JISC infoNet

2007

Information Legislation & Management Survey 2007

Steve Bailey

JISC infoNet

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Distinction and Diversity in Higher Education

GuildHE

Universities UK

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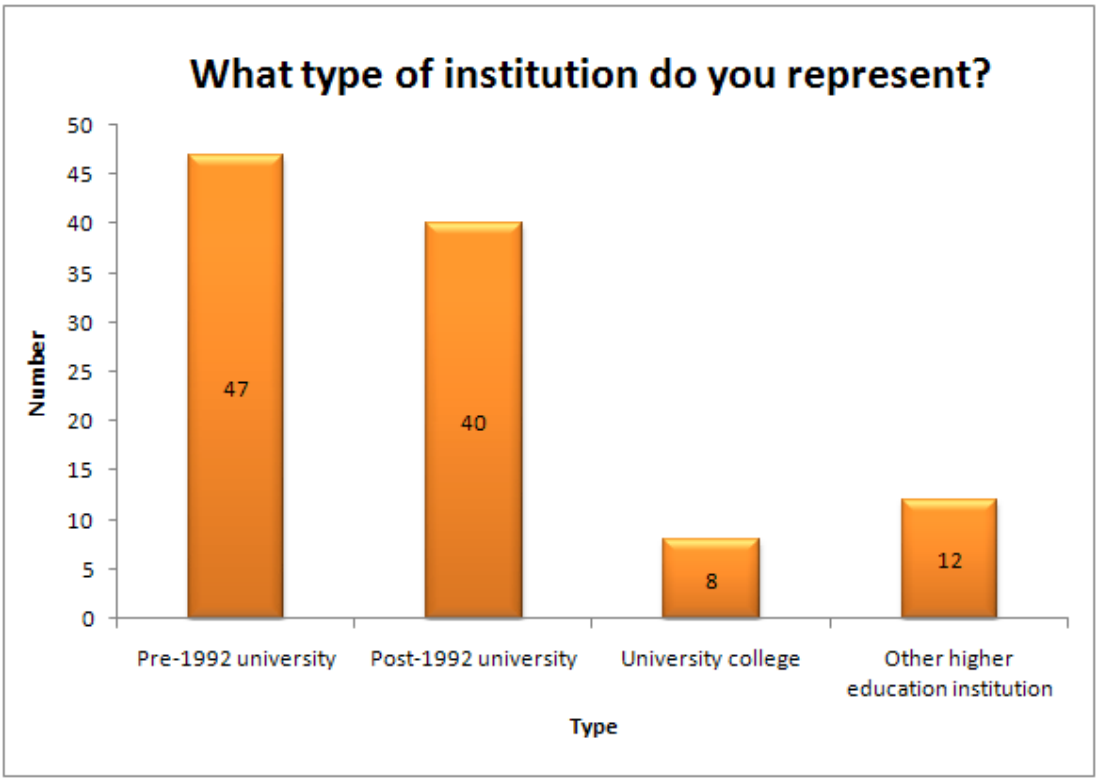
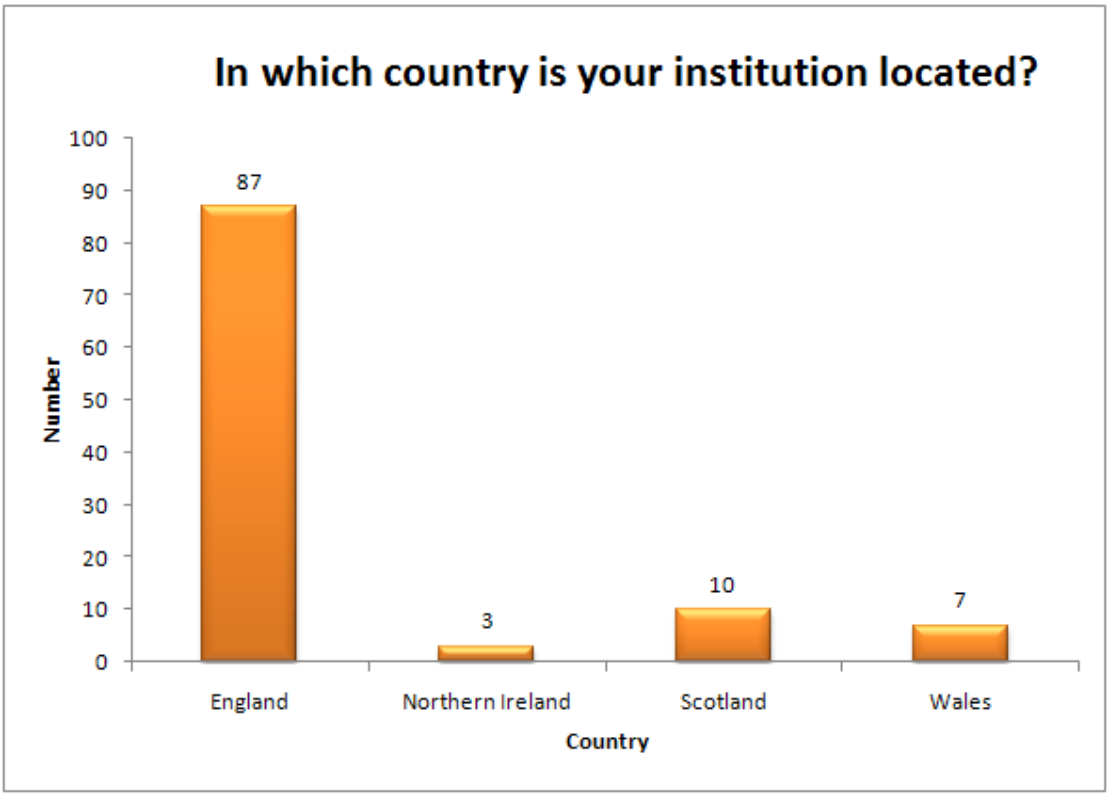
Results from the JISC/UUK/GuildHE Information Legislation & Management Survey 2007 based on 107 returns

1. Institution details

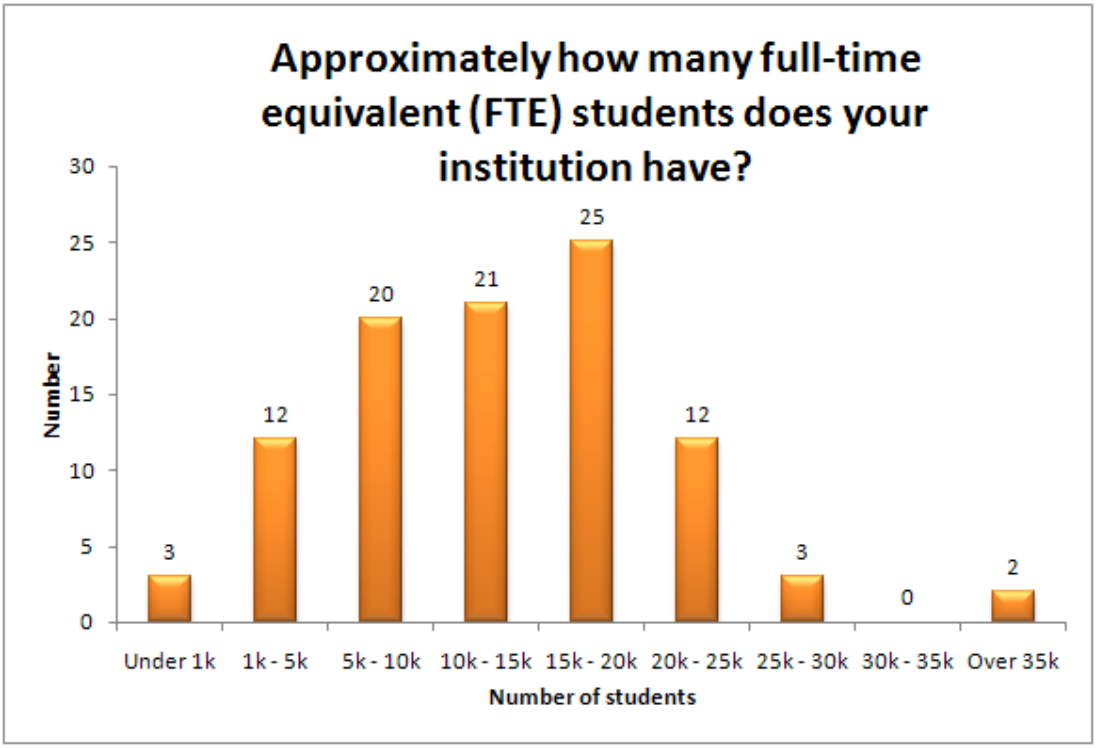
Q.1. What type of institution do you represent?



Q.2. In which country is your institution located in?



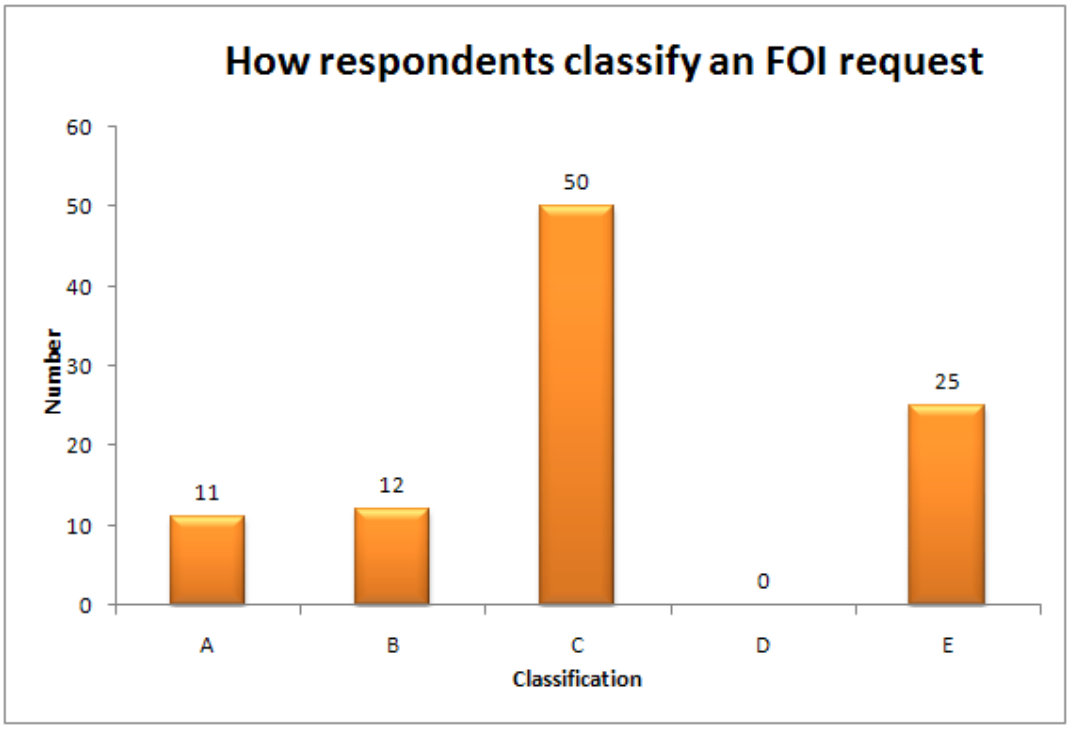
Q.3. Approximately how many full time equivalent students does your institution have?



2. Requests

2.1. Definitions

Q.4. How does your institution define an FOI request (i.e. on what basis do you decide whether or not to record a request received)?

