



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: March 2001

By Jo Peacock

This bulletin presents the results from the March 2001 Time Intervals Survey. The survey reports on the time taken between stages of proceedings for defendants in completed criminal cases in magistrates' courts. From the February 2000 survey onwards information on adult indictable cases is collected in one week of each quarter. Information on adult summary offences is additionally collected in the first and third

quarters. Information on youth defendants in both indictable and summary cases is collected in four weeks of each quarter. Additionally information is collected on all criminal cases involving persistent young offenders completed since the previous survey. 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

All criminal cases

- **Reduction in delay from offence to completion:** The average time from offence to completion for all defendants fell to 139 days in March 2001 from 142 days in February 2000.
- **Charged cases:** Considering only those defendants who were charged (and not those who were summonsed to appear in court) the average time from charge to first listing fell to 6 days in March 2001 from 9 days in February 2000. The average time from first listing to completion also fell from 56 days in February 2000 to 52 days in March 2001.

Indictable cases

- **Reduction in delay:** The average time from offence to completion fell to 112 days in March 2001 from 121 days in February 2000 and 129 days in February 1999. There were also reductions in delay at each stage of proceedings.
- **Increase in percentage of cases completed at first listing:** Twenty seven per cent of defendants' cases were completed at first listing in March 2001 compared with 26 per cent in February 2000 and 22 per cent in February 1999.

Summary cases

- **Reduction in delay from offence to completion:** The average time from offence to completion for defendants in summary non-motoring cases fell to 133 days in March 2001 from 135 days in February 2000. There was also a slight decrease in delay for defendants in summary motoring cases where the average time from offence to completion fell from 158 days in February 2000 to 157 days in March 2001.

Time Intervals for Criminal Cases: March 2001

Introduction

1. This bulletin consists of three sections. This first section includes a description of the results from the March 2001 survey. 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 – the first four covering information on both youth and adult defendants taken from the main survey week and the fifth covering information collected on youth defendants from a four week survey period – as follows:

- All criminal cases
- Indictable cases
- Summary non-motoring cases
- Summary motoring cases
- Youth defendants

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 since February 1993. The 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 March 2001 results for all criminal cases are based on a sample of 30,231 defendants. This is composed of 8,076 defendants in indictable cases, 7,933 defendants in summary non-motoring cases and 14,222 defendants in summary motoring cases. The youth defendant results are based on a sample of 5,718 defendants in indictable cases and 3,186 defendants in summary cases over a 4 week survey period. The notes section contains more information on sample sizes.

ALL CRIMINAL CASES

Time intervals

4. The March 2001 survey reports that the average time from offence to completion for defendants in all criminal cases decreased to 139 days from 142 days in February 2000. However this was an increase from the 132 days recorded in September 2000.

5. Among the component stages of the overall average from offence to completion, the average time from offence to charge or laying of information was 76 days – a slight decrease from 77 days in February 2000, but an increase from 72 days in September 2000. The interval from charge or laying of information to first listing was 28 days in March 2001, unchanged from September 2000 which was the lowest level recorded since the survey began. There was also a fall in the average time from first listing to completion from 36 days in February 2000 to 34 days in March

