



I N F O R M A T I O N

B U L L E T I N

Time Intervals for Criminal Proceedings in Magistrates' Courts: February 2000

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This bulletin presents the results from the February 2000 Time Intervals Survey. The survey reports on the time taken between stages of proceedings for defendants in completed criminal cases in magistrates' courts. Starting with this survey information on indictable cases is

collected in one week of each quarter. Information on summary offences is additionally collected in the first and third quarters. Please see paragraph 1 of the notes section for more details. All references to indictable cases in this bulletin include triable either way cases.

MAIN POINTS

Methodology

- From the February 1999 survey onwards results are on a new basis (as the rules which previously excluded longer cases are no longer applied). This change means that some intervals in 1999 and 2000 – especially those including first listing to completion – are slightly longer than they would have been on the old basis. Results on the old basis should be used for comparisons with 1998 and earlier years. **Unless stated all results in the text are on the new basis.**

All criminal cases

- Significant variation in time taken across MCCs:** The average time from first listing to completion in February 2000 varied from 12 days for the City of London Justice Rooms, 13 days for Sutton and 15 days for Trafford to 65 days for Sunderland and West Midlands and 73 days for Haringey.

Indictable cases

- Reduction in delay from charge or laying of information to first listing:** The average time from charge or laying of information to first listing fell to 12 days in February 2000 from 23 days in February 1999. This is believed to be mainly as a result of the 'Narey' reforms.
- Reduction in delay from offence to completion:** The average time from offence to completion for defendants in indictable cases decreased to 121 days in February 2000 from 129 days from February 1999 and the average time from first listing to completion fell to 59 days from 60 days in February 1999. However the average time from offence to charge or laying of information rose to 51 days in February 2000 from 46 days in February 1999.
- Increase in percentage of cases completed at first listing:** Twenty-six per cent of defendants' cases were completed at first listing in February 2000 compared with 22 per cent in February 1999.



Time Intervals for Criminal Cases: February 2000

Introduction

1. This bulletin consists of three sections. This first section includes a description of the results from February 2000. The second section contains tables of detailed results from the latest survey and previous surveys while the final section holds methodological notes and further information. Following this introduction the results are in five parts as follows:

- All criminal cases
- Indictable cases
- Indictable cases: Youth Court results
- Youth defendants
- Summary cases

2. From the February 1999 survey the rules which excluded from the analysis cases lasting over a year between either charge or laying of information and first listing or between first listing and completion were removed. These rules had been in place from February 1993. This change was implemented to make this aspect of

the survey compatible with the statistics on delay used for monitoring the Government's pledge to halve the time from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders. These are based on data from the Police National Computer not the Time Intervals Survey. The tables show results both as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied and as they are on the new basis. Unless stated all results in the text are on the new basis. Cases lasting longer than 10 years between offence and charge or laying of information have been excluded from the analysis since 1994 – there have been no changes to this rule. More details on the survey methodology can be found in the notes section at the end of the bulletin.

3. The results presented in this report are given per defendant. The February 2000 results come from a sample of 31,202 defendants composed of 8,749 defendants in indictable cases, 7,375 defendants in summary non-motoring cases and 15,078 defendants in summary motoring cases. The notes section contains more information on sample sizes.

ALL CRIMINAL CASES

Time intervals

4. The February 2000 survey reports that the average time from offence to completion for defendants in all criminal cases was 142 days. If the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied the average time would have been 138 days – an increase from 135 days in June 1999 but a decrease from 140 days in June 1998. Figure 1 and table 1 contain more detail. Among the constituent parts of the overall average, the average time from offence to charge or laying of information rose to 77 days in February 2000 from 72 days in June 1999 and the average time from charge or laying of information to first listing fell to 29 days from 33 days in June 1999.

5. One of LCD's Public Service Agreement targets is to reduce the time taken from first listing to case completion in magistrates' courts from 31 days to 29 days; in December 1998 this target was also set for MCCs. The target was based on the June 1998 figure of 31 days. On the same basis as the baseline figure the February 2000 result would have been 32 days. The

increase may be related to seasonality in the data – from figure 3 it can be seen that there is clear seasonality in the average first listing to completion time for defendants in indictable cases. The effects of the additional holiday at the millennium and precautions for the year 2000 computer date change may also possibly be exceptional factors. In addition there is some evidence of a change in the case mix towards an increasing proportion of cases that take longer over this period. On the new basis, the February 2000 survey shows the average time from first listing to completion to be 36 days.

Analysis by MCC area

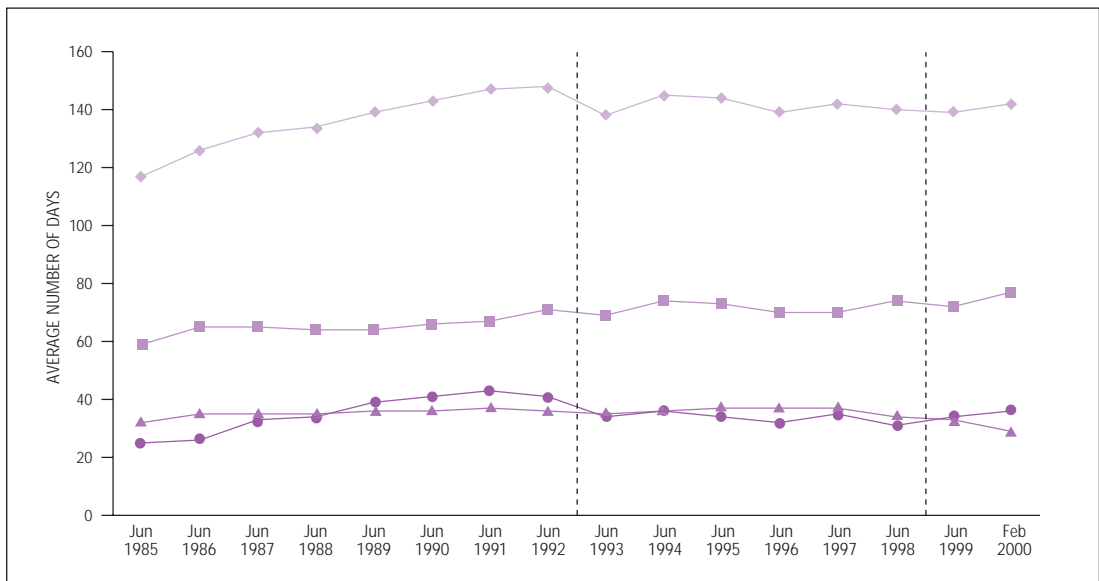
6. Table 9 gives results on the average time taken for defendants in all criminal cases in June 1998, June 1999 and February 2000 for Magistrates' Courts Committee (MCC) areas on both the old and the new basis. Since the figures in these tables are based on samples of defendants which may be fairly small for some areas the figures should be interpreted with caution especially for areas footnoted as having sample sizes of less than 100 defendants.