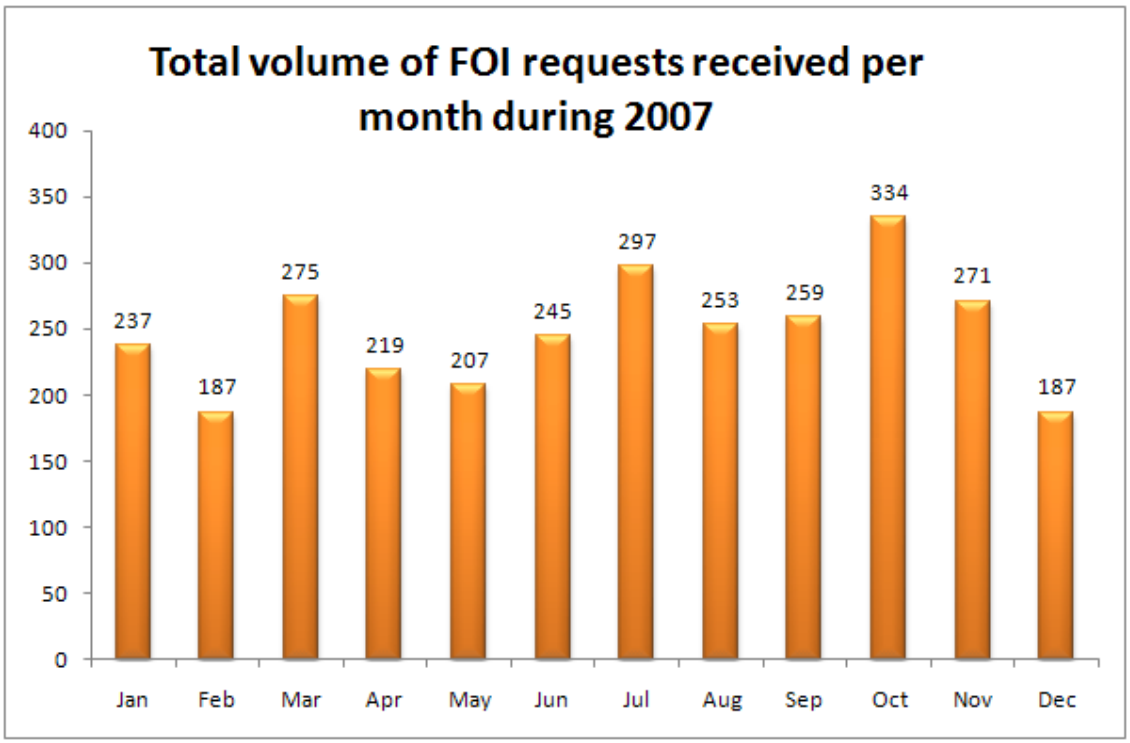


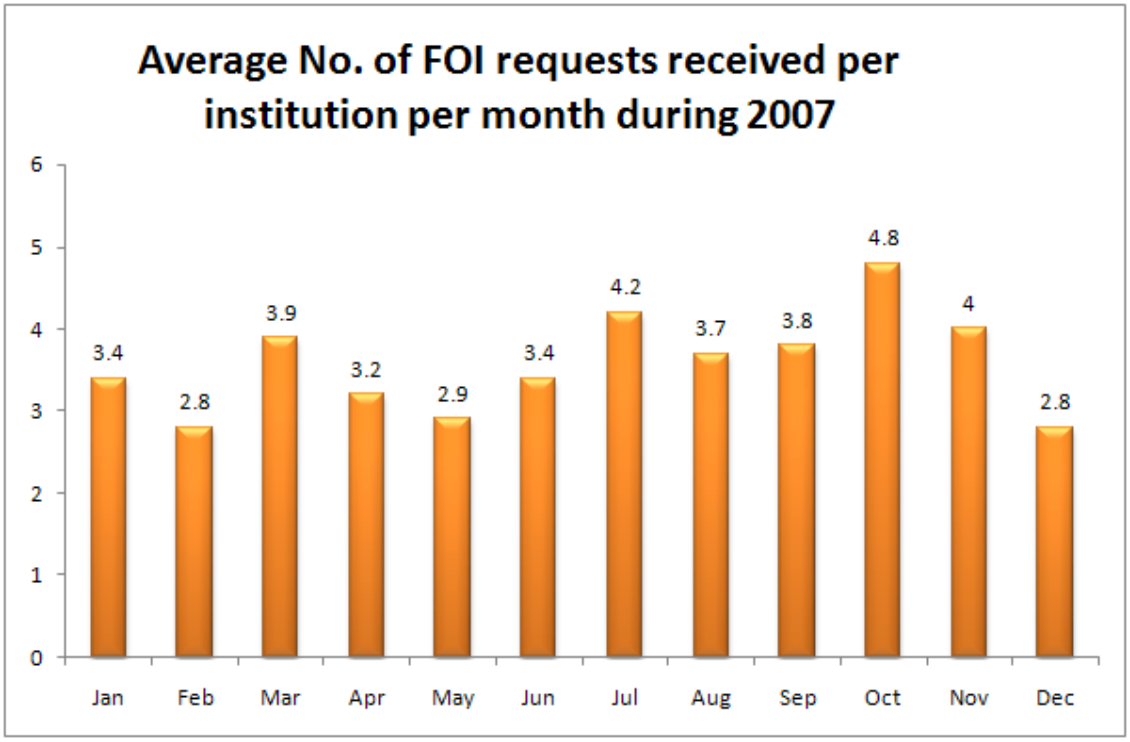
A. Any request for recorded information received in written form
B. Any request which specifically states that it is an FOI request
C. Requests for information that are considered 'non-standard' or 'non-routine'
D. Requests received for information not included in our publication scheme
E. Other

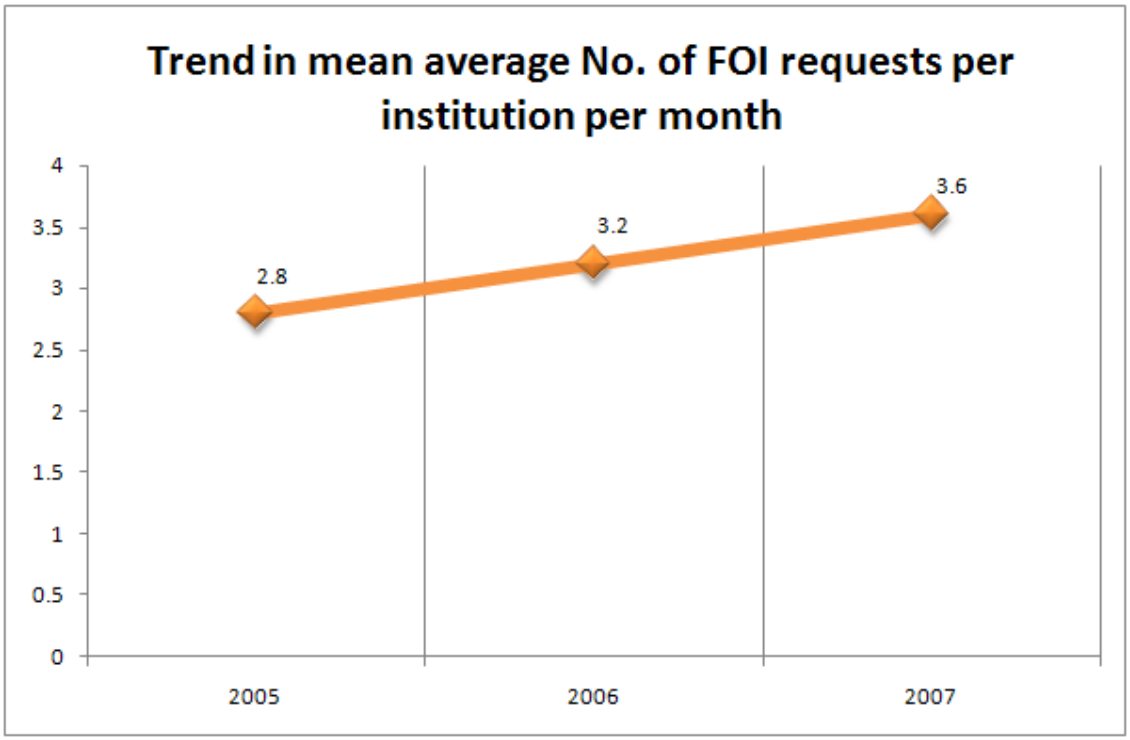
2.2. Volume of requests

Q.5. According to the above definition, how many FOI or EIR requests or Data Protection Act (DPA) Subject Access Requests have you received during the following months:

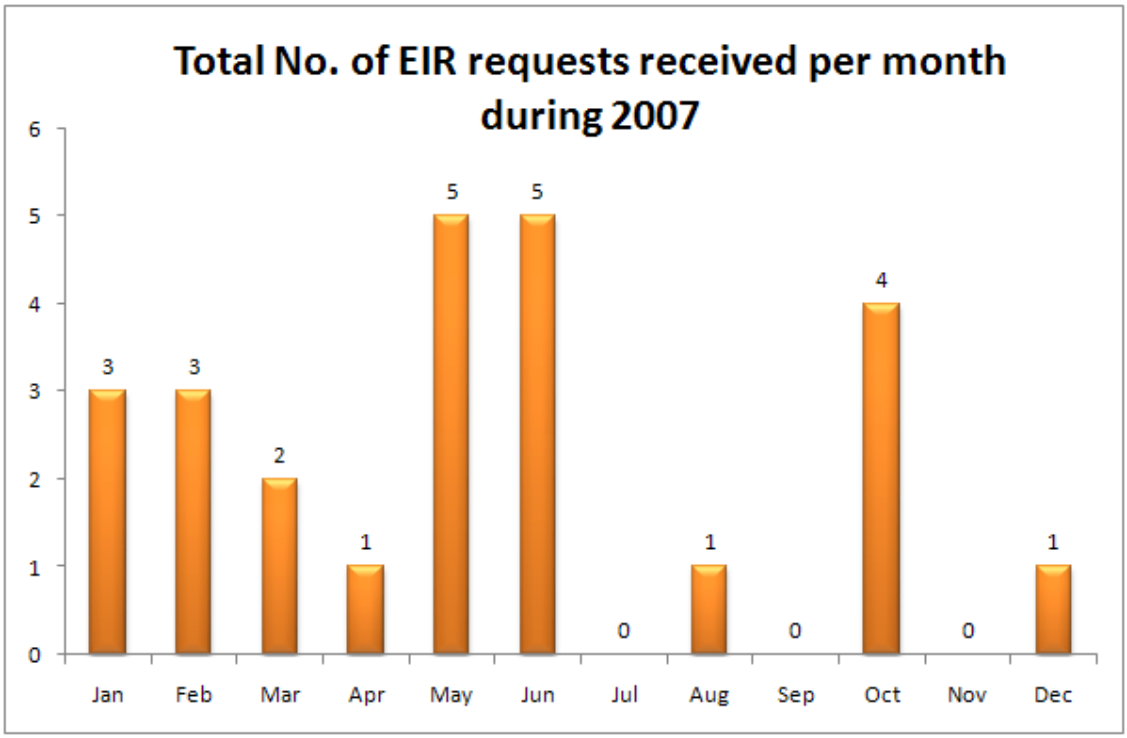
FOI



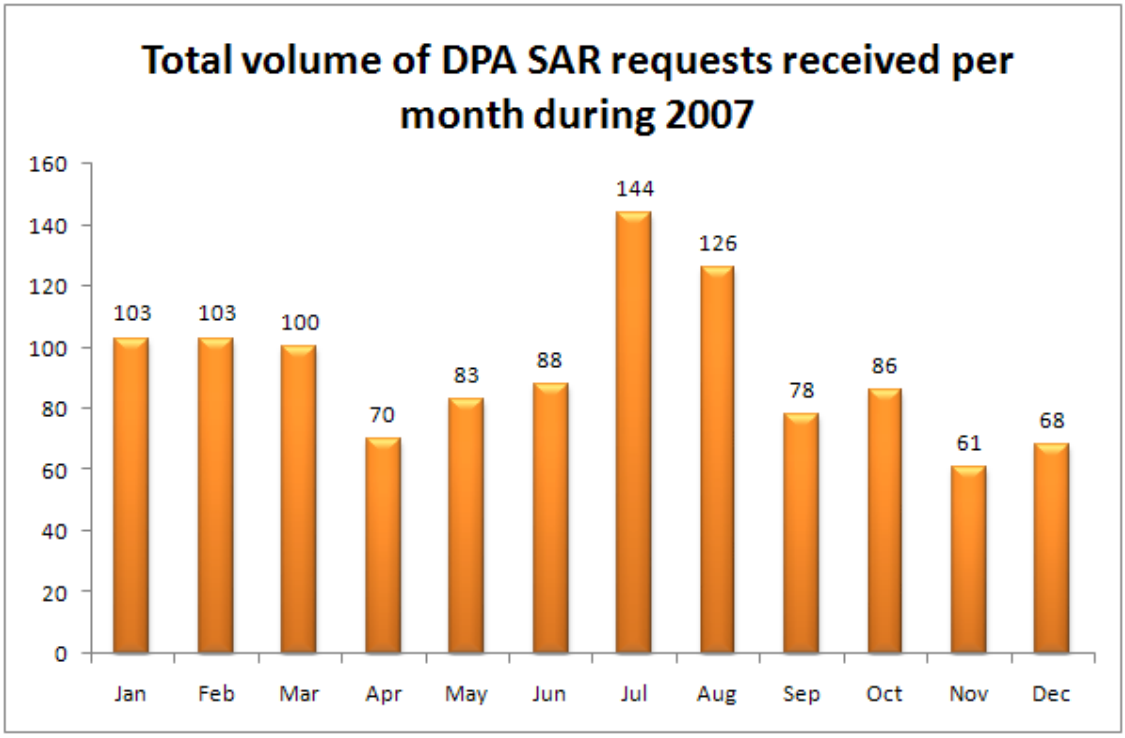


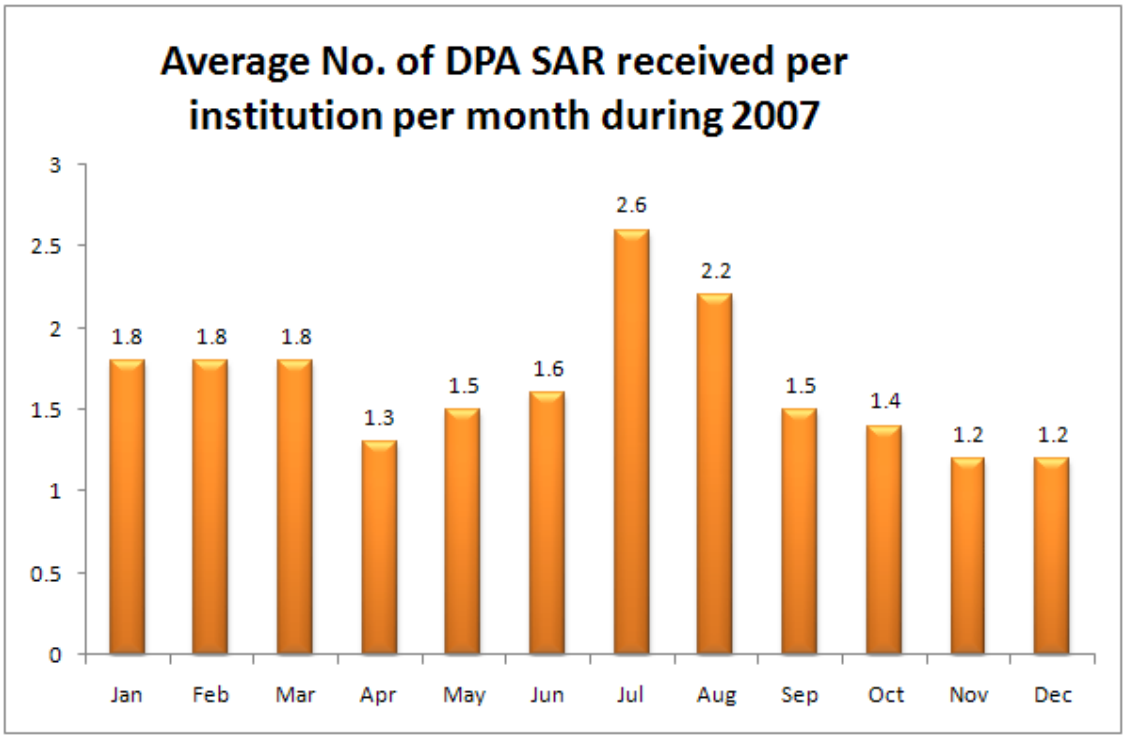

Trend in mean average No. of FOI requests per institution per month
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
2.8
3.2
3.6
2005
2006
2007