2001. Figure 1 and table 1 contain more information.

Adjournments

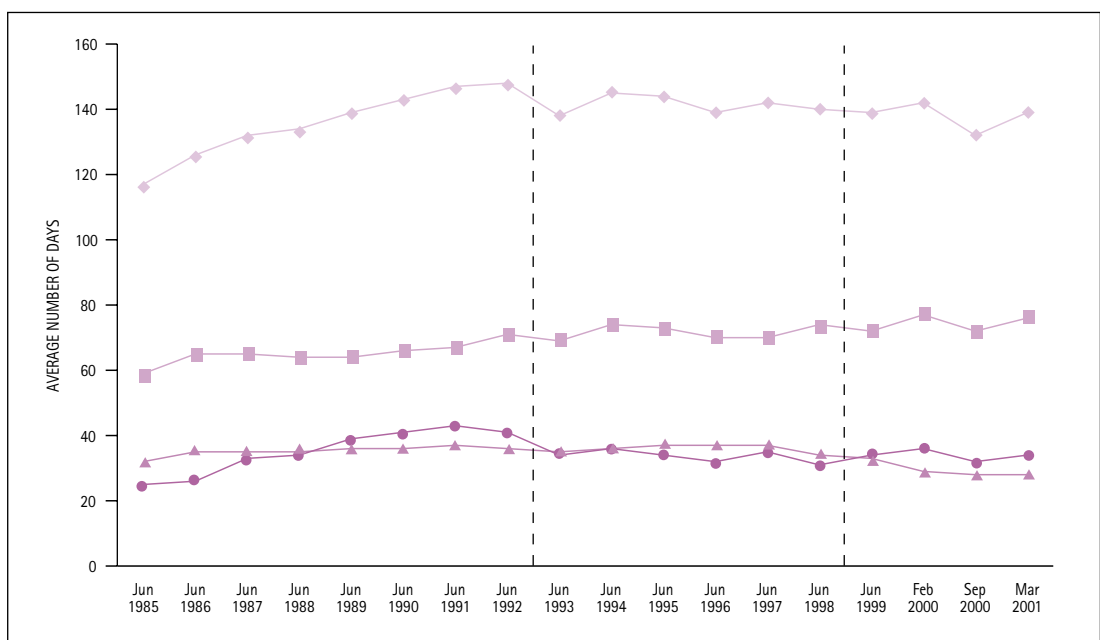
6. There were an average of 1.2 adjournments for defendants in all criminal cases in March 2001, or 1.1 adjournments if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied – a decrease from 1.2 in June 1998, June 1999 and February 2000. The average length of adjournments was 29 days, the same as in February 2000. Fifty-five per cent of all defendants' cases were completed at first listing, an increase from 52 per cent in February 2000. Table 2 provides further information on adjournments for defendants in all criminal cases.

FIGURE 1: Average time by stage of proceedings – defendants in all criminal cases, June 1985 to March 2001¹

1 Note: The dashed vertical lines in the chart denoted 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



INDICTABLE CASES

Time intervals

7. The average time from offence to completion for defendants in indictable cases fell to 112 days in March 2001 from 121 days in February 2000 and 129 days in February 1999. This improvement was reflected in reduced delay at each stage of proceedings. The average time from offence to charge or laying of information fell to 48 days in March 2001 from 51 days in February 2000. Over the same period the average time from first listing to completion fell from 59 days to 57 days. See figure 2 and table 3 for more information on time intervals for defendants in indictable cases.

8. The average time from charge or laying of information to first listing decreased to 8 days in March 2001 from 12 days in February 2000 and 23 days in February 1999. This was primarily due to the continued impact of the Narey reducing delay measures introduced nationally in November 1999 (which relate to charged cases

only). As shown in table 9, the time from charge to first listing for defendants charged as opposed to summonsed was lower than for all defendants in indictable cases – 6 days in March 2001 compared with 9 days in February 2000 and 22 days in February 1999.

Adjournments

10. As shown in table 4 the average number of adjournments for defendants in indictable cases was 2.2, unchanged from February 2000. The average length of adjournments was also unchanged at 26 days in both March 2001 and February 2000. Twenty-seven per cent of defendants' cases were completed at first listing – an increase from 26 per cent in February 2000 and the highest proportion recorded since June 1987. Figure 3 compares the average number of adjournments for defendants in indictable and summary cases.