FIGURE 1: Average time by stage of proceedings – defendants in all criminal cases, June 1985 to February 2000¹

1 Note: The dashed vertical lines in the chart denote the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993 and February 1999 surveys (see paragraph 5 of the notes section)

KEY

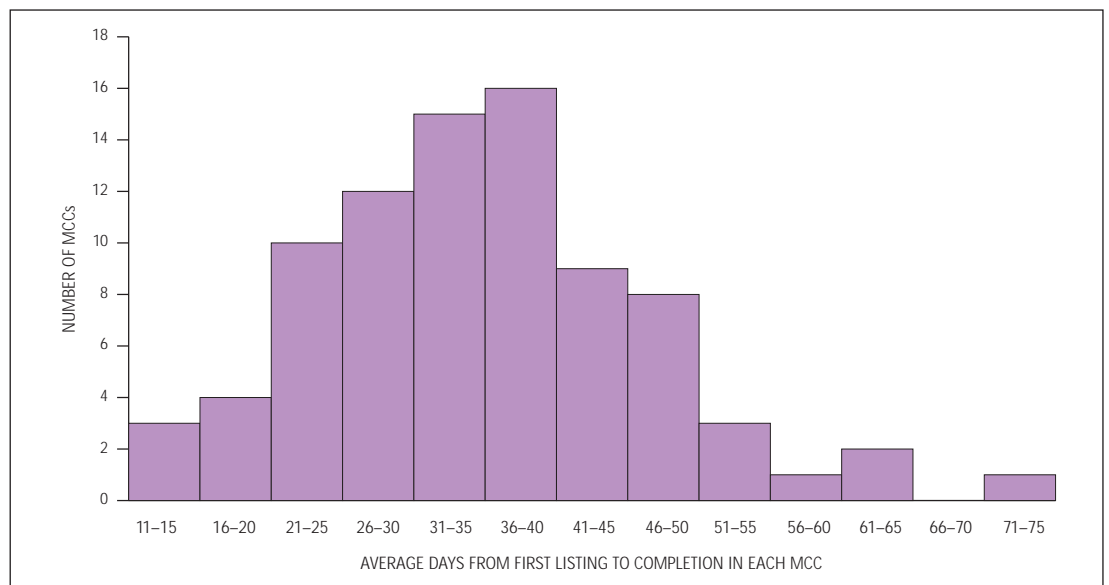
- ◆ Offence to completion
- Offence to charge or laying of information
- ▲ Charge or laying of information to first listing
- First listing to completion



7. The distribution of the average time taken from first listing to completion on the new basis for the 84 MCCs is shown in figure 2. In over a third of MCCs the average time taken was 30 days or less but in more than one in six MCCs the average time from first listing to completion was over 45 days. The average time from first listing to completion varied from 12 days for the City of London Justice Rooms, 13 days for Sutton and 15 days for Trafford to 65 days for Sunderland and West Midlands and 73 days for Haringey. Apart from Sutton and Sunderland the average time from first listing to completion in all these MCCs have been respectively below or above the England and Wales average since June 1998.

8. In table 9 the MCCs are classified into 3 groups: non-metropolitan areas, metropolitan districts and London. The average time from first listing to completion in February 2000 was similar across MCCs in non-metropolitan areas and in London at 34 and 33 days respectively. These results compare with the average of 44 days for MCCs in metropolitan districts in February 2000.

FIGURE 2: Magistrates' Courts Committee areas analysed by average first listing to completion time for defendants in all criminal cases, February 2000¹



INDICTABLE CASES

Time intervals

9. The average time from offence to completion for defendants in indictable cases decreased to 121 days in February 2000 from 129 days from February 1999. Figure 3 and table 3 contain more information. The average offence to charge or laying of information interval rose to 51 days in February 2000 from 46 days in February 1999. The average time from first listing to completion was 59 days – a decrease from 60 days in February 1999. If the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied the average time from first listing to completion would have fallen to 54 days in February 2000 from 55 days and 56 days in February 1999 and February 1998 respectively.

10. The average time from charge or laying of information to first listing fell to 12 days in February 2000 from 23 days in February 1999. This is the largest decrease since the recent downward trend in the average time from charge or laying of information to first listing began. One

likely cause of this large decrease is the national roll out of most of the Narey reducing delay measures (which relate to charged cases only) on 1 November 1999 (the pilots of provisions relating to indictable only cases were still undergoing evaluation at the time of writing). In the next survey (June 2000) a higher proportion of completed cases will have been dealt with under the revised procedures and so a further improvement in this interval may be seen.

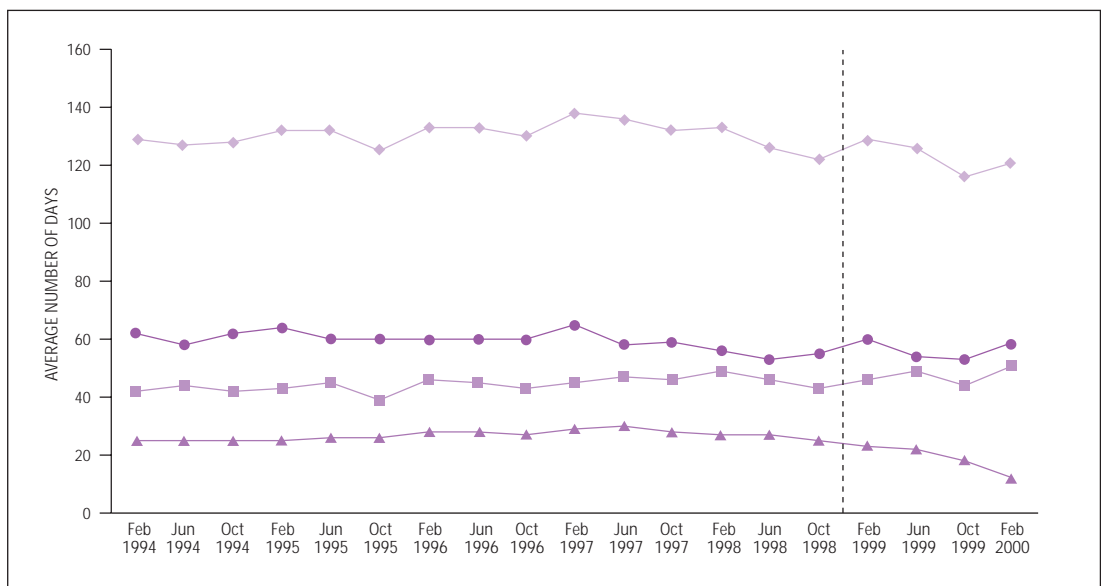
11. There is an element of seasonality in results for defendants in indictable cases. Therefore caution should be taken when comparing results between surveys undertaken at different times of the year. Seasonality is most apparent in the offence to charge or laying of information interval and the first listing to completion interval. The millennium holiday period and precautions for the year 2000 computer date change may possibly have increased the effect of seasonality between October 1999 results and February 2000 results.