EIR

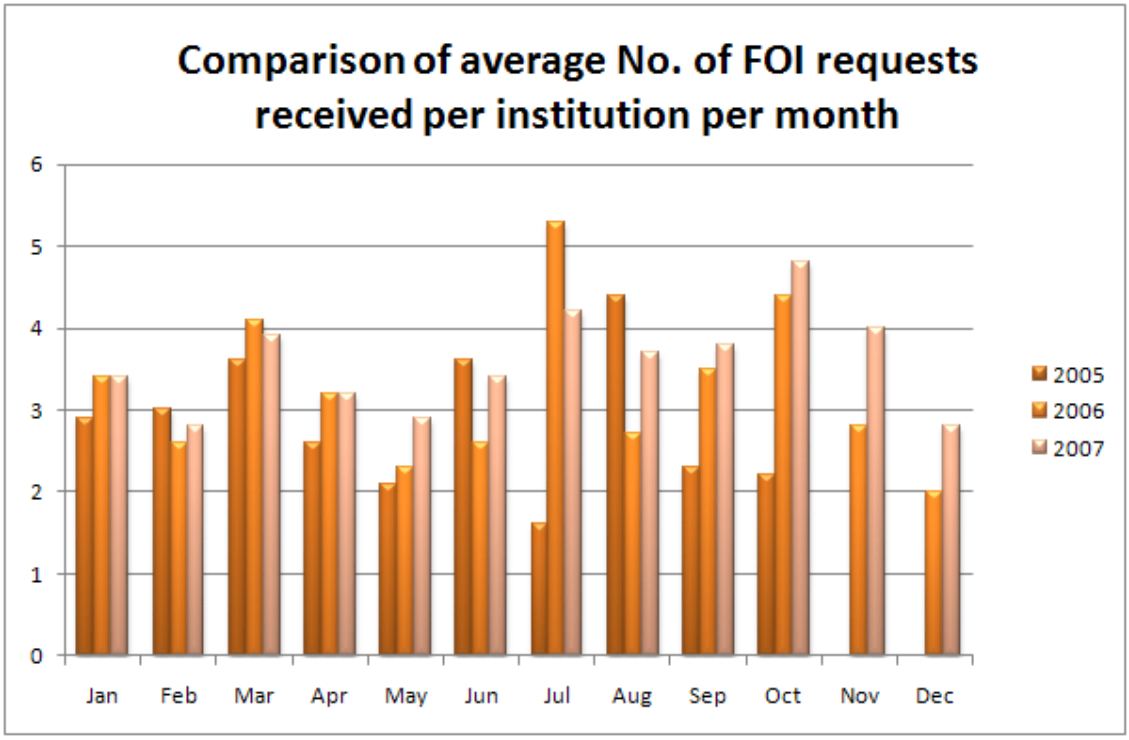

Total No. of EIR requests received per month during 2007
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
3
3
2
1
5
5
0
1
0
4
0
1
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec

DPA

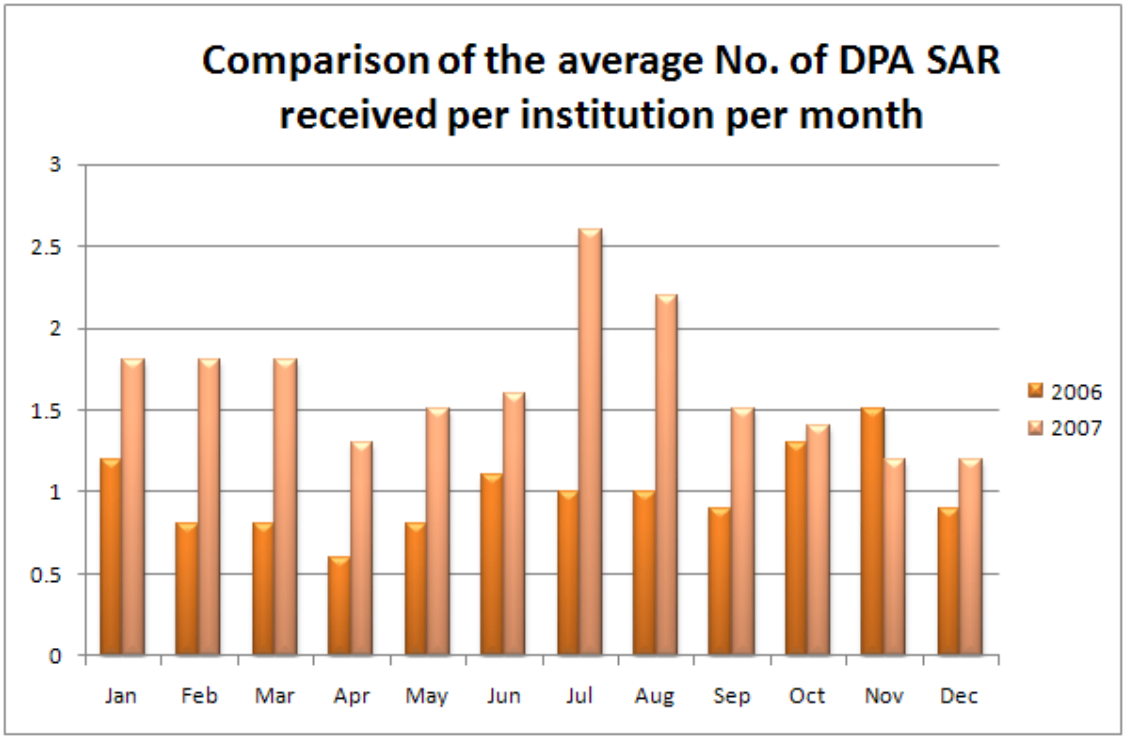

Total volume of DPA SAR requests received per month during 2007
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
103
103
100
70
83
88
144
126
78
86
61
68
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec

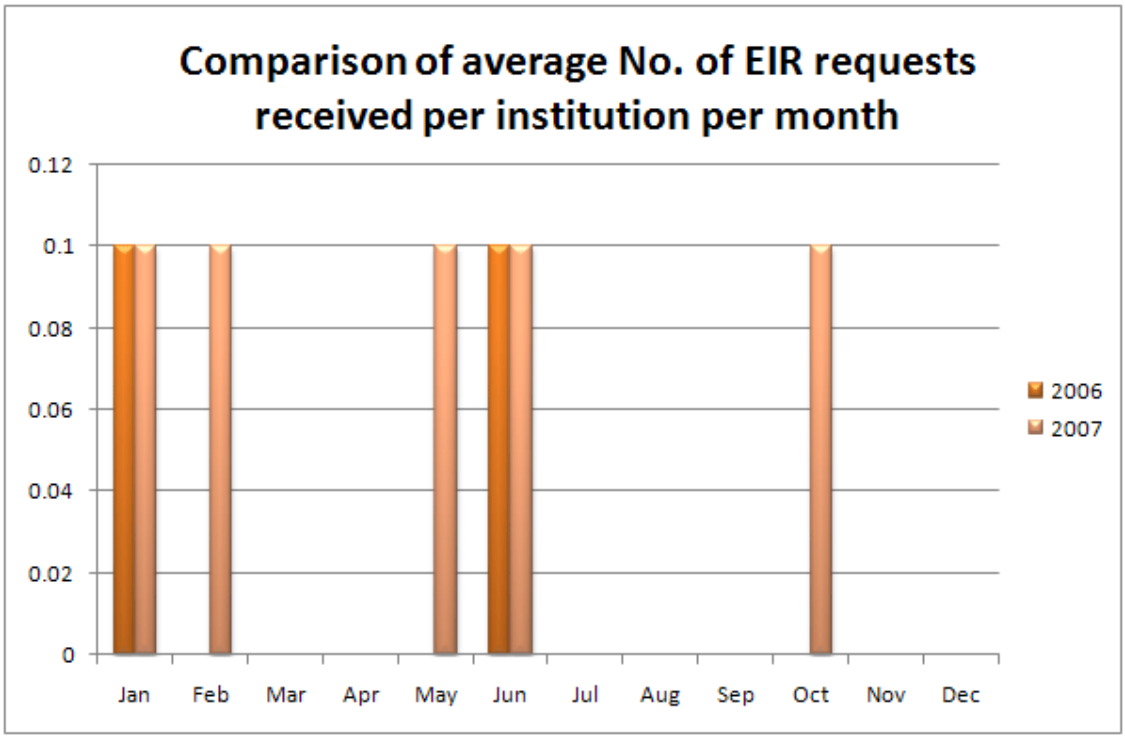

Average No. of DPA SAR received per institution per month during 2007
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
1.8
1.8
1.8
1.3
1.5
1.6
2.6
2.2
1.5
1.4
1.2
1.2
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec

Comparison

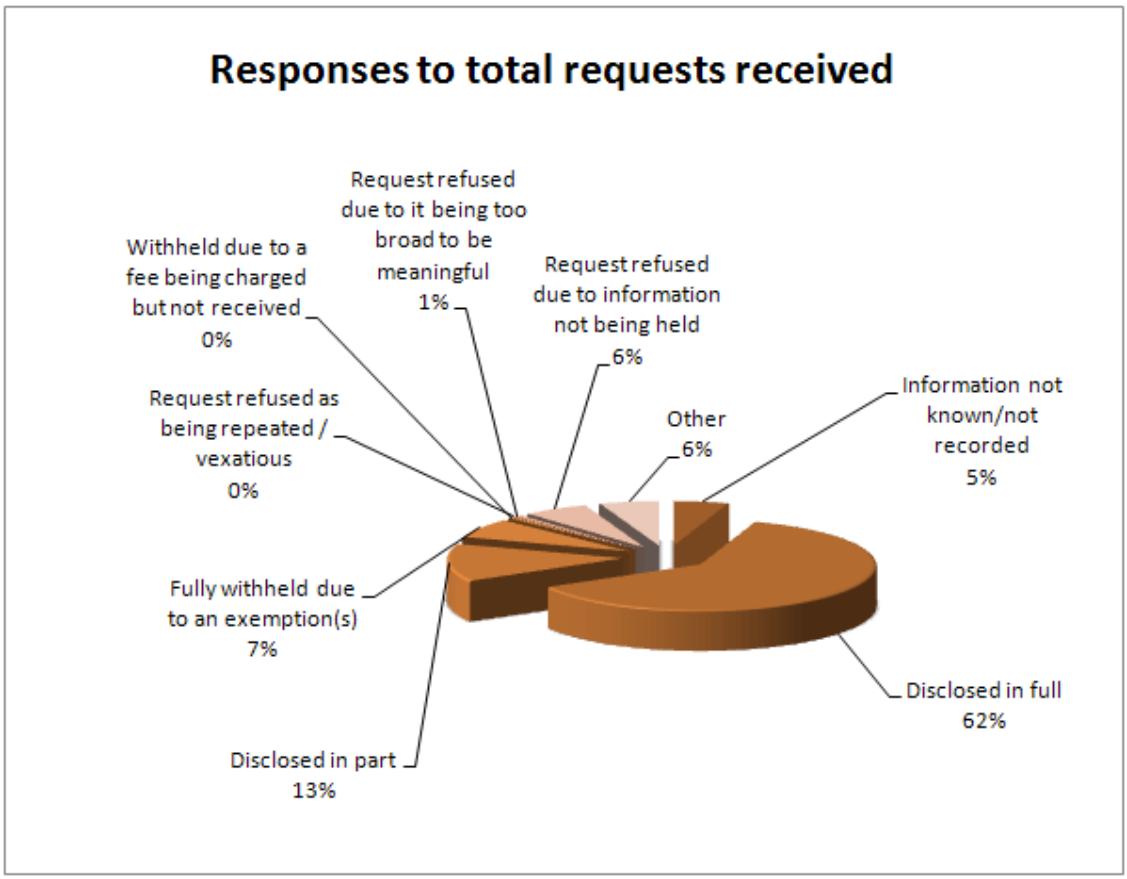


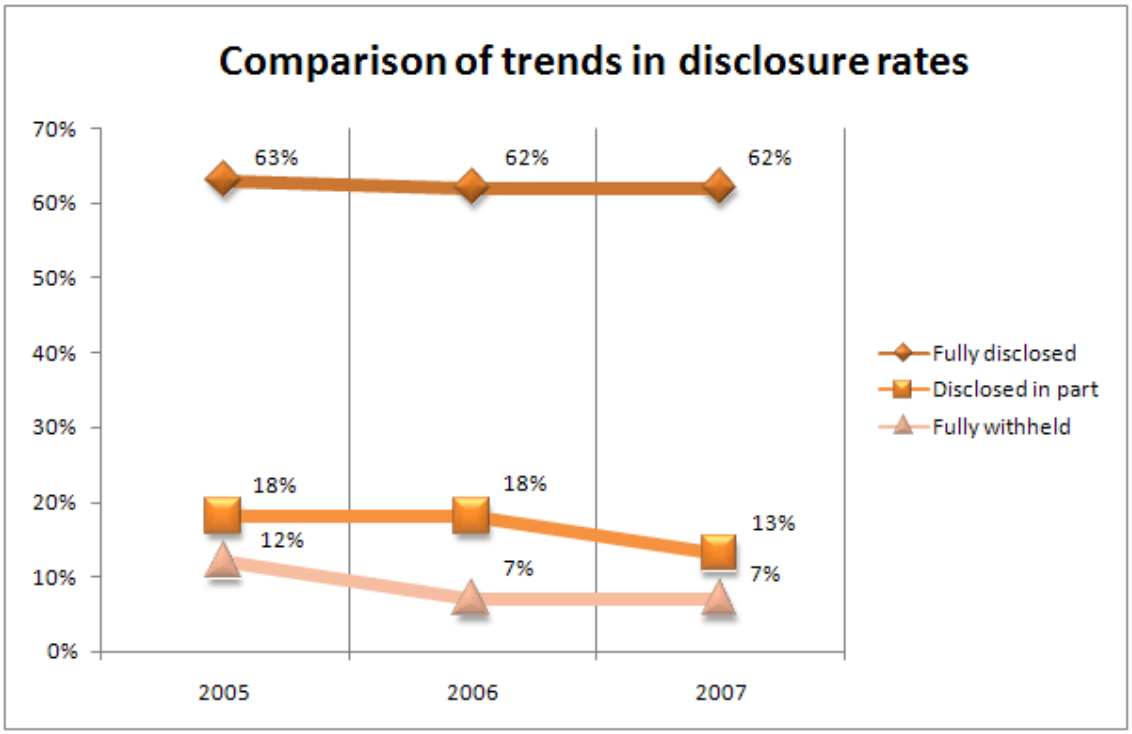
* Note: Figures for November and December 2005 were not collected