FIGURE 2: Average time by stage of proceedings – defendants in indictable cases, February 1995 to March 2001¹

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

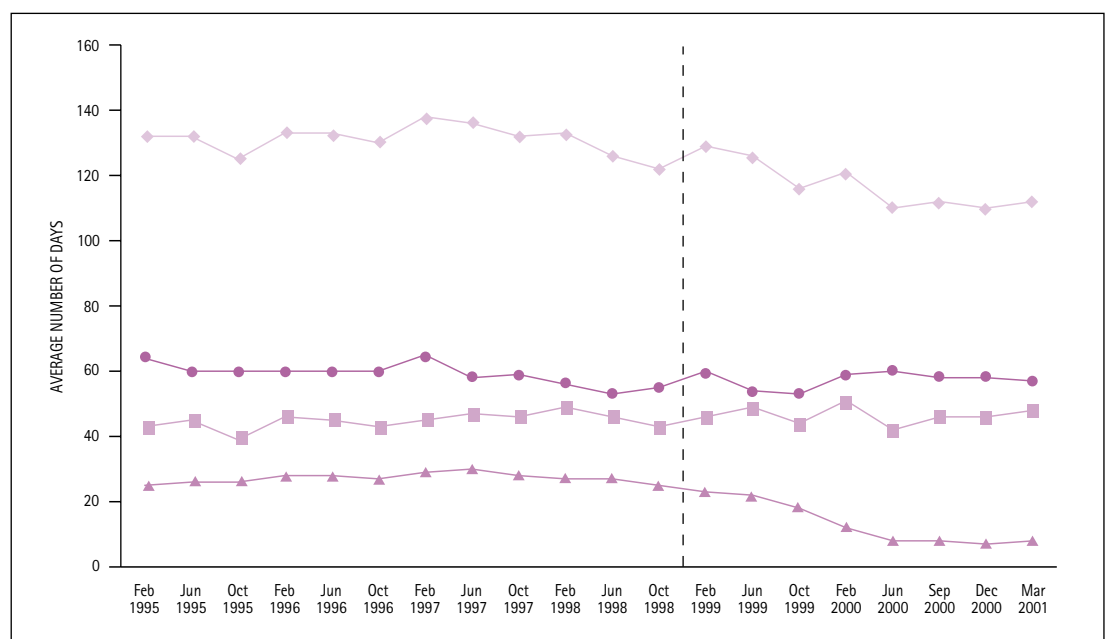
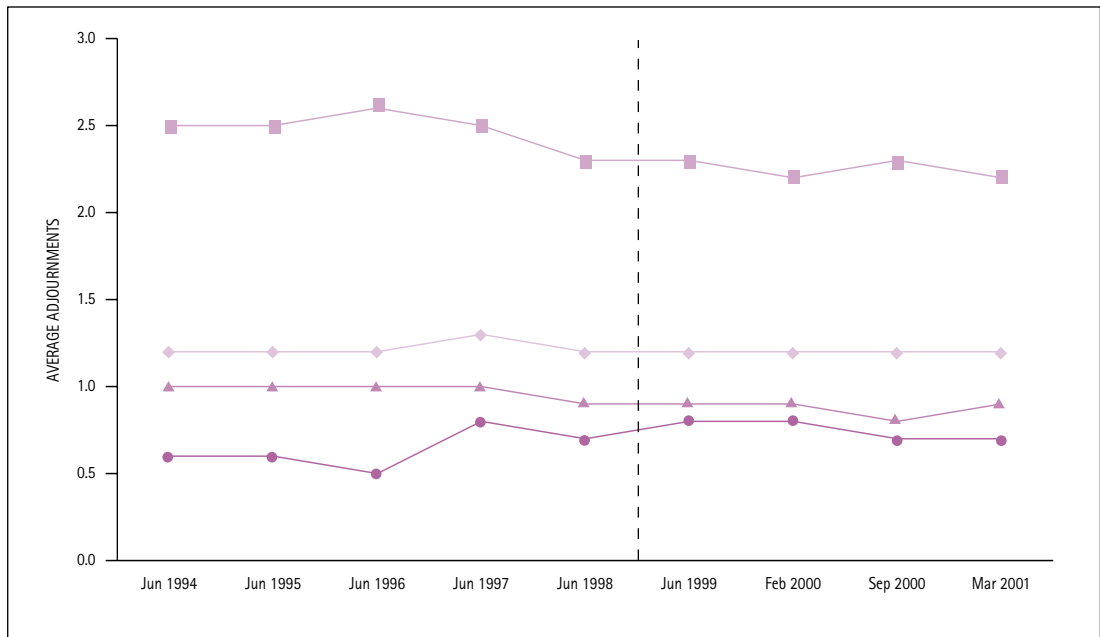