FIGURE 3: Average time by stage of proceedings – defendants in indictable cases, February 1994 to February 2000¹

1 Note: The dashed vertical line in the chart denotes the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1999 survey (see paragraph 5 of the notes section)

KEY

- ◆ Offence to completion
- Offence to charge or laying of information
- ▲ Charge or laying of information to first listing
- First listing to completion



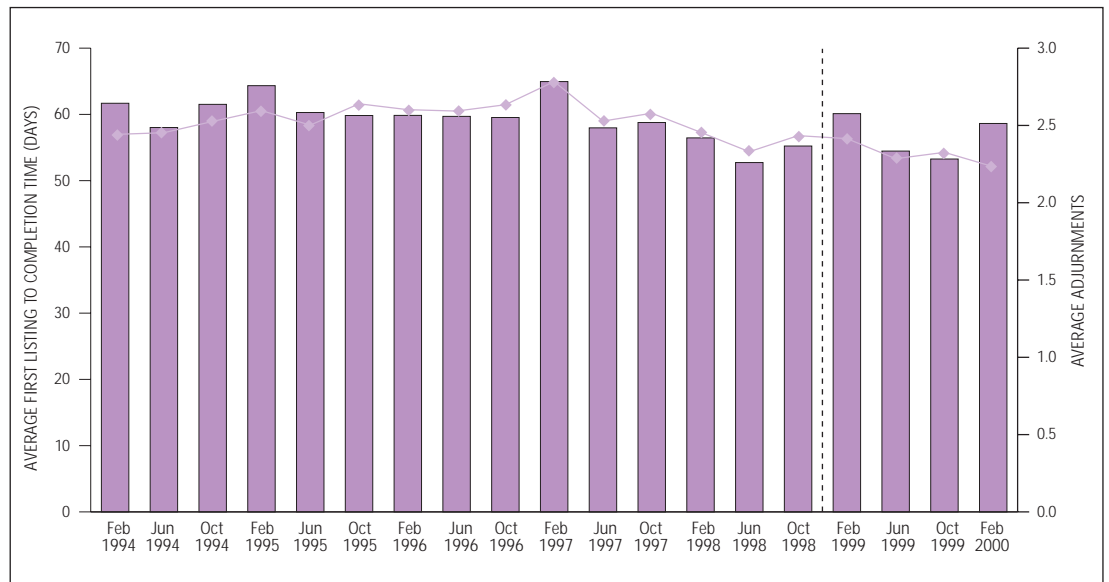
Adjournments

12. The percentage of defendants' cases completed at first listing rose to 26 per cent in February 2000 from 22 per cent in February 1999 (for defendants in indictable cases). The February 2000 result is the highest recorded percentage of cases completed at first listing since June 1987 and may possibly be as a result of the national roll out of most of the Narey reducing delay measures on 1 November 1999. There were an average of 2.2 adjournments for defendants in indictable cases in February 2000 – a decrease from 2.4 in February 1999 (as shown in figure 4). The average length of adjournments stood at 26 days in February 2000 – an increase from 25 days in February 1999. Table 4 contains further information on adjournments for defendants in indictable cases.

FIGURE 4: Average first listing to completion time and number of adjournments – defendants in indictable cases, February 1994 to February 2000¹

1 Note: The vertical separation in the chart signifies a change in methodology in February 1999 survey (see paragraph 5 of the notes section)

KEY
 Average first listing to completion time (days)
 Average adjournments



INDICTABLE CASES: YOUTH COURT RESULTS

Time Intervals

13. As shown in figure 5 and table 5 the average time from offence to completion for defendants in indictable cases in Youth Courts fell to 98 days in February 2000 from 115 days in February 1999. There were decreases in all three constituent intervals. The average time from offence to charge or laying of information fell to 31 days in February 2000 from 35 days in February 1999 and the average interval from first listing to completion decreased to 56 days compared with 58 days in February 1999. The average time taken from charge or laying of information to first listing fell to 12 days in February 2000 from 23 days in February 1999. This large decrease is likely to be related to the national roll out on 1 November 1999 of most of the Narey reducing delay measures.

Adjournments

14. The percentage of defendants' cases in Youth Courts completed at first listing rose to 22 per cent in February 2000 from 18 per cent in

February 1999 (for defendants in indictable cases), as shown in table 6. The average number of adjournments for defendants in Youth Courts in indictable cases fell to 2.4 in February 2000 from 2.5 in February 1999. The average length of adjournments was 23 days – unchanged from February 1999.

YOUTH DEFENDANTS

15. Although results for youth defendants bear close relation to Youth Court results they are not exactly the same as some youth defendants are dealt with in Adult Courts.

