up from 88% in March 2007. At end September 2008, 5% of all current scheme applications received had yet to be cleared. In September 2007, 10% 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.
- 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, 89% of cases have made at least one payment to the parent with care.

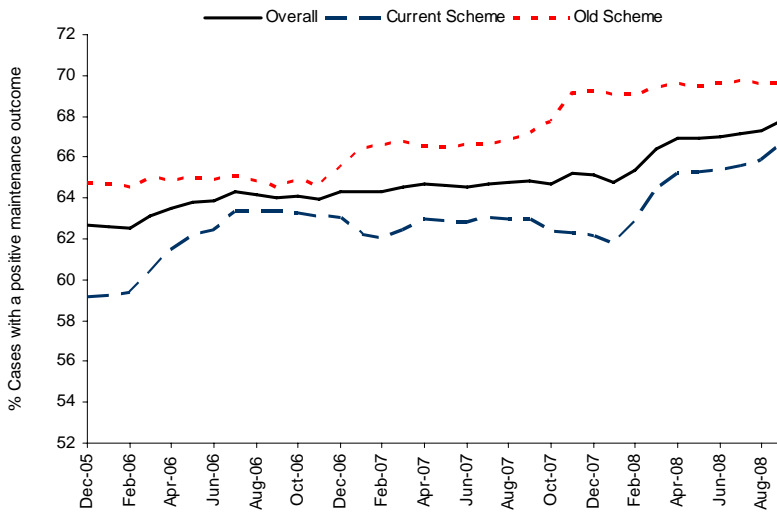
Current scheme application intake, clearances and work on hand: monthly



- At the end of September 2008, there were 103,000 uncleared applications across both schemes, a fall of 34% over the previous twelve months. The volume of uncleared current scheme applications has fallen by 43,000 since September 2007 and, at 76,000 (including clerical cases) is at its lowest since July 2003. This represents a fall of 39% since September 2007.
- In the quarter ending September 2008, on average, where maintenance had been charged and then paid via the collection service, the Agency had collected 93% of the amount due. Performance in this area has been gently rising for the last year.

- 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 in 2006/07, the average monthly rate of increase has slowed from £16 million to £10 million.

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



- In the quarter ending September 2008, 68% of all cases (including clerical cases) in which maintenance was due had either received maintenance via the CSA collection service, or had a maintenance direct arrangement in place.
- At the end of September 2008, the average current scheme maintenance calculation was £24 per week (including zero calculations), and that for old scheme assessments was £20.
- At the end of September 2008, the Agency had answered 99% of telephone calls available to staff to answer, within the quarter. The average waiting time was 18 seconds. This up from 98% answered with a waiting time of 20 seconds in the year ending March 2008.

- In September 2008, there were 9,400 staff employed by the CSA (measured on a full-time equivalent basis).

Notes to Editors

Launched on 5 April 1993, the Child Support Agency (CSA) is an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions, set up to implement the Child Support Act 1991 and operate the new child maintenance system in Great Britain (there is a separate but parallel agency for Northern Ireland). The CSA is responsible for tracing Non-resident Parents, working out how much maintenance they should pay, and can collect and enforce payments

Prior to 3 March 2003, CSA stored information on the Child Support Computer System (CSCS). Since the introduction of the new computer system (CS2) on that date, all new Child Support applications have been assessed under a current scheme on the new system

Changes in this edition

A legislative repeal in July 2008 meant that single parents making a new claim for income based benefit are no longer referred to CSA. Some have made direct arrangements with the Agency, but they are not compelled to do so. This change can be seen as a fall in the numbers of potential new claims received directly from Jobcentre Plus.

The effect within QSS is:

- Table 13.1 and Table 13.2 remain unchanged (benefit receipt for non-resident parents and parents with care)
- Table 2.1 – 2.4 (new application process) continues to show “Applications received directly via Jobcentre Plus” rows, but the numbers show the falls indicated above.

Information on potential applications received from Jobcentre Plus is only available up to 17 September 2008. Hence, the figure for September 2008 excludes those potential applications received via that route after 17 September that have not progressed to be an application. Once a proper application is started, it is counted as usual.

Changes in the December 2008 QSS

Users should be aware of changes of legislation in October 2008 which removes 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, it is expected that some parents with care will opt to end their child support claim with CSA. This will be seen as a fall in overall caseload after October 2008.

The effect within QSS will be:

- Table 13.1 and Table 13.2 will remain unchanged (benefit receipt for non-resident parents and parents with care)
- Table 2.1 – 2.4 (new application process) will continue to show “Applications received directly via Jobcentre Plus” rows, but the numbers will show the falls indicated above. From October onwards, there will be no Jobcentre plus intake and parents with care on benefit opting to claim for maintenance via the CSA will be shown as “Private applications”
- Table 29 (current scheme changes of circumstance) may be removed from future publications pending a review. Due to a change in computer system, it is not possible to complete this table on a consistent basis from September 2008 onwards.

On 1 November 2008, the Child Support Agency becomes part of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission. However, the next QSS, relating to the end of December 2008, will continue to be published as normal at the end of January. Targets will be reported in the current form at least until March 2009.