FIGURE 3 : Average number of adjournments by type of offence – defendants in all criminal cases, June 1994 to March 2001¹

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
 ◆ All Criminal Cases
 ■ Indictable
 ▲ Summary motoring
 ● Summary non-motoring



Youth Court results

11. Table 5 shows that the average time from offence to completion for defendants in indictable cases in Youth Courts was 98 days – unchanged from February 2000 and a decrease from 115 days in February 1999. Among the constituent intervals of the overall average from offence to completion, the average time from charge or laying of information to first listing fell from 12 days in February 2000 to 7 days in March 2001 – unchanged from the two most recent surveys in September and December 2000 maintaining the substantial impact the Narey reducing delay measures have had on timeliness in charged cases. However, the average time from first listing to completion rose from 56 days in February 2000 to 58 days in March 2001.

12. Twenty per cent of Youth Court defendants' cases were completed at first listing (for defendants in indictable cases), a decrease from 22 per cent in February 2000. As shown in table 6, the average number of adjournments for defendants in indictable cases in Youth Courts rose to 2.5 in March 2001 from 2.4 in February 2000. The average length of adjournments remained unchanged at 23 days in February 1999, February 2000 and March 2001.

SUMMARY NON-MOTORING CASES

13. The average time from offence to completion for defendants in summary non-motoring cases was 133 days in March 2001, compared with 135 days in February 2000 and 123 days in September 2000. The average time from first listing to completion stood at 23 days – a slight decrease from 24 days in February 2000, although higher than the 20 days recorded in September 2000. The average time from offence to charge or laying of information fell to 77 days from 81 days in February 2000, although again this was an increase from the most recent figure of 70 days in September 2000.

14. While the Narey reducing delay measures have significantly reduced the delay between charge or laying of information and first listing in indictable cases, the same impact has not been seen in summary non-motoring cases. The average delay between charge or laying of information and first listing in summary non-motoring cases rose from 30 days in February 2000 to 32 days in

March 2001 (although this was lower than in any other survey since June 1985). However, this is not particularly surprising as defendants in summary non-motoring cases tend to be summonsed rather than charged and the Narey reducing delay measures relate to charged cases only. Looking only at the 33 per cent of defendants who were charged as opposed to summonsed in summary non-motoring cases, the average time from charge to first listing fell from 9 days in February 2000 to 7 days in March 2001.