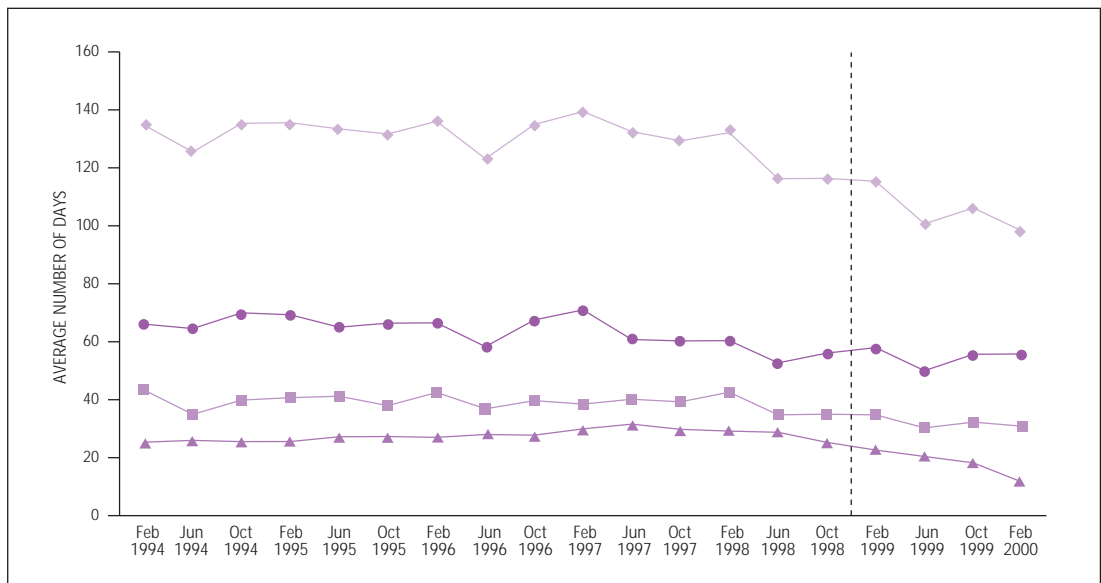
16. The average time from offence to completion for youth defendants in all criminal cases fell to 100 days in February 2000 from 116 days in February 1999. This can be broken down into offence types, as shown in table 10. The average time from offence to completion for youth defendants in summary non-motoring

FIGURE 5: Average time by stage of proceedings at Youth Courts – defendants in indictable cases, February 1994 to February 2000¹

1 Note: The dashed vertical line in the chart denotes the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1999 survey (see paragraph 5 of the notes section)

KEY

- ◆ Offence to completion
- Offence to charge or laying of information
- ▲ Charge or laying of information to first listing
- First listing to completion



cases fell to 90 days from 111 days in February 1999, and the average for those in summary motoring cases fell to 123 days in February 2000 from 133 days in February 1999. Results for youth defendants in indictable cases are similar to those for defendants in indictable cases in Youth Courts described above.

17. There were some major changes in the average time taken for the constituent intervals in summary non-motoring cases. The average time from offence to charge or laying of information for youth defendants in summary non-motoring cases fell to 29 days in February 2000 from 51 days in February 1999 and the average time from charge or laying of information to first listing fell to 13 days from 24 days in February 1999. However the average time from first listing to completion rose to 48 days in February 2000 from 36 days in February 1999.

SUMMARY CASES

Summary non-motoring cases

18. The average time from offence to completion for defendants in summary non-motoring cases was 135 days in February 2000 against 133 days in June 1999. The average time from first listing to completion in February 2000 stood at 24 days. If the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied the average time would have increased to 21 days from 20 days in June 1999 and 18 days in June 1998.

Summary motoring cases

19. For defendants in summary motoring cases the average time from offence to completion rose to 158 days in February 2000 from 149 days in June 1999. The average time from first listing to completion was 30 days in February 2000. The average time would have been 25 days if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied – a rise from 24 days in June 1999 but a decrease from the June 1998 average of 27 days.

TABLE 1: Average time taken for defendants in all criminal cases by stage of proceedings, June 1985 to February 2000

England and Wales

	Average number of days from:			
	Offence to charge or laying of information	Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing to completion	Offence to completion
June 1985	59	32	25	117
June 1986	65	35	26	126
June 1987	65	35	33	132
June 1988	64	35	34	134
June 1989	64	36	39	139
June 1990	66	36	41	143
June 1991	67	37	43	147
June 1992	71	36	41	148
June 1993 ⁽¹⁾	69	35	34	138
June 1994 ⁽¹⁾	74	36	36	145
June 1995	73	37	34	144
June 1996	70	37	32	139
June 1997	70	37	35	142
June 1998	74	34	31	140
June 1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	72	32	31	135
February 2000 old basis ⁽¹⁾	77	29	32	138
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	72	33	34	139
February 2000 new basis ⁽¹⁾	77	29	36	142

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993, February 1994 and February 1999 surveys. The row labelled *old basis* shows results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 2: Adjournments for defendants in all criminal cases, June 1985 to February 2000

England and Wales

	Average time from first listing to completion	Percentage completed at first listing	Average number of adjournments	Average length of adjournments
	Days	Per cent	Number	Days
June 1985	25	60	0.8	32
June 1986	26	61	0.8	31
June 1987	33	54	1.1	30
June 1988	34	54	1.1	30
June 1989	39	52	1.2	33
June 1990	41	51	1.2	33
June 1991	43	50	1.3	34
June 1992	41	50	1.2	34
June 1993 ⁽¹⁾	34	49	1.2	28
June 1994 ⁽¹⁾	36	50	1.2	28
June 1995	34	53	1.2	28
June 1996	32	53	1.2	26
June 1997	35	50	1.3	26
June 1998	31	52	1.2	25
June 1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	31	52	1.2	25
February 2000 old basis ⁽¹⁾	32	53	1.2	27
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	34	52	1.2	28
February 2000 new basis ⁽¹⁾	36	52	1.2	29

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993, February 1994 and February 1999 surveys. The row labelled *old basis* shows results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 3: Average time taken for defendants in indictable cases by stage of proceedings, 1986 to 2000

England and Wales

		Average number of days from:			
		Offence to charge or laying of information	Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing to completion	Offence to completion
	1986	41	20	46	108
(1) Includes an element of estimation for abnormal incompleteness in February 1987.	1987 ⁽¹⁾	41	22	51	114
	1988	40	21	55	117
	1989	40	22	61	122
	1990	40	22	64	127
	1991	42	22	65	128
	1992	43	22	64	129
(2) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993, February 1994 and February 1999 surveys.	1993 ⁽²⁾	39	25	56	120
The rows labelled <i>old basis</i> show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.	1994 ⁽²⁾	43	25	60	128
	1995	43	26	61	130
	1996	45	28	60	132
	1997	46	29	60	135
	1998	46	26	55	127
	1999 old basis ⁽²⁾	46	21	52	120
	1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	46	21	56	124
	1988 February	42	22	56	119
	June	41	22	54	116
	October	38	20	56	114
	1989 February	42	22	61	124
	June	38	21	61	120
	October	40	22	61	122
	1990 February	42	22	64	128
	June	43	22	62	128
	October	36	22	65	123
	1991 February	42	23	67	132
	June	44	22	63	129
	October	38	21	64	124
	1992 February	40	22	67	129
	June	43	23	63	129
	October	44	22	63	130
	1993 February ⁽²⁾	40	25	60	125
	June	38	25	53	116
	October	39	24	57	121
	1994 February ⁽²⁾	42	25	62	129
	June	44	25	58	127
	October	42	25	62	128
	1995 February	43	25	64	132
	June	45	26	60	132
	October	39	26	60	125
	1996 February	46	28	60	133
	June	45	28	60	133
	October	43	27	60	130
	1997 February	45	29	65	138
	June	47	30	58	136
	October	46	28	59	132
	1998 February	49	27	56	133
	June	46	27	53	126
	October	43	25	55	122
	1999 February old basis ⁽²⁾	46	23	55	123
	June old basis	49	22	52	122
	October old basis	44	18	50	113
	2000 February old basis	51	11	54	115
	1999 February new basis ⁽²⁾	46	23	60	129
	June new basis	49	22	54	126
	October new basis	44	18	53	116
	2000 February new basis	51	12	59	121