Q.6. Of the total number of FOI and EIR requests received how many have resulted in the following responses:





2.3. Types of request

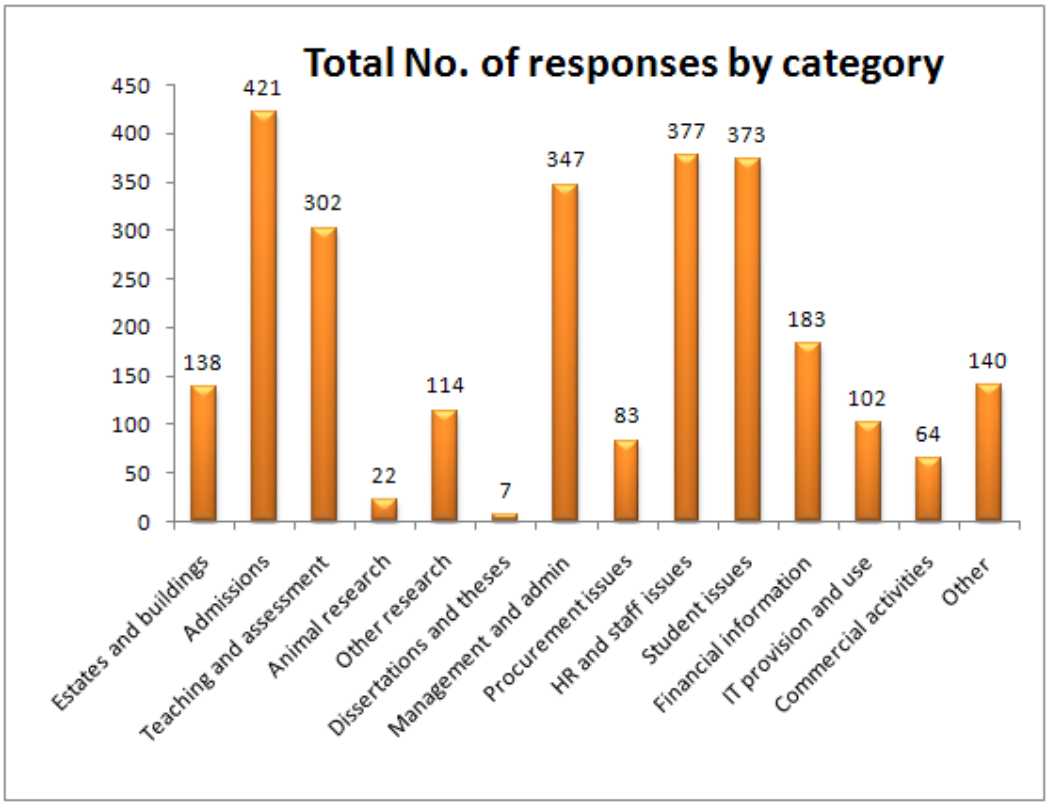
Q.7. How many of the requests you have received have cited the following specific legislation?

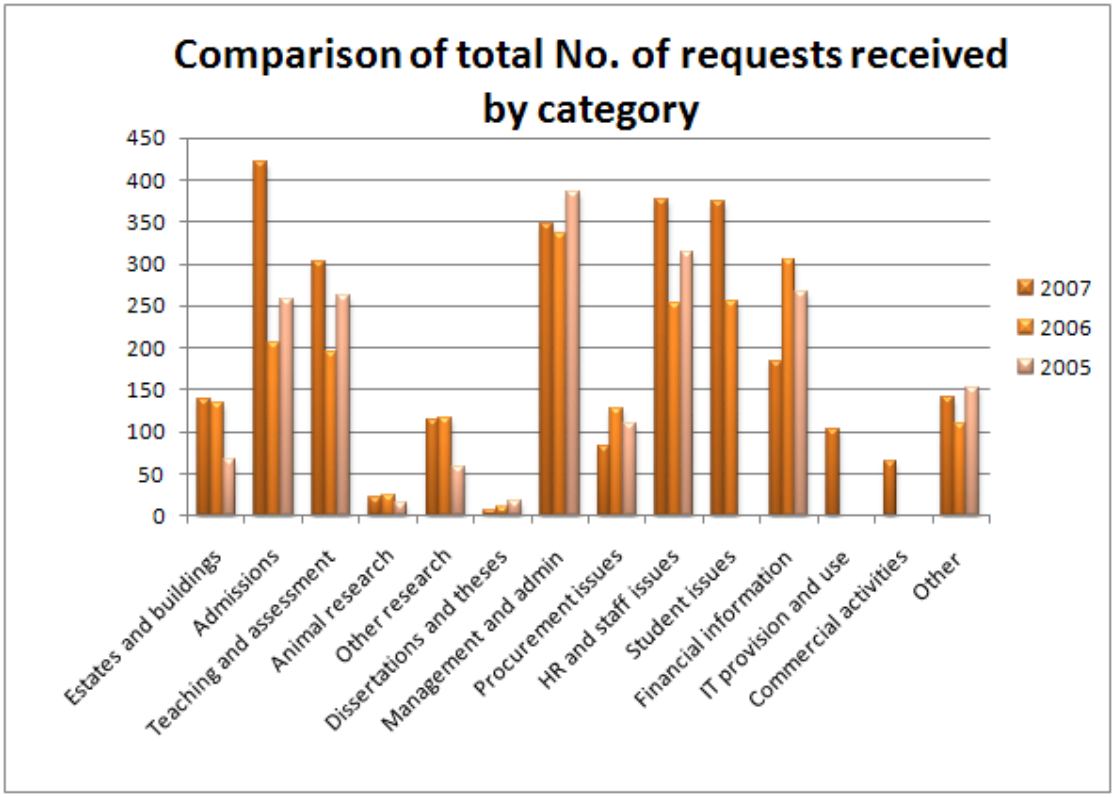
FOI	**1699** requests (**57.1%** of the total FOI requests received)
EIR	**1** requests (**4%** of the total EIR requests received)
DPA	**613** request (**55.2%** of the total DPA SAR received)
Total	**2313** requests (**56.3%** of all categories of requests received)

Q.8. How many requests have you received which have been 'mixed' requests (i.e. which have required handling under more than one piece of information access legislation)?

128 mixed requests received

Q.9. Of the total number of requests received which you have dealt with under FOI how many have related to the following subject areas: (if a request covers more than one of the areas outlined below please record it under the principal subject area)



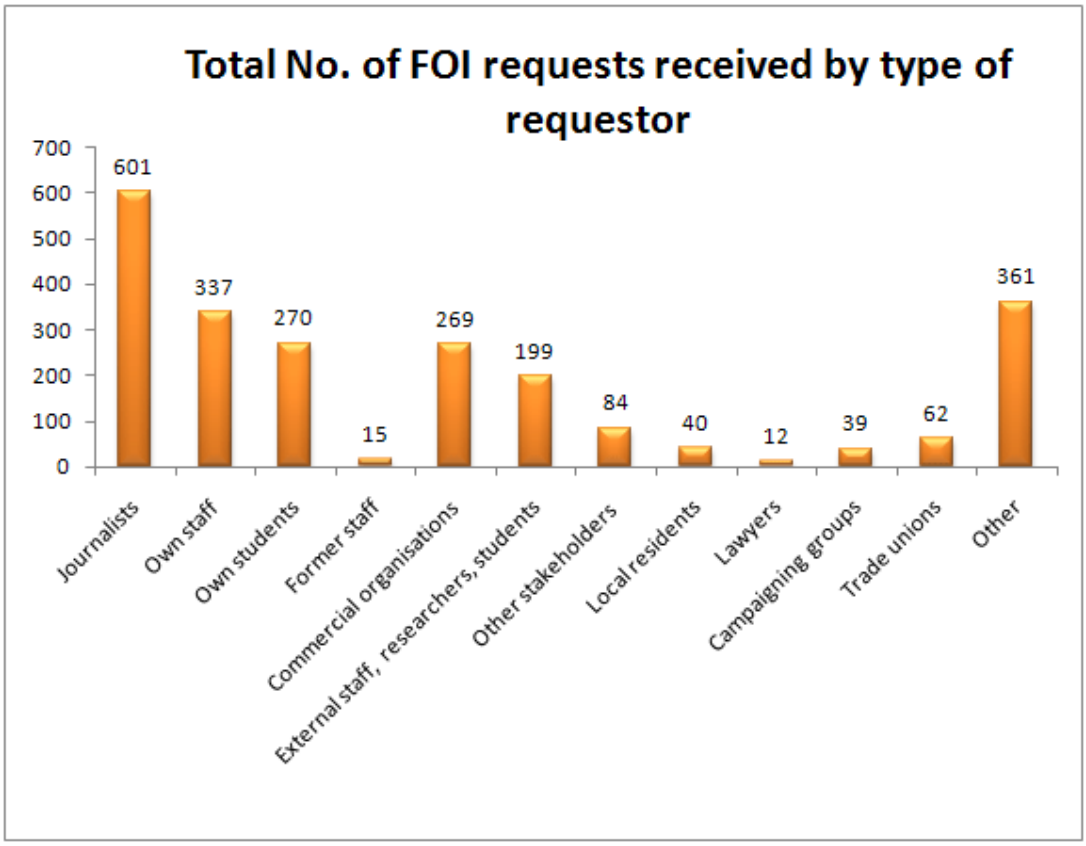


*Note: Figures for 'student issues' were not collected in 2005. Figures for 'IT provision & use' and 'Commercial activities' were only collected in 2007.

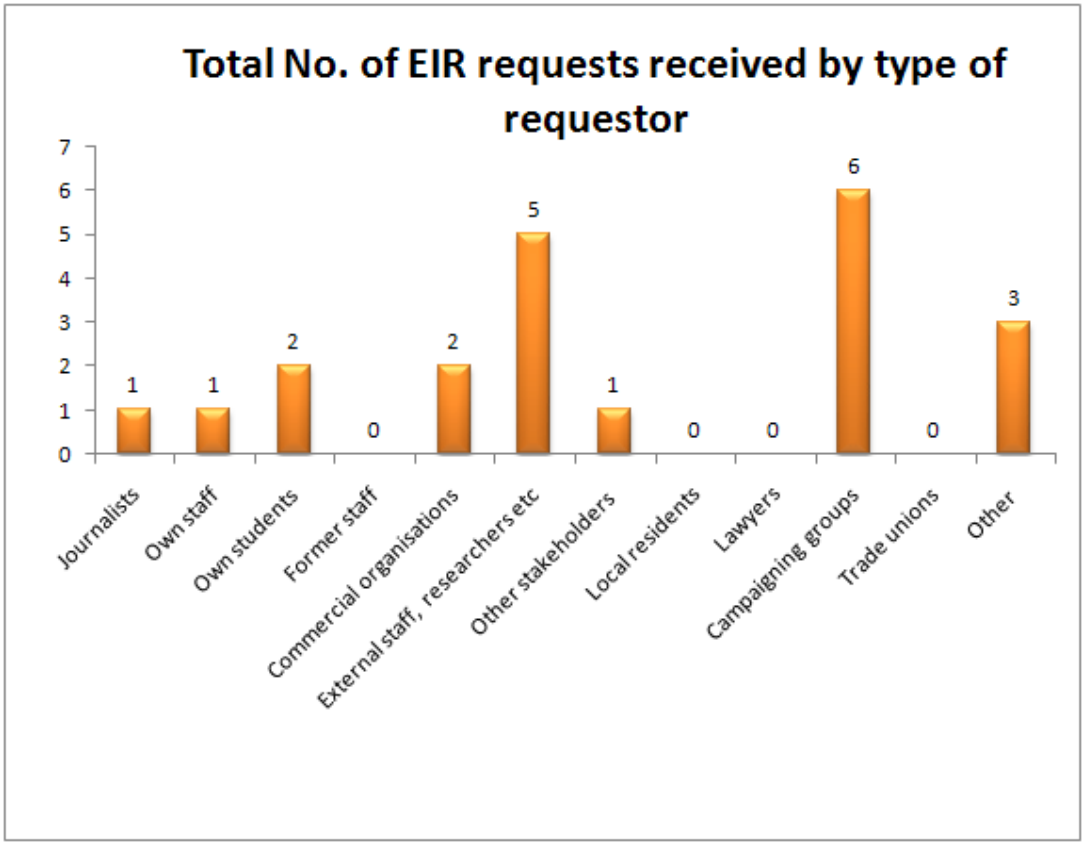
2.4. Types of requestor

Q.10. Of the FOI & EIR requests you have received since January 2007 how many have been from each of the following categories of requestor. Please provide separate figures for FOI and EIR:

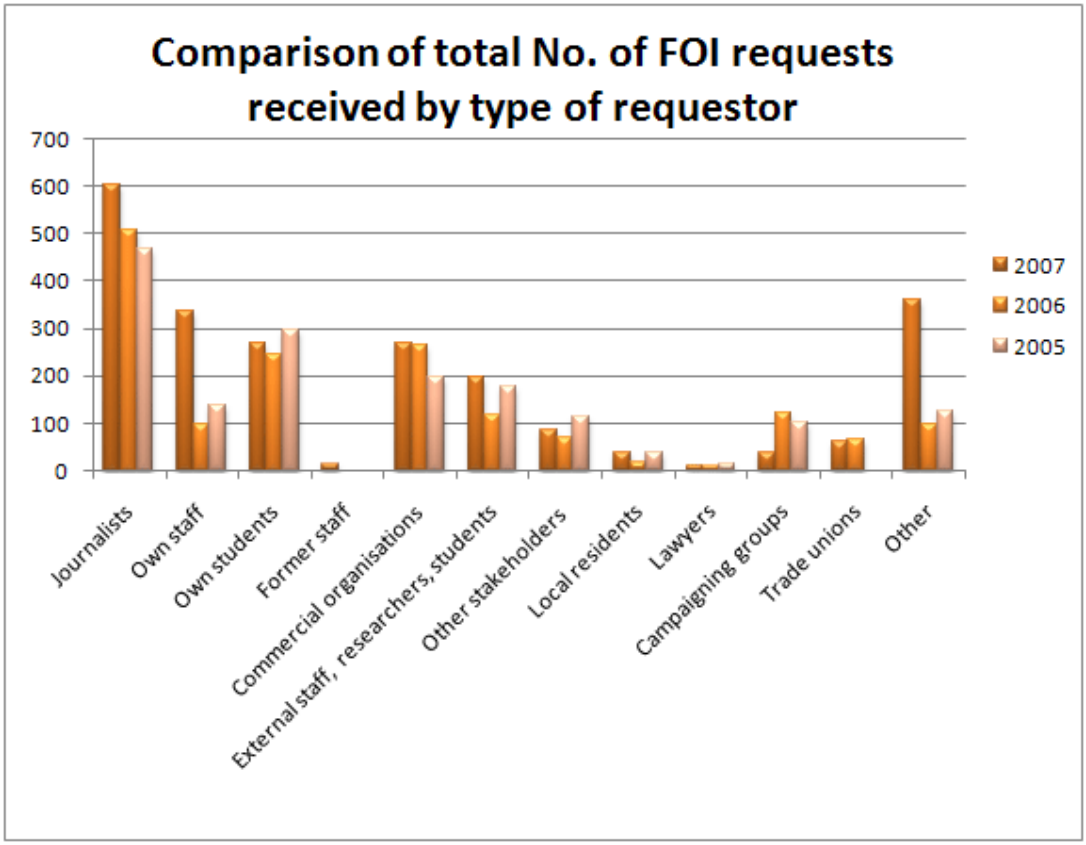
FOI



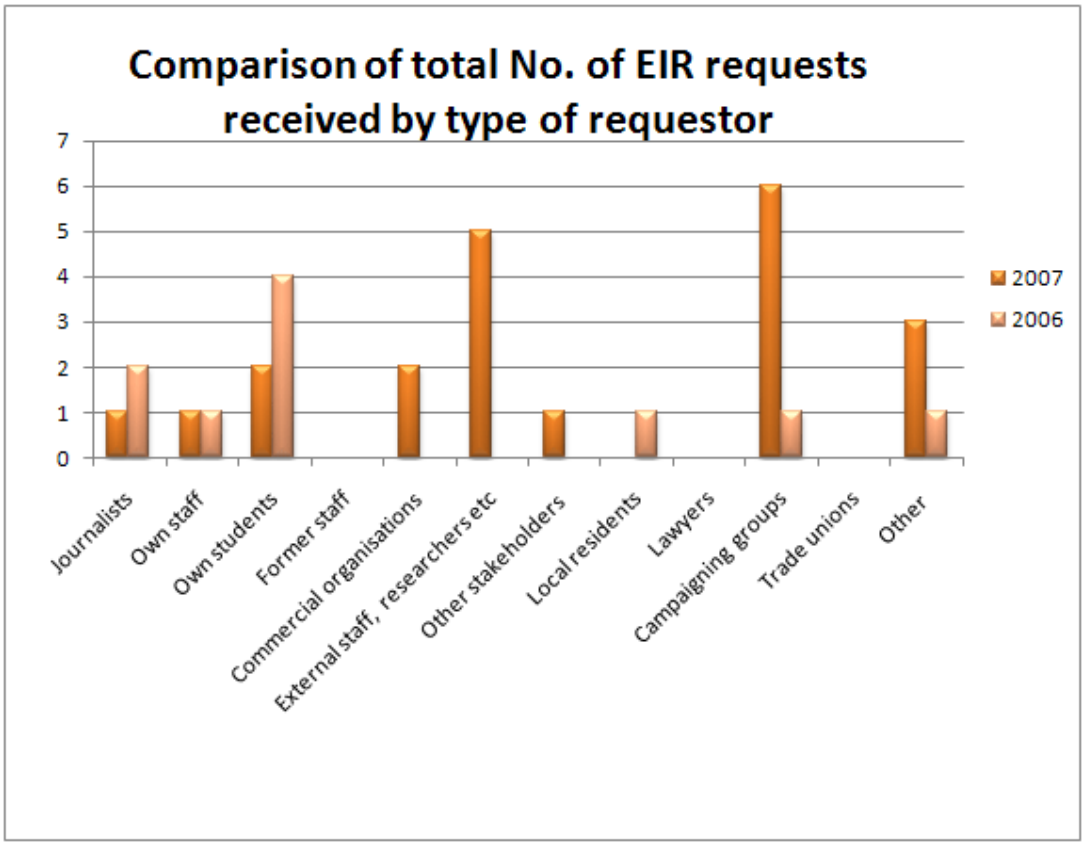
EIR



Comparison



*Note: Figures for 'Trade Unions' were not collected in 2005

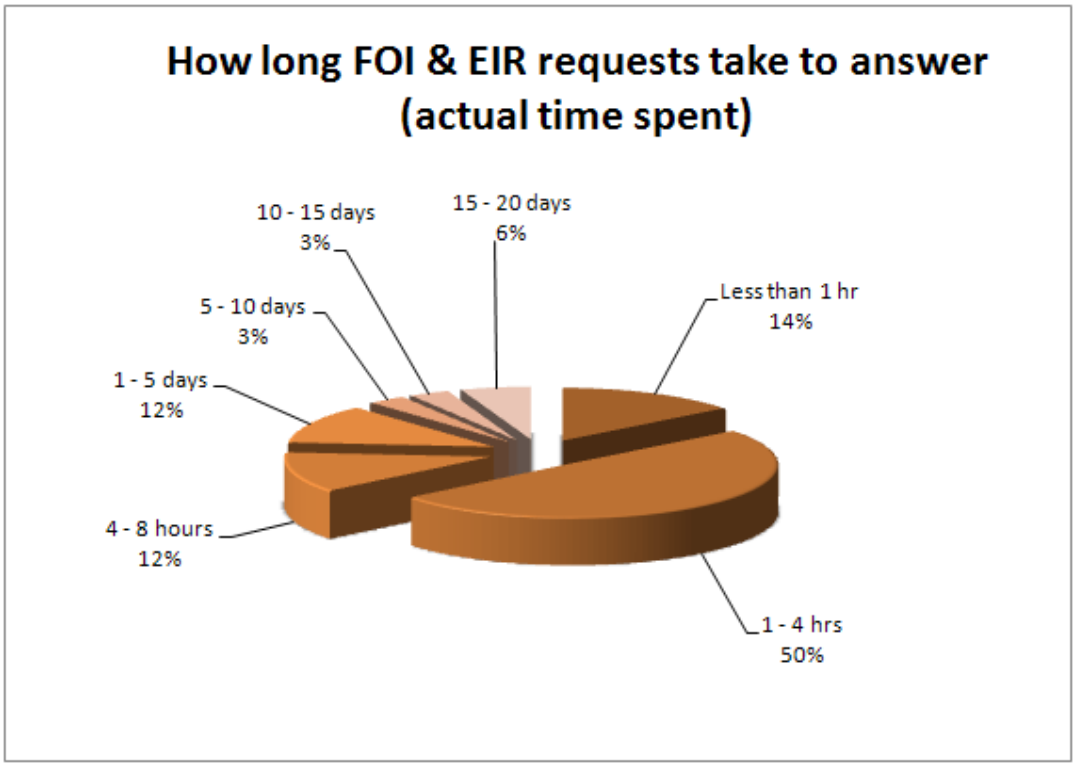

Comparison of total No. of EIR requests received by type of requestor
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
2007
2006
Journalists
Own staff
Own students
Former staff
Commercial organisations
External staff, researchers etc
Other stakeholders
Local residents
Lawyers
Campaigning groups
Trade unions
Other

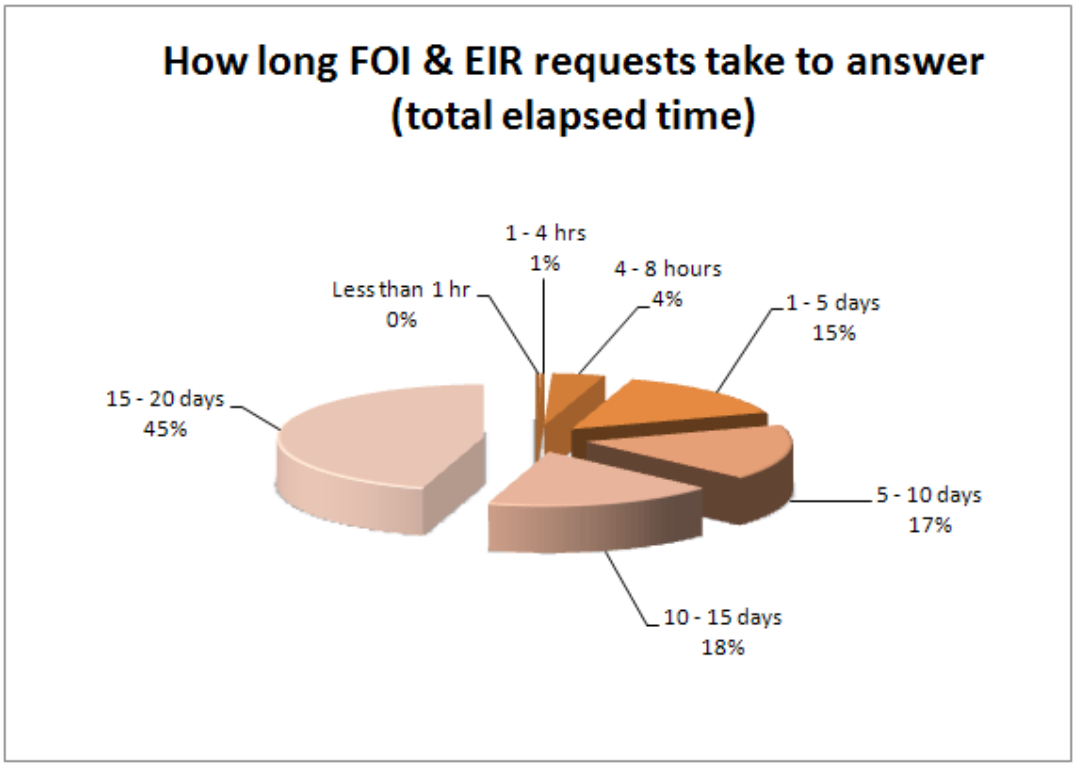
2.5. Responding to requests

Q.11. If you routinely record the amount of time it takes to answer an FOI / EIR request or DPA SAR please indicate how many requests have taken the following periods of time to complete. (including forwarding / logging of request, identifying and locating relevant information, considering exemptions, redacting / preparing information for release, internal approval process for release).