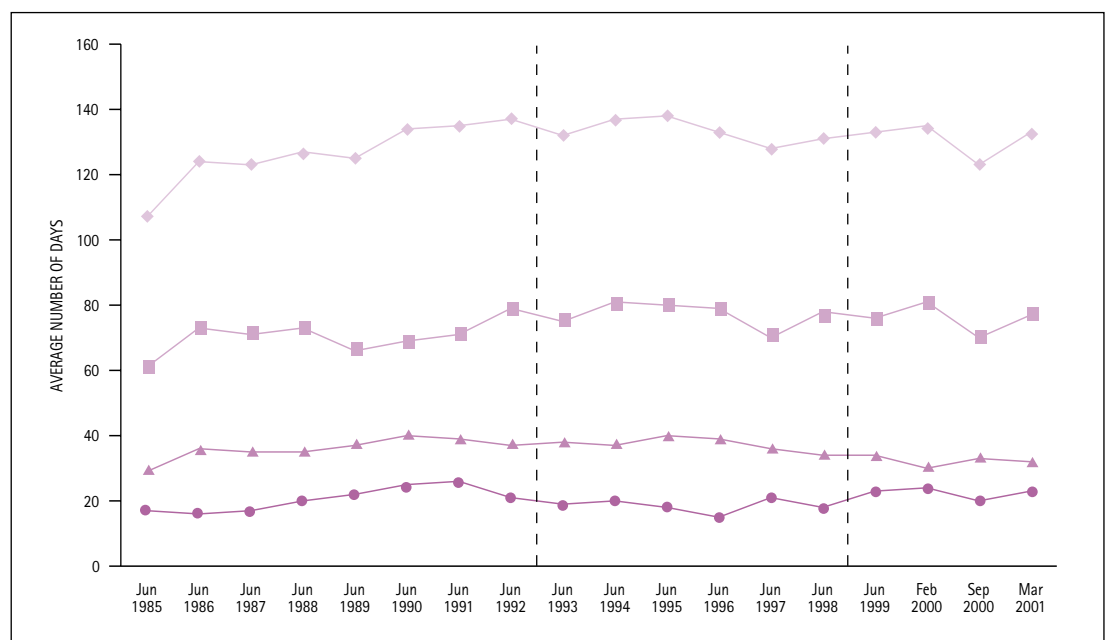
15. There were an average of 0.7 adjournments in summary non-motoring cases in March 2001 – a decrease from 0.8 in both February 2000 and June 1999 (see table 8). The average length of adjournments was 31 days – the same as in February 2000 but a slight increase from 30 days in June 1999. Seventy-one per cent of defendants' cases were completed at first listing in March 2001, an increase from 68 per cent in both February 2000 and June 1999.

FIGURE 4: Average time by stage of proceedings – defendants in summary non-motoring cases, June 1985 to March 2001¹

1 Note: The dashed vertical lines in the chart denoted 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



SUMMARY MOTORING CASES

16. As shown in figure 5 the average time from offence to completion for defendants in summary motoring cases was 157 days in March 2001 – a slight decrease from 158 days in February 2000. Among the constituent intervals of the overall average from offence to completion, the average time from first listing to completion decreased to 27 days in March 2001 from 30 days in February 2000. The average time from charge or laying of information to first listing was 38 days – unchanged from both February 2000 and June 1999. Table 7 contains further information.

17. As with summary non-motoring cases, there was little evidence of the improvement from charge or laying of information to first listing that was seen for defendants in indictable cases. However, again this is not particularly surprising as the Narey reducing delay measures relate to charged cases only and defendants in summary motoring cases tend to be summonsed to appear

in court – only 13 per cent of defendants in summary motoring cases were charged compared with 94 per cent in indictable cases. Table 9 shows that for those defendants who were charged in summary motoring cases the average time from charge to first listing fell from 18 days in June 1999 and 8 days in February 2000 to 6 days in March 2001.