TABLE 4: Adjudgments for defendants in indictable cases, 1986 to 2000

England and Wales

		Average time from first listing to completion Days	Percentage completed at first listing Per cent	Average number of adjournments Number	Average length of adjournments Days		
		1986	46	29	2.0	23	
(1) Includes an element of estimation for abnormal incompleteness in February 1987.		1987 ⁽¹⁾	51	26	2.3	22	
		1988	55	24	2.4	23	
		1989	61	22	2.5	24	
		1990	64	22	2.5	26	
		1991	65	21	2.6	25	
		1992	64	20	2.4	27	
	(2) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993, February 1994 and February 1999 surveys. The rows labelled <i>old basis</i> show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.		1993 ⁽²⁾	56	21	2.3	24
			1994 ⁽²⁾	60	20	2.5	24
			1995	61	20	2.6	24
			1996	60	19	2.6	23
		1997	60	20	2.6	23	
		1998	55	22	2.4	23	
		1999 old basis ⁽²⁾	52	23	2.3	23	
		1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	56	23	2.3	24	
		1988 February	56	24	2.3	24	
		June	54	23	2.4	23	
	October	56	23	2.5	23		
	1989 February	61	21	2.6	24		
	June	61	22	2.5	25		
	October	61	23	2.5	24		
	1990 February	64	21	2.5	26		
	June	62	24	2.4	26		
	October	65	20	2.5	26		
	1991 February	67	19	2.6	26		
	June	63	23	2.4	26		
	October	64	19	2.7	24		
	1992 February	67	19	2.5	27		
	June	63	20	2.3	27		
	October	63	20	2.4	26		
	1993 February ⁽²⁾	60	21	2.4	25		
	June	53	23	2.2	24		
	October	57	20	2.4	24		
	1994 February ⁽²⁾	62	21	2.4	25		
	June	58	21	2.5	24		
	October	62	18	2.5	24		
	1995 February	64	19	2.6	25		
	June	60	21	2.5	24		
	October	60	19	2.6	23		
	1996 February	60	19	2.6	23		
	June	60	20	2.6	23		
	October	60	19	2.6	23		
	1997 February	65	18	2.8	23		
	June	58	21	2.5	23		
	October	59	19	2.6	23		
	1998 February	56	23	2.5	23		
	June	53	24	2.3	23		
	October	55	21	2.4	23		
	1999 February old basis ⁽²⁾	55	22	2.4	23		
	June old basis	52	25	2.3	23		
	October old basis	50	23	2.3	22		
	2000 February old basis	54	26	2.2	24		
	1999 February new basis ⁽²⁾	60	22	2.4	25		
	June new basis	54	24	2.3	24		
	October new basis	53	23	2.3	23		
	2000 February new basis	59	26	2.2	26		

TABLE 5: Average time taken for defendants in indictable cases by stage of proceedings and type of court, 1994 to 2000

England and Wales

	Offence to charge or laying of information	Average number of days from: Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing to completion	Offence to completion	Defendants charged as a percentage of all proceeded against (per cent)	Sample size (number of defendants)
Adult Courts						
1994	43	25	59	128	92	18,970
1995	43	26	60	129	91	18,649
1996	46	28	59	132	93	18,124
1997	47	29	60	136	93	19,178
1998	48	26	54	128	94	19,853
1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	49	21	52	123	94	19,577
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	49	21	56	127	94	19,720
1995 February	43	25	63	132	92	6,046
June	46	26	59	132	89	6,482
October	39	26	59	124	92	6,121
1996 February	47	28	59	133	93	5,865
June	47	28	60	135	92	6,201
October	43	27	58	129	92	6,058
1997 February	46	28	64	138	95	6,189
June	49	30	57	136	91	6,831
October	47	27	58	132	94	6,158
1998 February	50	27	56	133	95	6,354
June	48	27	53	128	92	6,775
October	44	24	55	124	95	6,724
1999 February old basis ⁽¹⁾	48	23	55	126	95	6,545
June old basis	53	22	52	127	92	6,887
October old basis	47	18	50	115	96	6,145
2000 February old basis	54	11	54	119	93	7,377
1999 February new basis ⁽¹⁾	48	23	61	132	95	6,605
June new basis	53	23	55	131	92	6,933
October new basis	47	19	53	118	96	6,182
2000 February new basis	54	12	59	125	93	7,450

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1999 survey. The rows labelled old basis show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 5: Average time taken for defendants in indictable cases by stage of proceedings and type of court, 1994 to 2000 (continued)

England and Wales

	Offence to charge or laying of information	Average number of days from: Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing to completion	Offence to completion	Defendants charged as a percentage of all proceeded against (per cent)	Sample size (number of defendants)
Youth Courts						
1994	39	26	67	132	89	3,003
1995	40	27	67	134	89	3,539
1996	40	28	64	131	90	3,431
1997	39	30	64	134	93	3,539
1998	37	28	56	121	94	3,682
1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	32	20	53	105	96	14,091
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	33	20	55	108	96	14,148
1995 February	41	26	69	136	90	1,056
June	41	27	65	133	87	1,334
October	38	27	66	132	90	1,149
1996 February	43	27	67	136	92	1,175
June	37	28	58	123	89	1,199
October	40	28	68	135	89	1,057
1997 February	38	30	71	139	93	1,144
June	40	32	61	132	94	1,266
October	39	30	60	129	92	1,129
1998 February	43	29	60	132	94	1,158
June	35	29	53	116	93	1,273
October	35	25	56	116	95	1,251
1999 February old basis ⁽¹⁾	35	23	56	114	96	4,873 ⁽²⁾
June old basis	30	20	48	99	97	4,438
October old basis	32	18	53	103	96	4,780
2000 February old basis	31	12	53	96	97	4,921
1999 February new basis ⁽¹⁾	35	23	58	115	96	4,888 ⁽²⁾
June new basis	30	20	50	101	97	4,457
October new basis	32	18	56	106	96	4,803
2000 February new basis	31	12	56	98	97	4,943

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1999 survey. The rows labelled *old basis* show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

(2). The higher sample size is because from February 1999 onwards the survey collects information on youth defendants over a four week period compared to a one week period previously.