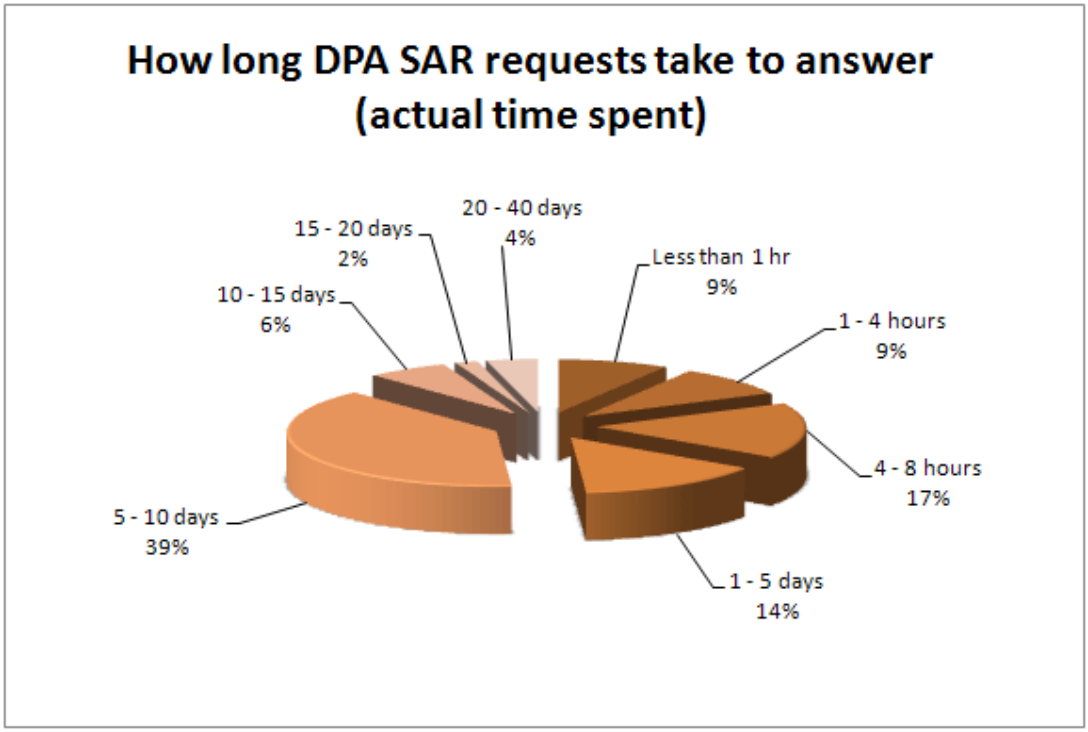
If you do not record this information, please indicate which of the following lengths of time you feel that the majority of requests have taken to answer.

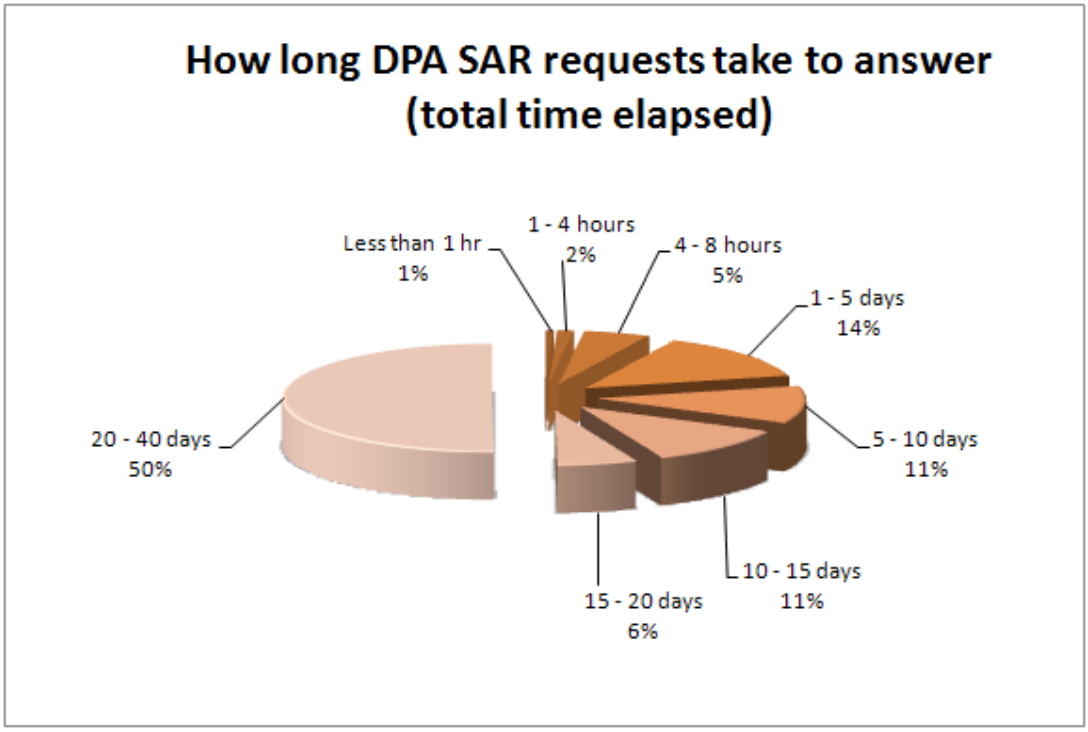
FOI/EIR





DPA


How long DPA SAR requests take to answer (actual time spent)
20 - 40 days 4%
15 - 20 days 2%
Less than 1 hr 9%
10 - 15 days 6%
1 - 4 hours 9%
4 - 8 hours 17%
5 - 10 days 39%
1 - 5 days 14%


How long DPA SAR requests take to answer (total time elapsed)
1 - 4 hours 2%
Less than 1 hr 1%
4 - 8 hours 5%
1 - 5 days 14%
20 - 40 days 50%
5 - 10 days 11%
10 - 15 days 11%
15 - 20 days 6%

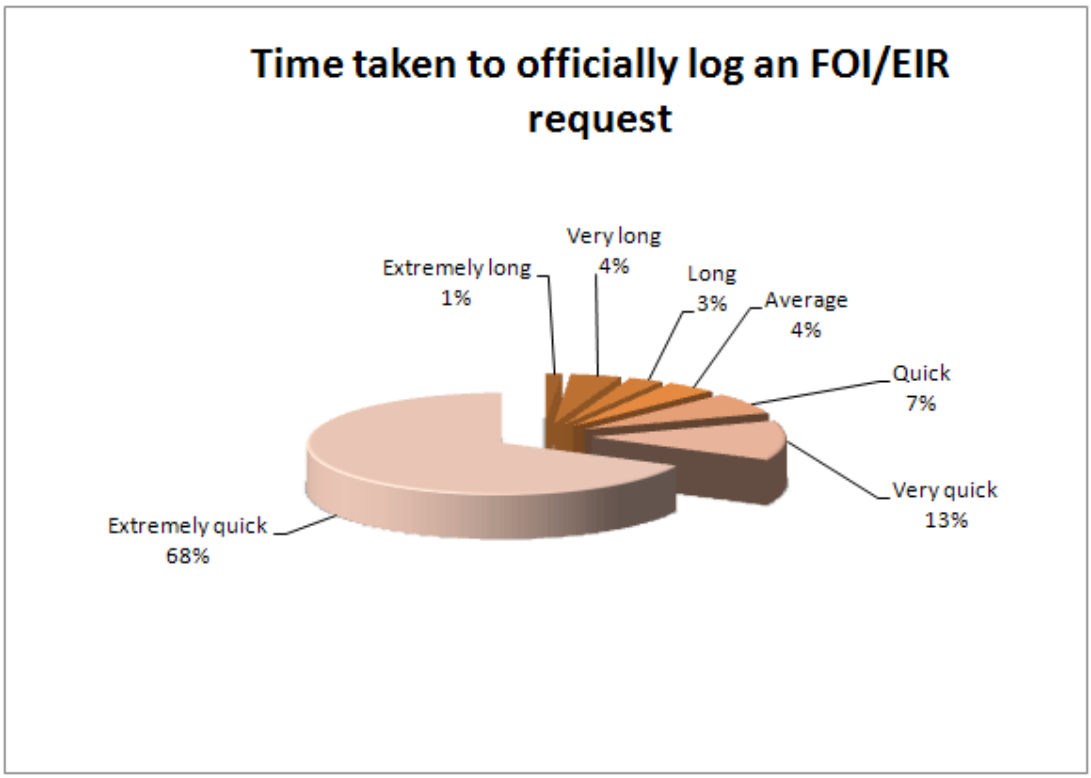
Q.12 How many FOI or EIR requests did you receive during 2007 which you did not complete within 20 working days?

166 requests out of a total of **2996** (**4.5%**) received were not completed within **20** working days
Of those **166**, **23** (**0.8%**) were caused by extensions to the deadline to allow for consideration of the public interest test

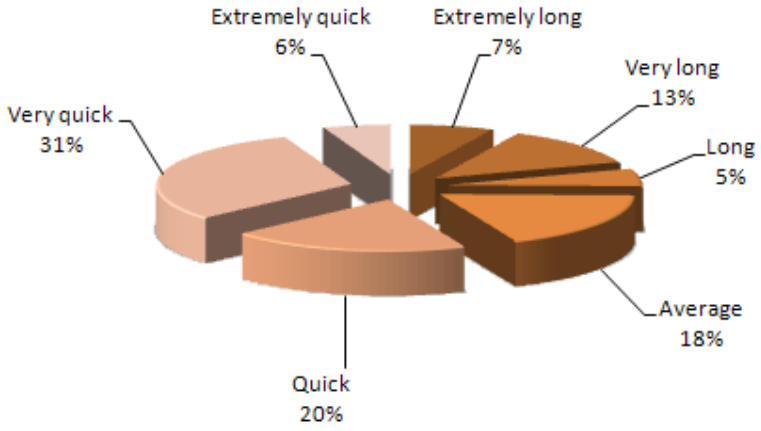
Q.13. How many DPA subject access requests did you receive during 2007 which you did not complete within 40 days?

26 Subject Access Requests out of a total of **1110** (**2.3%**) were not completed within **40** days

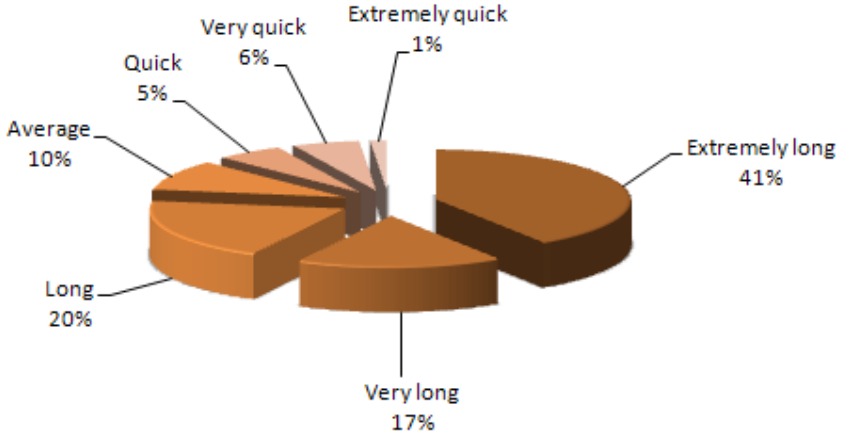
Q.14. Please rank the steps below in order of the amount of time they usually take when completing an FOI or EIR request (ranging from 1 = longest time to complete to 7 = shortest time to complete)



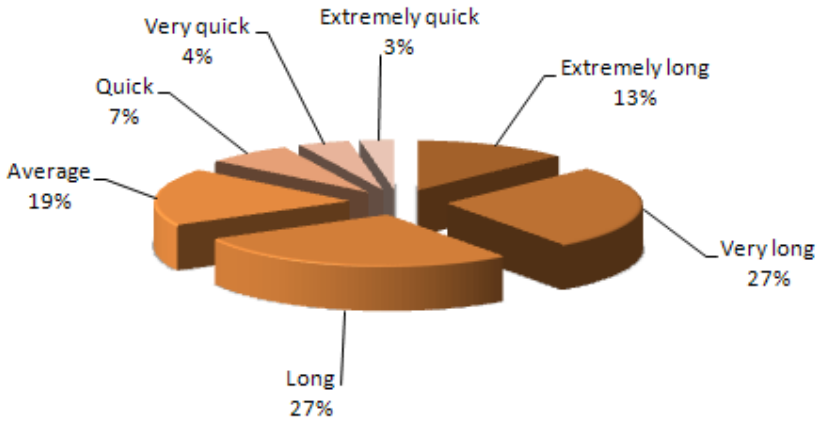
Time taken identifying relevant information sources



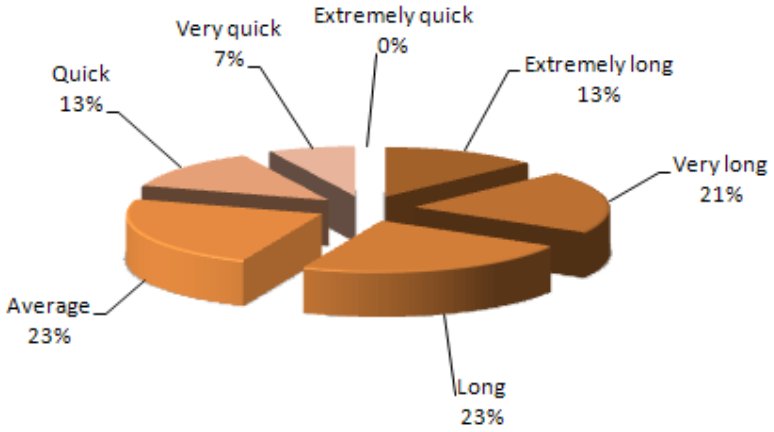
Time taken locating & accessing required information