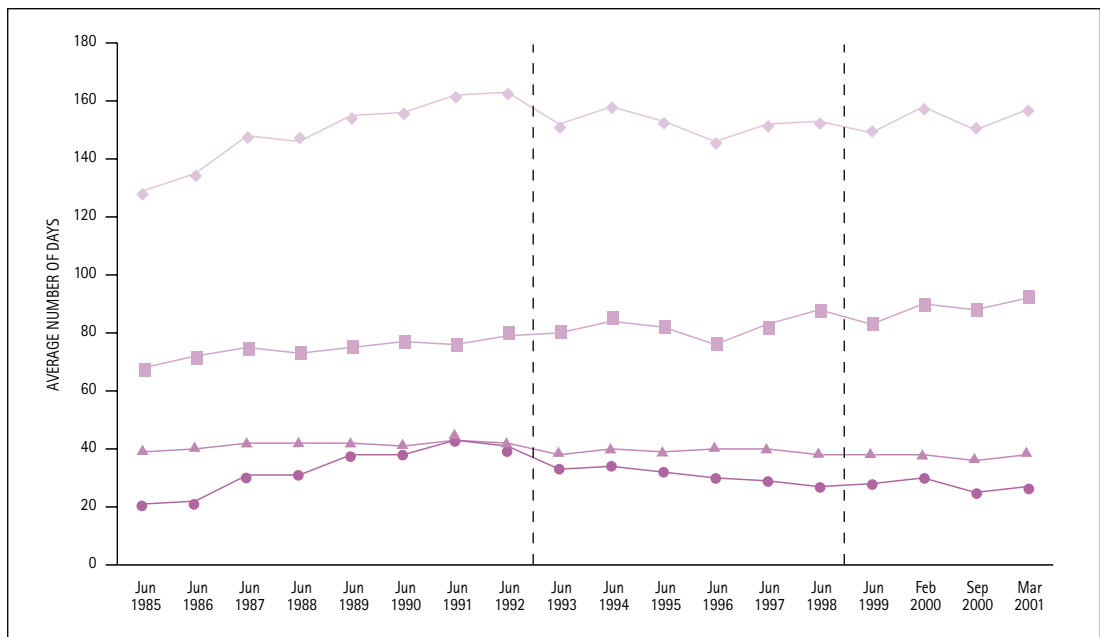
18. In March 2001 defendants in summary motoring cases had an average of 0.9 adjournments lasting on average 31 days. This was a slight improvement on both February 2000 and June 1999 when there were an average of 0.9 adjournments lasting 34 and 32 days respectively (see table 8). The proportion of defendants' cases dealt with at first listing continued to rise from 60 per cent in February 2000 and 61 per cent in September 2000 to 62 per cent in March 2001 – the highest proportion since June 1986.

FIGURE 5: Average time by stage of proceedings – defendants in summary motoring cases, June 1985 to March 2001¹

¹ Note: The dashed vertical lines in the chart denoted 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



YOUTH DEFENDANTS

19. Although the results for youth defendants are similar to Youth Court results they are not exactly the same because they include youth defendants who have been dealt with in Adult Courts. Table 10 shows the average time interval at each stage of proceedings for youth defendants in all criminal cases broken down by offence type.

20. In March 2001 the average time from offence to completion for youth defendants in all criminal cases fell to 97 days from 100 days in February 2000 and 107 days in June 1999. The average time from offence to completion for youth defendants in summary non-motoring cases fell from 90 days in February 2000 to 87 days in March 2001, and the average for those in summary motoring cases fell to 111 days from 124 days in February 2000. Results for youth defendants in indictable cases are similar to those for defendants in indictable cases in Youth Courts described above (figures can be found in table 10).

21. Among the component stages of the overall average from offence to completion, the average time from charge or laying of information to first listing for youth defendants in all criminal cases fell to 10 days in March 2001 from 14 days in February 2000 and 24 days in February 1999. However the average time from offence to charge or laying of information rose from 35 days in February 2000 to 36 days in March 2001 and the average time from first listing to completion was 51 days – the same as in February 2000 and a slight decrease from 52 days in February 1999.

22. As shown in table 11 the average number of adjournments for youth defendants in all criminal cases rose from 2.2 in February 2000 to 2.3 in March 2001. Over the same period the average length of adjournments fell from 24 days to 23 days.

FIGURE 6: Average time by stage of proceedings and type of offence – youth defendants in all criminal cases, March 2001