TABLE 6: Adjudgments for defendants in indictable cases by type of court, 1994 to 2000

England and Wales

	Average time from first listing to completion Days	Percentage completed at first listing Per cent	Average number of adjournments Number	Average length of adjournments Days
Adult Courts				
1994	59	21	2.4	25
1995	60	21	2.5	24
1996	59	20	2.5	23
1997	60	20	2.6	23
1998	54	23	2.4	23
1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	52	24	2.3	23
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	56	24	2.3	24
1995 February	63	20	2.5	25
June	59	22	2.4	24
October	59	20	2.6	23
1996 February	59	20	2.5	23
June	60	20	2.5	24
October	58	20	2.5	23
1997 February	64	19	2.7	24
June	57	22	2.5	23
October	58	20	2.5	23
1998 February	56	23	2.4	23
June	53	24	2.3	23
October	55	21	2.4	23
1999 February old basis ⁽¹⁾	55	22	2.4	23
June old basis	52	25	2.2	23
October old basis	50	24	2.3	22
2000 February old basis	54	27	2.2	25
1999 February new basis ⁽¹⁾	61	22	2.4	25
June new basis	55	25	2.3	24
October new basis	53	24	2.3	23
2000 February new basis	59	26	2.2	27

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1999 survey. The rows labelled *old basis* show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 6: Adjudgments for defendants in indictable cases by type of court, 1994 to 2000 (continued)

England and Wales

	Average time from first listing to completion Days	Percentage completed at first listing Per cent	Average number of adjournments Number	Average length of adjournments Days
Youth Courts				
1994	67	14	3.0	22
1995	67	15	2.9	23
1996	64	16	3.0	21
1997	64	15	3.0	21
1998	56	20	2.7	21
1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	53	19	2.5	21
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	55	19	2.5	22
1995 February	69	15	2.9	24
June	65	16	2.9	22
October	66	15	3.0	22
1996 February	67	14	3.1	22
June	58	18	2.9	20
October	68	15	3.1	21
1997 February	71	14	3.3	21
June	61	16	2.9	21
October	60	15	2.8	22
1998 February	60	19	2.9	21
June	53	21	2.5	21
October	56	19	2.6	21
1999 February old basis ⁽¹⁾	56	18	2.5	22
June old basis	48	21	2.3	21
October old basis	53	18	2.5	21
2000 February old basis	53	22	2.4	22
1999 February new basis ⁽¹⁾	58	18	2.5	23
June new basis	50	21	2.3	21
October new basis	56	18	2.5	22
2000 February new basis	56	22	2.4	23

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1999 survey. The rows labelled *old basis* show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 7: Average time taken for defendants in summary cases by offence type and stage of proceedings, June 1985 to February 2000

England and Wales

	Average number of days from:			
	Offence to charge or laying of information	Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing to completion	Offence to completion
Summary non-motoring				
June 1985	61	29	17	107
June 1986	73	36	16	124
June 1987	71	35	17	123
June 1988	73	35	20	127
June 1989	66	37	22	125
June 1990	69	40	25	134
June 1991	71	39	26	135
June 1992	79	37	21	137
June 1993 ⁽¹⁾	75	38	19	132
June 1994 ⁽¹⁾	81	37	20	137
June 1995	80	40	18	138
June 1996	79	39	15	133
June 1997	70	36	21	128
June 1998	78	34	18	131
June 1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	76	33	20	129
February 2000 old basis ⁽¹⁾	81	30	21	133
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	76	34	23	133
February 2000 new basis ⁽¹⁾	81	30	24	135
Summary motoring				
June 1985	68	39	21	129
June 1986	72	40	22	135
June 1987	75	42	31	148
June 1988	73	42	31	146
June 1989	75	42	38	155
June 1990	77	41	38	156
June 1991	76	43	43	162
June 1992	79	42	41	163
June 1993 ⁽¹⁾	80	38	33	152
June 1994 ⁽¹⁾	84	40	34	158
June 1995	82	39	32	153
June 1996	76	40	30	146
June 1997	83	40	29	152
June 1998	88	38	27	153
June 1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	83	37	24	145
February 2000 old basis ⁽¹⁾	90	38	25	153
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	83	38	28	149
February 2000 new basis ⁽¹⁾	90	38	30	158

(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993, February 1994 and February 1999 surveys. The row labelled *old basis* shows results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 8: Adjudgments for defendants in summary cases, June 1985 to February 2000

England and Wales

	Average time from first listing to completion Days	Percentage completed at first listing Per cent	Average number of adjournments Number	Average length of adjournments Days	
Summary non-motoring					
June 1985	17	72	0.4	38	
June 1986	16	74	0.4	37	
June 1987	17	74	0.5	36	
June 1988	20	73	0.5	40	
June 1989	22	70	0.6	39	
June 1990	25	69	0.6	43	
June 1991	26	66	0.6	40	
June 1992	21	70	0.5	42	
(1) See paragraph 5 of the notes section for details of the changes in survey methodology introduced with the February 1993, February 1994 and February 1999 surveys. The row labelled <i>old basis</i> shows results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.	June 1993 ⁽¹⁾	19	67	0.6	32
June 1994 ⁽¹⁾	20	68	0.6	32	
June 1995	18	75	0.6	30	
June 1996	15	76	0.5	28	
June 1997	21	68	0.8	27	
June 1998	18	72	0.7	28	
June 1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	20	69	0.7	27	
February 2000 old basis ⁽¹⁾	21	68	0.7	29	
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	23	68	0.8	30	
February 2000 new basis ⁽¹⁾	24	68	0.8	31	
Summary motoring					
June 1985	21	69	0.5	43	
June 1986	22	69	0.5	41	
June 1987	31	59	0.8	39	
June 1988	31	61	0.8	39	
June 1989	38	57	0.9	41	
June 1990	38	55	1.0	39	
June 1991	43	55	1.0	41	
June 1992	41	53	1.0	41	
June 1993 ⁽¹⁾	33	52	1.0	33	
June 1994 ⁽¹⁾	34	53	1.0	32	
June 1995	32	54	1.0	31	
June 1996	30	54	1.0	29	
June 1997	29	57	1.0	29	
June 1998	27	57	0.9	28	
June 1999 old basis ⁽¹⁾	24	59	0.9	28	
February 2000 old basis ⁽¹⁾	25	61	0.9	29	
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	28	59	0.9	32	
February 2000 new basis ⁽¹⁾	30	60	0.9	34	