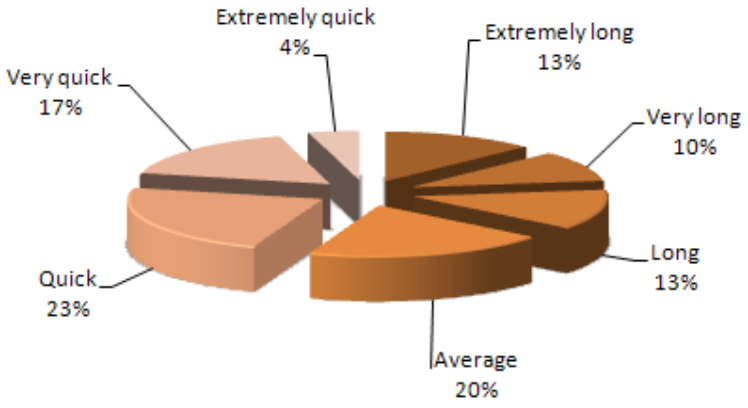
Time taken reviewing the information



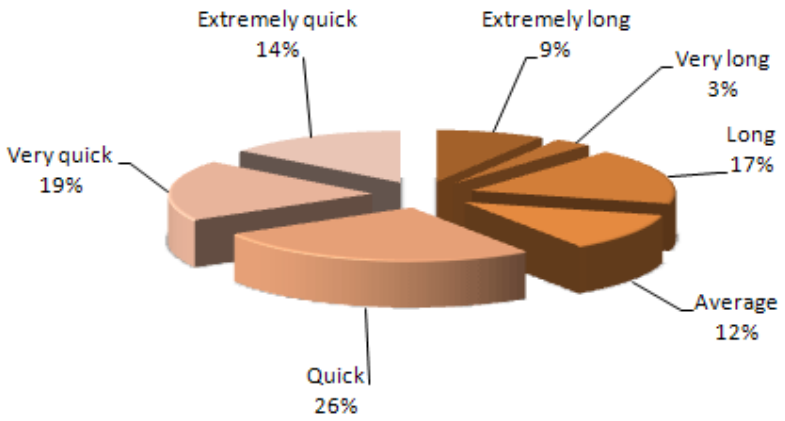
Time taken considering exemptions



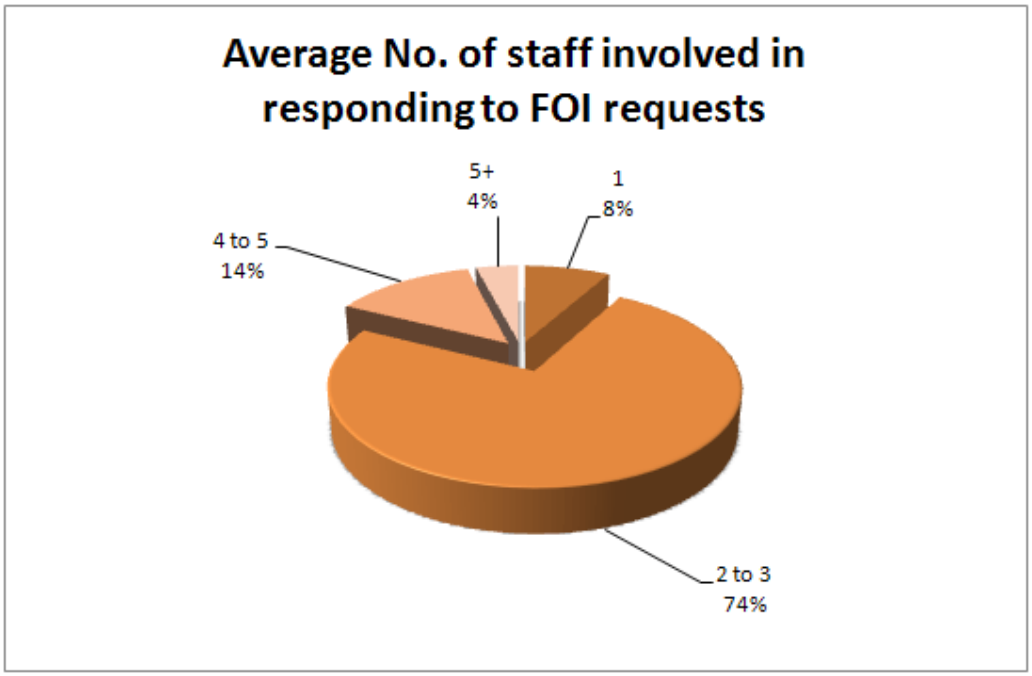
Time taken obtaining internal approval for decisions taken

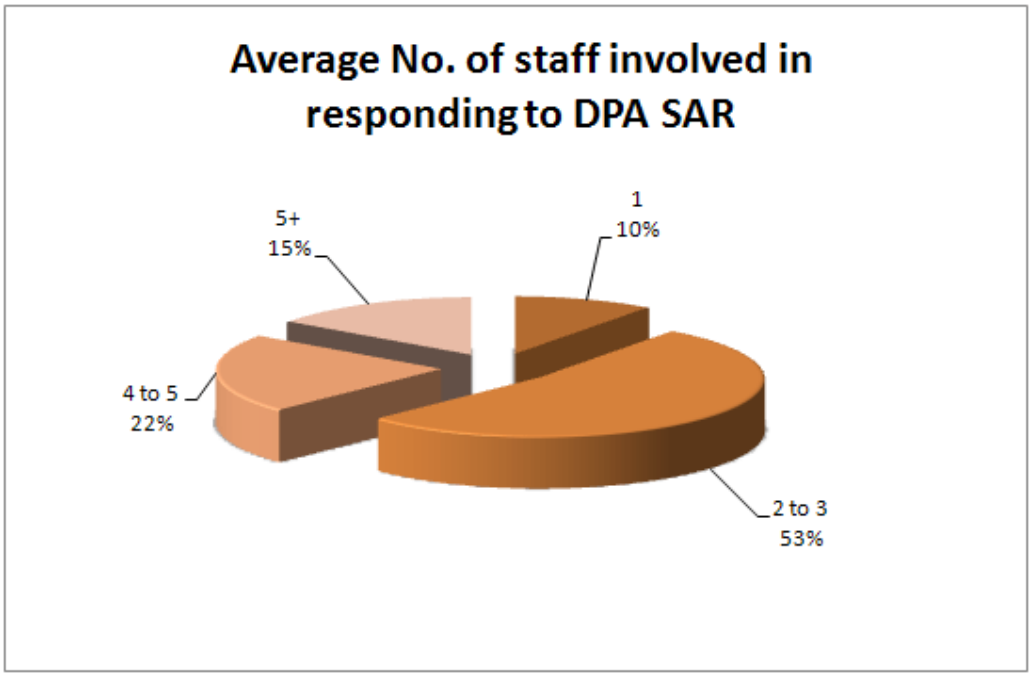


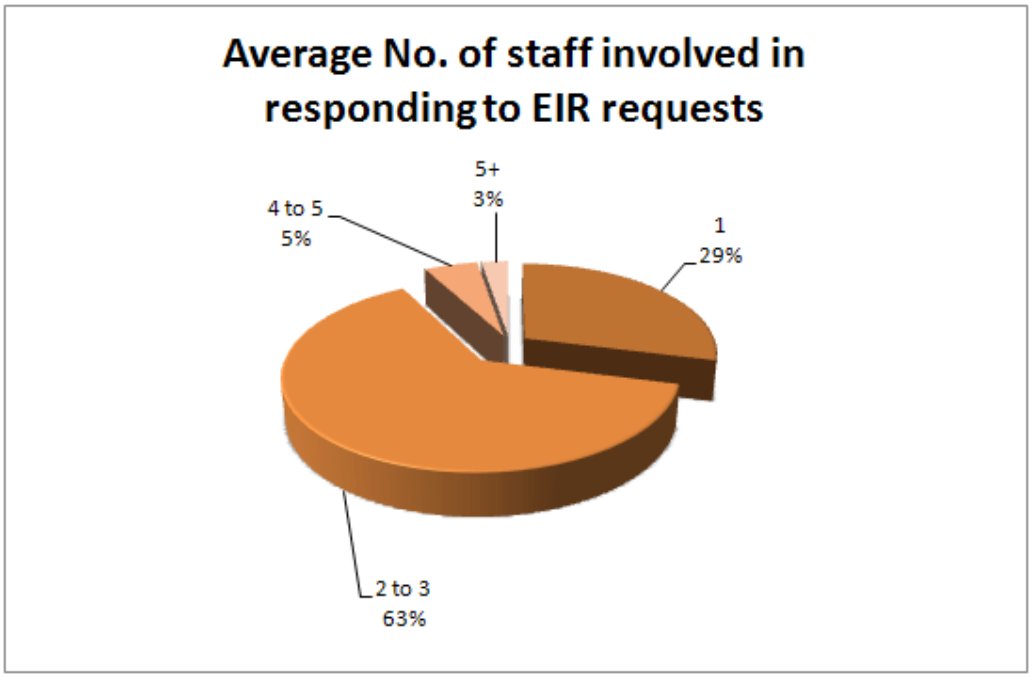
Time taken redacting information



Q.15. On average, how many members of staff are actively involved in responding to an FOI, EIR or DPA request?







Q.16. How many FOI or EIR requests did you receive during 2007 for which you charged a fee?

5 out of **2303** requests (**0.21%**) which were either answered partially or in full resulted in a fee being charged

Q.17. How many FOI or EIR requests did you receive during 2007 for which you charged for disbursements

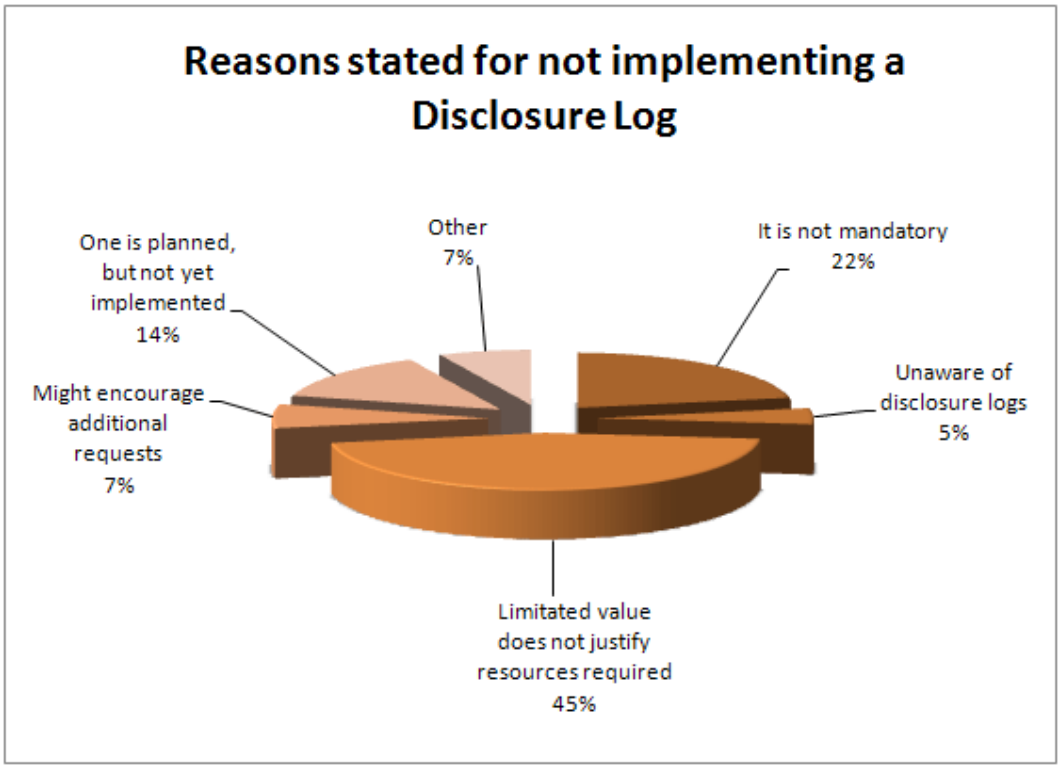
4 out of **2303** requests (**0.17%**) which were either answered partially or in full resulted in disbursements being charged

Q.18. During 2007 how many DPA subject access requests did you charge a £10 fee for?

618 out of **1110** Subject Access Requests (**55.6%**) required payment of a **£10** fee

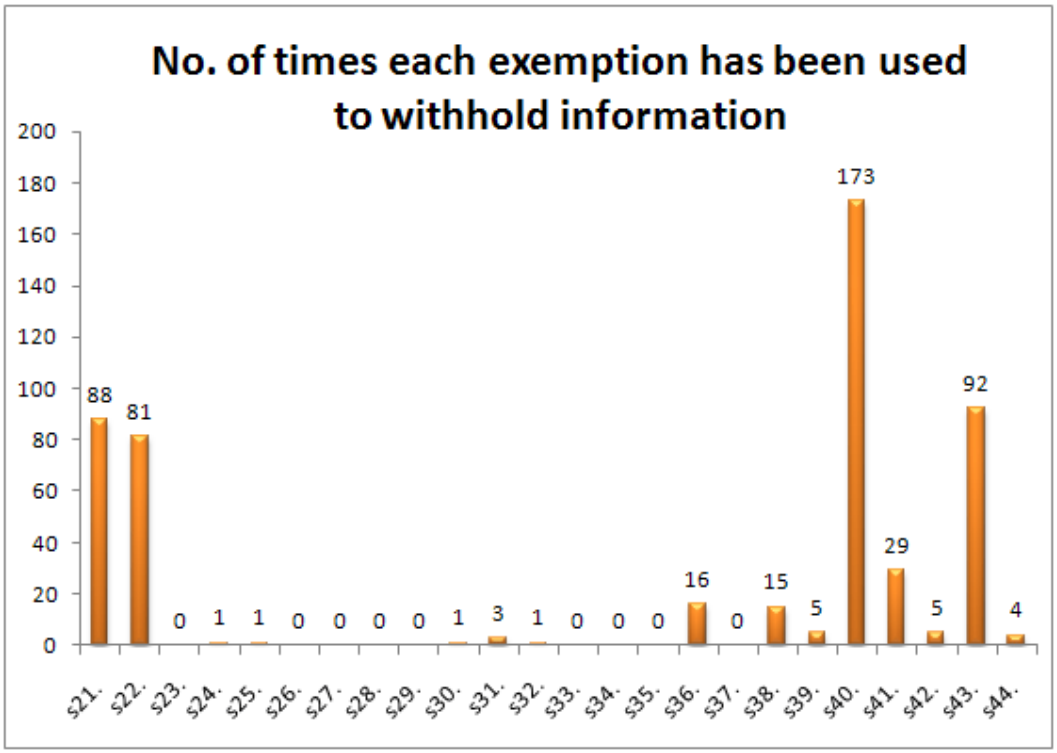
Q.19. Do you publish the FOI or EIR requests you have received and the answers / information you have given (e.g. in the form of a disclosure log)?