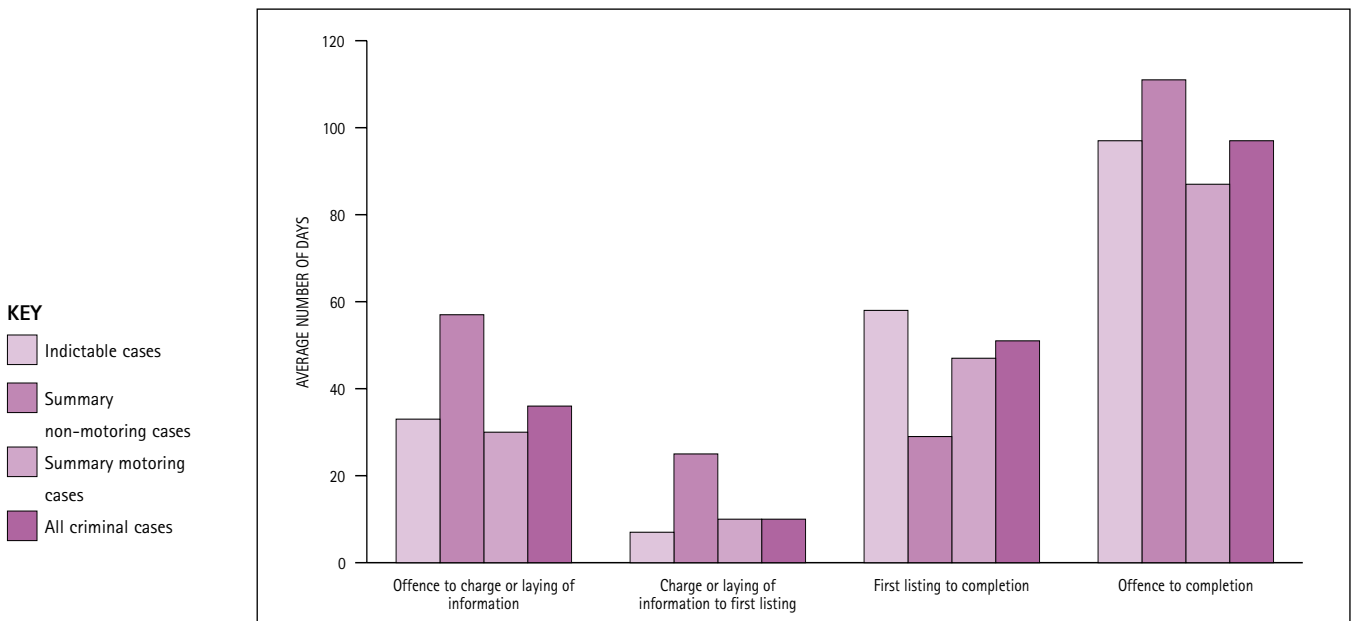


TABLE 1 : Average time taken for defendants in all criminal cases by stage of proceedings, June 1985 to March 2001

England and Wales

	Offence to charge or laying of information	Average number of days from:		Offence to completion
		Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing 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	77	29	32	138
September 2000 old basis	72	28	29	129
March 2001 old basis	76	28	30	134
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	72	33	34	139
February 2000 new basis	77	29	36	142
September 2000 new basis	72	28	32	132
March 2001 new basis	76	28	34	139

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 rows labelled *old basis* show 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 March 2001

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
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	32	53	1.2	27
September 2000 old basis	29	55	1.1	26
March 2001 old basis	30	55	1.1	26
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	34	52	1.2	28
February 2000 new basis	36	52	1.2	29
September 2000 new basis	32	54	1.2	28
March 2001 new basis	34	55	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 rows labelled *old basis* show 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 2001

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
	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
	1993 ⁽²⁾	39	25	56	120
	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
	2000 old basis	46	8	54	108
	1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	46	21	56	124
	2000 new basis	46	9	59	114
	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	116
	June old basis	42	7	54	103
	September old basis	45	8	54	107
	December old basis	45	7	52	104
	2001 March old basis	48	7	52	107
	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
	June new basis	42	8	60	110
	September new basis	46	8	58	112
	December new basis	46	7	58	110
	2001 March new basis	48	8	57	112

1 Includes an element of estimation for abnormal incompleteness in February 1987.

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 *old basis* show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 4: Adjournments for defendants in indictable cases, 1986 to 2001

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	
	1986	46	29	2.0	23
	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
	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
	2000 old basis	54	25	2.2	24
	1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	56	23	2.3	24
	2000 new basis	59	25	2.3	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
	June old basis	54	25	2.3	24
	September old basis	54	26	2.2	24
	December old basis	52	24	2.2	23
	2001 March old basis	52	27	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
	June new basis	60	25	2.3	26
	September new basis	58	26	2.3	26
	December new basis	58	23	2.3	25
	2001 March new basis	57	27	2.2	26