TABLE 9: Average time taken by stage of proceedings for defendants in all criminal cases by Magistrates' Courts Committee area, June 1998 to February 2000

England and Wales					
	Average number of days from first listing to completion:				
	June 1998 old basis	June 1999 old basis	February 2000 old basis	June 1999 new basis	February 2000 new basis
Non-Metropolitan areas					
England					
	21	30	29	39	30
	26	25	25	25	25
	50	21	20	24	20
	35	31	21	32	29
	35	30	30	32	31
	34	34	23	35	29
	33	35	29	36	35
(1) See paragraph 10 of the notes section for details of MCC amalgamations. Results for these MCCs prior to their creation are based on results of the old MCCs which were amalgamated.	28	25	27	35	28
	29	20	24	20	24
	39	26	16	26	18
	47	33	23	35	23
	37	20	23	20	24
	22	38	20	40	21
	43	37	35	38	42
	44	29	46	29	47
	27	36	32	36	32
	31	25	34	25	35
(2) Sample size less than 100 in one or more years. Small sample sizes mean that these figures will be subject to greater sampling error. Therefore these figures should be treated more cautiously than others in the table.	21	28	43	28	43
	30	37	38	37	42
	33	24	28	29	30
	29	22	30	25	32
	36	28	39	30	39
	32	27	34	27	34
	31	31	31	31	33
	24	22	24	24	25
	43	22	32	22	39
	30	38	39	41	43
	34	18	39	18	39
	15	25	33	37	34
	31	48	40	64	50
	33	32	32	33	34
	20	30	38	30	38
	30	35	27	37	30
	27	22	39	25	45
	40	41	37	46	37
	19	23	44	29	47
Wales					
	20	29	48	33	53
	18	23	40	23	40
	34	35	28	52	37
	14	38	50	38	50
	25	28	41	28	42
	19	28	35	31	39
All Non-Metropolitan areas	31	29	31	32	34

TABLE 9: Average time taken by stage of proceedings for defendants in all criminal cases by Magistrates' Courts Committee area, June 1998 to February 2000 (continued)

England and Wales

	Average number of days from frist listing to completion:				
	June 1998 old basis	June 1999 old basis	February 2000 old basis	June 1999 new basis	February 2000 new basis
Metropolitan Districts					
Barnsley	22	29	24	29	24
Calderdale	19	25	38	27	38
Doncaster	39	42	43	42	43
Gateshead ⁽¹⁾	41	30	30	74	30
Leeds	47	34	29	36	30
Manchester	24	21	23	22	23
Merseyside ⁽²⁾	33	36	41	41	49
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	24	30	41	34	54
North & West Greater Manchester	36	35	32	37	36
North Tyneside ⁽¹⁾	38	46	45	53	49
Oldham	54	60	52	60	56
Rotherham	33	42	24	42	26
Sheffield	27	25	36	26	43
South Tyneside ⁽¹⁾	21	17	34	29	34
Stockport	29	36	25	36	25
Sunderland ⁽¹⁾	30	53	65	56	65
Tameside	27	28	28	28	28
Trafford	18	21	15	25	15
West Midlands ⁽²⁾	43	44	47	54	65
West Riding Metropolitan	28	26	35	26	36
All Metropolitan Districts	34	34	36	39	44
London					
City of London Justice Rooms	24	14	12	14	12
Inner London Area	31	30	31	34	36
Barking and Dagenham ⁽¹⁾	24	30	17	30	31
Barnet ⁽¹⁾	46	21	33	21	33
Bexley P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	32	33	37	33	38
Brent P.S.A.	49	33	23	33	23
Bromley P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	12	25	39	25	39
Croydon P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	37	50	37	67	37
Ealing P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	33	21	17	21	20
Enfield P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	24	34	34	34	40
Haringey P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	48	36	73	36	73
Harrow P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	56	37	40	79	47
Havering P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	28	30	41	30	41
Hillingdon P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	25	32	30	32	30
Hounslow P.S.A.	34	37	47	37	47
Kingston-upon-Thames ⁽¹⁾	38	50	35	50	35
Merton P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	22	33	22	41	27
Newham P.S.A.	25	20	39	20	54
Redbridge P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	44	37	20	37	20
Richmond-upon-Thames ⁽¹⁾	28	15	21	15	32
Sutton P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	15	37	12	51	13
Waltham Forest P.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	20	11	33	11	33
All London	31	29	29	32	33
All England and Wales	31	31	32	34	36

(1) Sample size less than 100 in one or more years. Small sample sizes mean that these figures will be subject to greater sampling error. Therefore these figures should be treated more cautiously than others in the table.

(2) See paragraph 10 of the notes section for details of MCC amalgamations. Results for these MCCs prior to their creation are based on results of the old MCCs which were amalgamated.

TABLE 10: Average time taken for youth defendants in criminal cases by offence type and stage of proceedings, February 1999 to February 2000

England and Wales

		Offence to charge or laying of information	Average number of days from:		Offence to completion	Sample size (number of defendants)
			Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing to completion		
Indictable						
1999		33	20	55	109	15,346
1999	February	35	23	58	115	5,057
	June	33	21	51	105	5,329
	October	32	18	56	106	4,960
2000	February	31	11	56	98	5,089
Summary non-motoring						
1999		41	22	39	102	4,808
1999	February	51	24	36	111	1,585
	June	40	23	38	100	1,844
	October	30	19	44	93	1,379
2000	February	29	13	48	90	1,639
Summary motoring						
1999		59	29	32	120	3,241
1999	February	59	30	43	133	837
	June	63	30	27	119	1,433
	October	52	27	31	110	971
2000	February	61	27	35	123	1,165
All criminal cases						
1999		38	22	49	109	23,395
1999	February	41	24	52	116	7,479
	June	40	23	44	107	8,606
	October	34	19	50	104	7,310
2000	February	35	14	51	100	7,893

Notes

Methodology

1. In 1999 and earlier years clerkships provided details of all defendants in indictable cases in magistrates' courts against whom proceedings were completed in selected sample weeks in February, June and October of each year. Information on summary offences was requested in the June one week sample only. From the February 1999 survey onwards information on youth defendants in all criminal cases is collected in a four week period ending at the same time as the selected main sample week of each survey. In addition from February 1999 onwards each survey collects data on all persistent young offender cases completed since the end of the previous survey. Starting this survey there will now be one survey in each quarter with two of these (first and third quarter) collecting the additional information on summary offences. The completed proceedings on which information is provided includes cases committed to the Crown Court and those dismissed or discharged as well as those in which a sentence was passed. For each defendant selected details of the case are recorded (for example, offence, type of proceedings and type of completion) together with the dates of certain stages of proceedings.