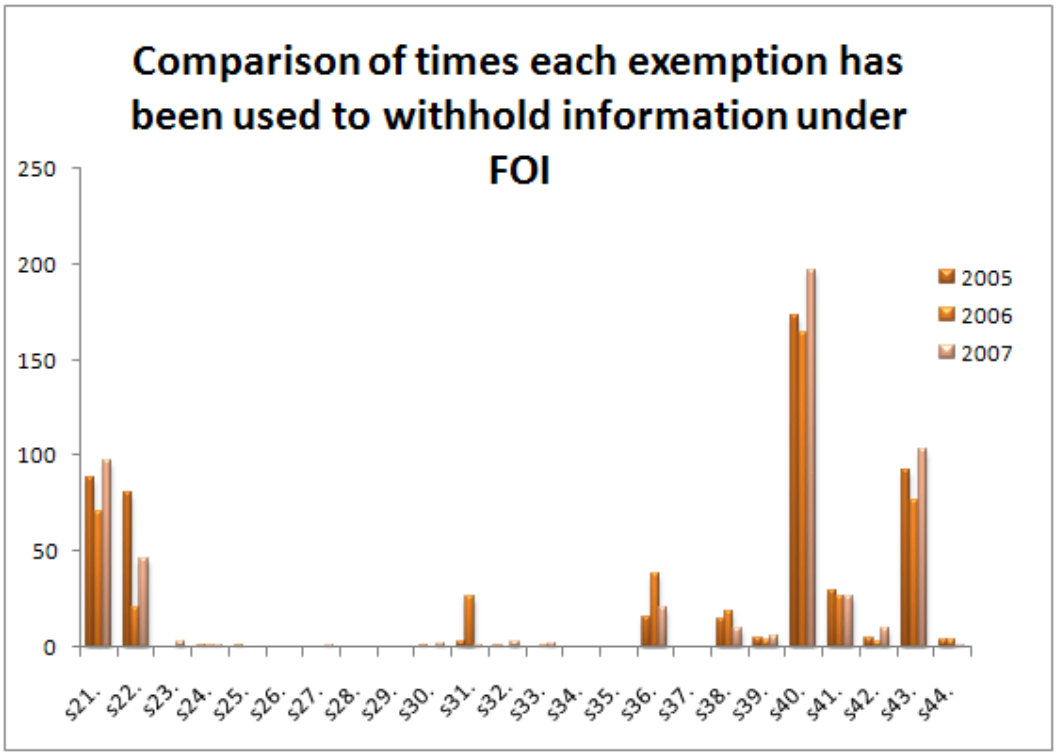
5 institutions do publish the information they provide
69 institutions do not



2.6. Exemptions applied

Q.20. Since January 2007 how many times have you relied on the following exemptions to withhold information requested under FOI





Key to exemption numbers

21. Information accessible to applicant by other means.

22. Information intended for future publication.

23. Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters.

24. National security.

25. Certificates under ss. 23 and 24: supplementary provisions.

26. Defence.

27. International relations.

28. Relations within the United Kingdom.

29. The economy.

30. Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities.

31. Law enforcement.

32. Court records, etc.

33. Audit functions.

34. Parliamentary privilege.

35. Formulation of government policy, etc.

36. Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs.

37. Communications with Her Majesty, etc. and honours.

38. Health and safety.

39. Environmental information.

40. Personal information.

41. Information provided in confidence.

42. Legal professional privilege.

43. Commercial interests.

44. Prohibitions on disclosure.

2.7. Appeals process

Q.21. Since January 2007 how many requests for information which have been either partially or completely refused by the institution have subsequently been subject to an internal appeal

64 decisions to withhold information have been subject to an internal appeal (2.10% of all FOI/EIR requests received)

Of these:

50 Upheld by the internal appeal
24 Overruled by the internal appeal
5 Decisions still pending

Q.22. How many requests since January 2007 have been the subject of external appeal (i.e. involving the Office of the Information Commissioner, Scottish Information Commissioner, the Information Tribunal or the Court of Session)?

16 decisions to withhold information have been the subject of external appeal (**0.53%** of all FOI/EIR requests received)

How many of these decisions to refuse a request, either partially or completely, were:

1 Upheld completely by the external appeal
1 Upheld in part by the external appeal
2 Over ruled by the external appeal
12 Decisions still pending

Q.23. How many times since January 2007 have you sought formal legal advice when responding to a request or appeal?

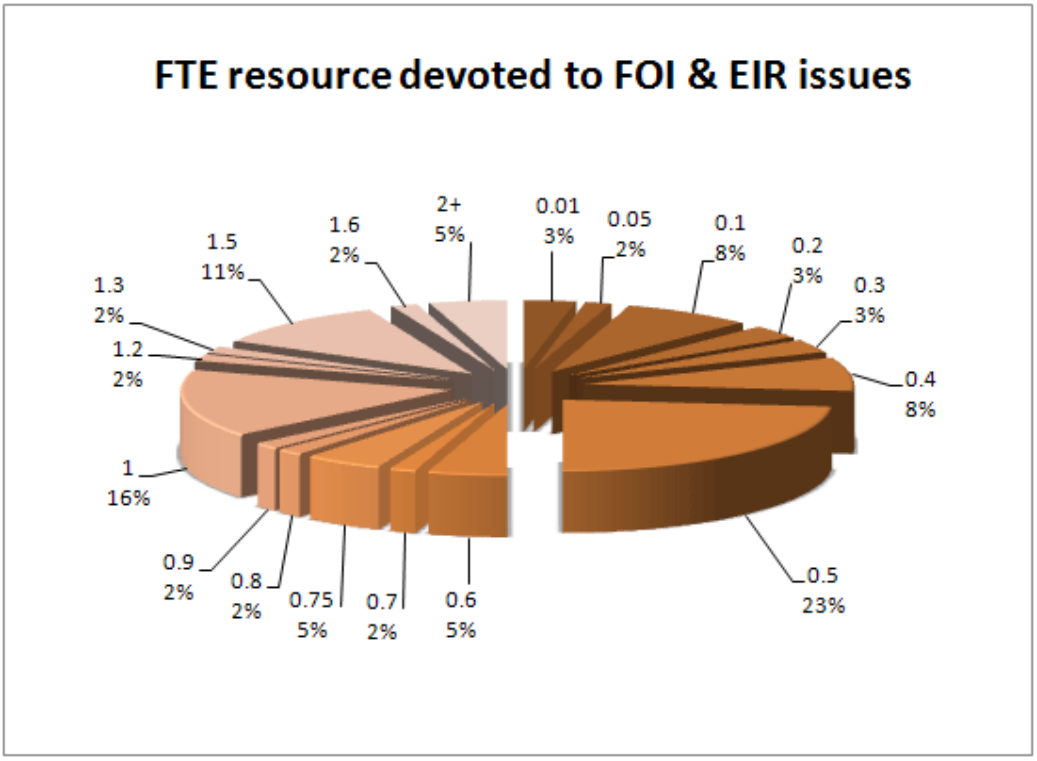
Legal advice has been sought on **88** occasions regarding FOI matters
33 times regarding DPA issues and **2** times regarding the EIR

3. Staffing Issues

Q.24. Do you have an officially designated FOI Officer and/or team?

74 (**69%**) Yes

Q.25. If so, approximately what equivalent FTE resource is devoted to FOI issues (please note this can be more than 1.0 FTE if more than one person is employed in this area)?

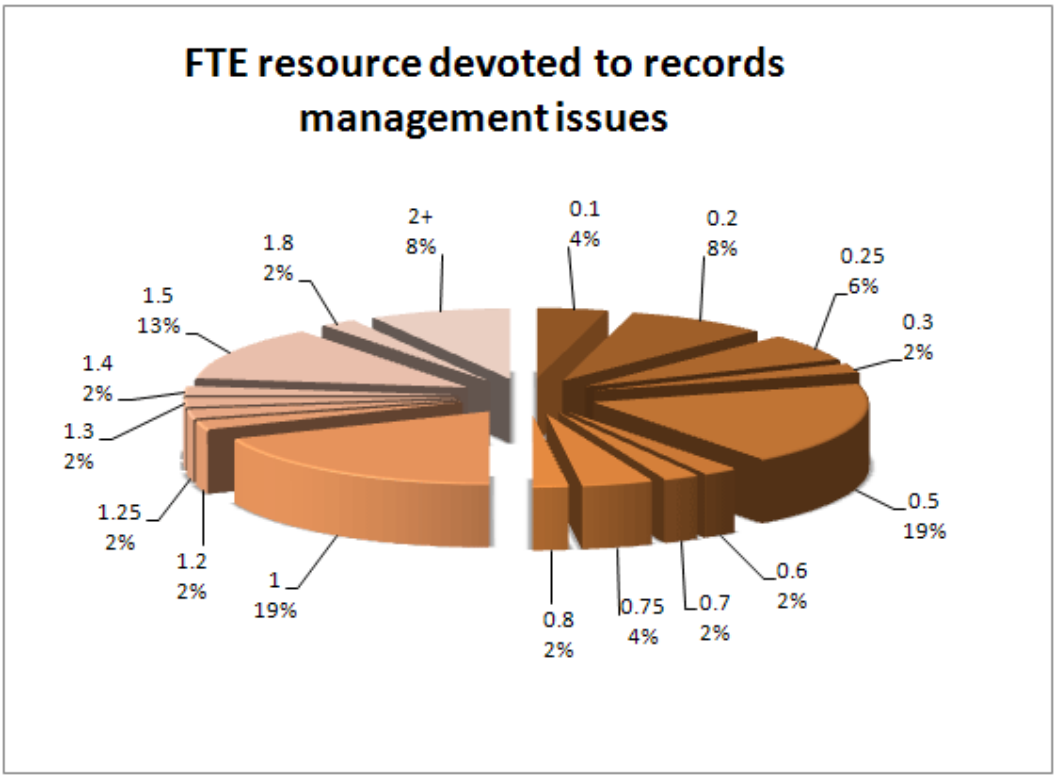


4. Records Management

Q.26. Does your institution have an officially designated Records Manager and/or team?

47 (**43.9%**) Yes
25 (**23.4%**) No

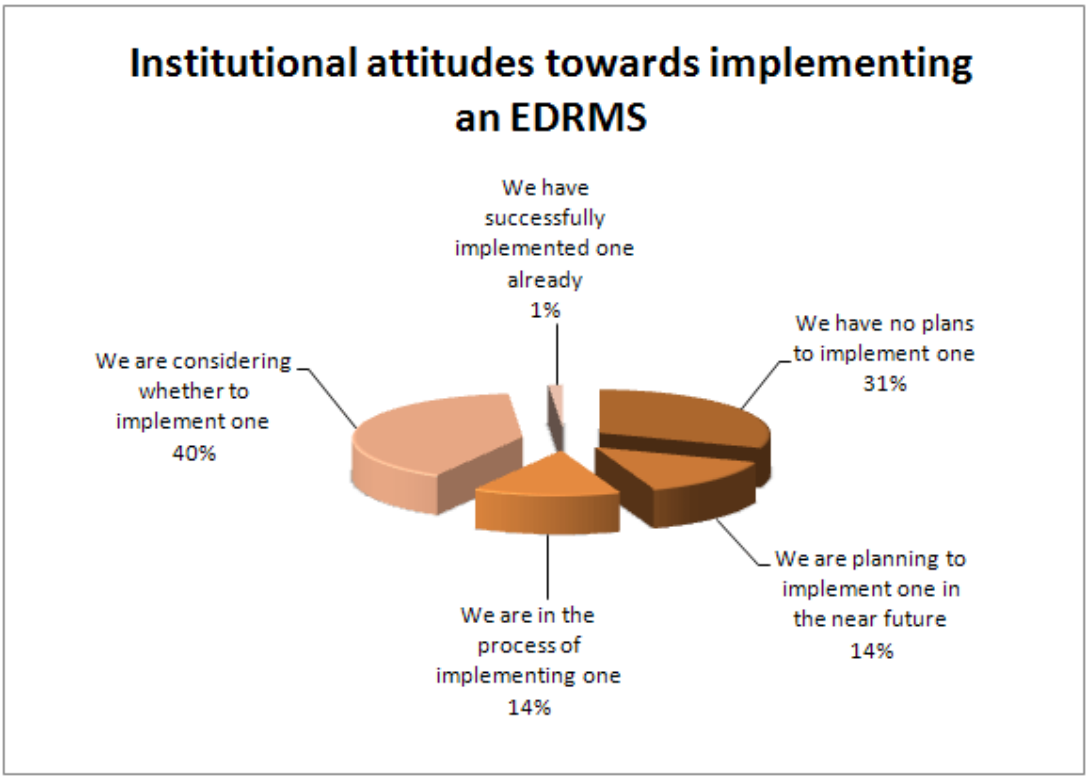
Q.27. If so, approximately what equivalent FTE resource is devoted to Records Management issues (please note this can be more than 1.0 FTE if more than one person is employed in this area)?



Q.28. Do you have an approved records management policy in place?

44 (**41.1%**) Yes
26 (**24.3%**) No

Q.29. Which of the following best describes your institution's approach to implementing an Electronic Document & Records Management System?



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