2. The figures in this bulletin are based on defendants. Where a case involves more than one defendant, each defendant is considered individually.

3. In bulletins in 1998 and earlier years the date of charge or laying of information was simplified to the date of charge or summons. From 1999 onwards bulletins use the exact definition of the date requested in the survey – the date of charge or laying of information.

Therefore the interval from offence to charge or summons previously reported on is now defined as the interval from offence to charge or laying of information. Similarly the interval from charge or summons to first listing has been re-defined as the interval from charge or laying of information to first listing. As the date used in the calculations is exactly the same this change has not affected results.

Quality and completeness of the data

4. Data is transferred on computer disk from the clerkships to Magistrates' Courts Division at the Lord Chancellor's Department. Checks on the consistency of the data are made (for example that dates are in chronological order) and returns found to be in error are returned for correction. In addition any records which appear implausible are referred back to the court for confirmation.

5. Starting with the February 1993 survey there have been several changes in recording procedures, which will have led to small discontinuities in the data series. These are signified by vertical separations in the charts. They are as follows:

February 1993

- Cases adjourned sine die are not counted until finally disposed of.
- From the February 1993 survey to the October 1998 survey cases were excluded which took more than one year to complete (from either charge or laying of information to first listing, or first listing to completion) for reasons which appeared to be beyond the control of the court, for example, where the defendant absconded.

It is estimated that this change reduced the average interval from offence to completion by about 7.5 days for indictable offences in 1992, the last year before the change. Almost all this difference was due to a lower average time from first listing to completion.

February 1994

- Records where the defendant was charged or had information laid against them over ten years after the offence occurred have been excluded from the February 1994 survey onwards. This affected very few defendants but it is estimated that it would have reduced the average time from offence to completion by 1.5 days in 1992 for indictable offences. Virtually all this change was in the offence to charge or laying of information interval rather than the period after charge or laying of information.

February 1999

- The rules that previously excluded longer cases (lasting over a year from either charge or laying of information to first listing, or first listing to completion) were not applied for surveys from February 1999 onwards. No longer applying the rules which excluded longer cases increased the average time from offence to completion for defendants in indictable cases in 1999 to 124 days from 120 days and the average time from first listing to completion to 56 days from 52 days. Unless stated, all results in this bulletin are on the new basis. The rules were removed in order to ensure this aspect of the survey is compatible with the statistics on delay used for monitoring the Government's pledge to halve the time

from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders. These are based on data from the Police National Computer not the Time Intervals Survey.

6. In February 1999 new data collection software was introduced following testing in 6 clerkships in the October 1998 survey. For the October 1999 survey a second version of the software was introduced which performed additional validations on the data and also produced local reports from the data entered. Guidance on the collection of data is included in the magistrates' courts management information system good practice guide (available from Rahila Khanom at the address below).

7. Figures in the text and tables may not sum exactly to totals because the numbers in this bulletin have been rounded independently of each other.

8. In the past some Petty Sessional Divisions (PSDs) and clerkships have sometimes been unable to participate in the collection of data due to local circumstances. However in February surveys from 1996 onwards 100 per cent of clerkships have made returns. The table gives the estimated completeness of the data and the number of defendants in each February sample of criminal proceedings. The term completeness in this table refers to the proportion of clerkships (or PSDs before 1994 – see below) supplying data. It does not refer to the proportion of all cases completed during each sample week on which time intervals data was not returned by clerkships (or PSDs before 1994). This would almost certainly be lower. For this reason, and short term and seasonal variation, the figures here for number of defendants are unlikely to provide a reliable indicator of the changes in magistrates' courts caseload.

Proportion of clerkships (or PSDs before 1994) making returns and sample sizes, 1986 to 1999, February surveys

Collection week	Proportion of clerkships (or PSDs before 1994) making returns (per cent)	Number of defendants (sample size)		
		Indictable cases	Summary non- motoring cases	Summary motoring cases
February 1986	95.4	8,981	-	-
February 1987	82.5	8,055	-	-
February 1988	91.4	9,206	-	-
February 1989	91.4	7,725	-	-
February 1990	94.9	8,083	-	-
February 1991	96.9	8,111	-	-
February 1992	97.0	8,864	-	-
February 1993	98.0	7,291	-	-
February 1994	98.2	6,937	-	-
February 1995	98.7	7,102	-	-
February 1996	100.0	7,040	-	-
February 1997	100.0	7,333	-	-
February 1998	100.0	7,512	-	-
February 1999 ⁽¹⁾	100.0	7,890	-	-
February 2000	100.0	8,749	7,375	15,078

(1) The sample sizes for February 1999 onwards are from the one week sample only. Sample sizes from the four week survey of youth defendants are shown in table 10. Table 5 shows Youth Court sample sizes in the four week survey.

9. The sample size for defendants in indictable cases was higher in February 2000 than for any February survey since 1992.

MCC amalgamations

10. The following MCC amalgamations have taken place since 1998. Where MCCs have merged during the course of a year tables containing these MCCs are presented on the basis of the structure at the end of the year. Similarly results for merged MCCs in years prior to their creation are based on results of the old MCCs which were amalgamated into the new MCC.

Previous bulletins

11. Statistical Bulletins containing data from time intervals surveys up to and including October 1993 were produced by the Home Office's Research and Statistics Directorate. The Lord Chancellor's Department took over responsibility for the surveys from 1 January 1994. When the Home Office conducted the survey the data was

collected directly from PSDs rather than clerkships as currently.

Further Information

12. This bulletin has been prepared by Statistics Branch and Magistrates' Courts Division in the Lord Chancellor's Department. Comments on this publication or suggestions would be welcomed. If you have any enquiries about figures in this bulletin or wish to request further analysis of the data (a fee may be charged) contact Peter Lumb at the address below:

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MCC Amalgamations since 1998

Date	Amalgamated MCCs	Old MCCs
1 April 1999	Devon and Cornwall	Devon, Cornwall
1 April 1999	Merseyside	Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton, Wirral
1 April 1999	Thames Valley	Berkshire & Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire
1 April 1999	West Midlands	Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton

13. For further copies of this bulletin contact
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