1 Includes an element of estimation for abnormal incompleteness in February 1987.

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 *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 2001

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
2000 old basis	49	8	53	111	94	24,801
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	49	21	56	127	94	19,720
2000 new basis	50	9	59	117	94	25,054
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	7,382
June old basis	45	7	55	107	96	5,892
September old basis	49	8	53	110	92	5,928
December old basis	49	7	51	107	95	5,599
2001 March old basis	51	7	52	110	94	6,591
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	7,455
June new basis	45	8	61	114	96	5,958
September new basis	49	8	58	115	92	5,978
December new basis	49	7	58	114	95	5,663
2001 March new basis	51	8	57	115	94	6,661

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 2001 (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
2000 old basis	30	8	55	93	97	19,100
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	33	20	55	108	96	14,148
2000 new basis	30	8	58	96	97	19,208
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	4,939
June old basis	30	8	54	91	97	4,509
September old basis	29	7	56	92	97	4,312
December old basis	29	6	57	93	97	5,340
2001 March old basis	33	7	55	95	97	5,499
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	4,961
June new basis	30	8	56	94	97	4,531
September new basis	29	7	59	95	97	4,335
December new basis	29	7	60	96	97	5,381
2001 March new basis	33	7	58	98	97	5,527

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 2001

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
2000 old basis	53	26	2.2	24
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	56	24	2.3	24
2000 new basis	59	26	2.2	27
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	26	2.2	25
June old basis	55	26	2.2	25
September old basis	53	28	2.1	25
December old basis	51	25	2.2	24
2001 March old basis	52	29	2.1	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
June new basis	61	26	2.3	27
September new basis	58	27	2.2	27
December new basis	58	24	2.2	26
2001 March new basis	57	28	2.1	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 2001 (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
2000 old basis	55	19	2.5	22
1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	55	19	2.5	22
2000 new basis	58	19	2.5	23
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
June old basis	54	19	2.4	22
September old basis	56	18	2.6	22
December old basis	57	19	2.6	22
2001 March old basis	55	20	2.5	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
June new basis	56	19	2.5	23
September new basis	59	18	2.6	23
December new basis	60	18	2.6	23
2001 March new basis	58	20	2.5	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 March 2001

England and Wales

	Offence to charge or laying of information	Average number of days from:		Offence to completion
		Charge or laying of information to first listing	First listing 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	81	30	22	133
September 2000 old basis	70	33	18	121
March 2001 old basis	77	32	20	130
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	76	34	23	133
February 2000 new basis	81	30	24	135
September 2000 new basis	70	33	20	123
March 2001 new basis	77	32	23	133
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	90	38	25	153
September 2000 old basis	88	36	22	146
March 2001 old basis	92	37	23	152
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	83	38	28	149
February 2000 new basis	90	38	30	158
September 2000 new basis	88	36	25	150
March 2001 new basis	92	38	27	157

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 rows labelled *old basis* show 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 March 2001

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
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	22	68	0.8	29
September 2000 old basis	18	72	0.7	27
March 2001 old basis	20	71	0.7	28
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	23	68	0.8	30
February 2000 new basis	24	68	0.8	31
September 2000 new basis	20	71	0.7	28
March 2001 new basis	23	71	0.7	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	25	61	0.9	29
September 2000 old basis	22	61	0.8	27
March 2001 old basis	23	62	0.8	28
June 1999 new basis ⁽¹⁾	28	59	0.9	32
February 2000 new basis	30	60	0.9	34
September 2000 new basis	25	61	0.8	30
March 2001 new basis	27	62	0.9	31

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 rows labelled *old basis* show results as they would have been if the rules that previously excluded longer cases had been applied.

TABLE 9 : Average time taken for defendants charged⁽¹⁾ in criminal cases by offence type and stage of proceedings, June 1994 to March 2001

England and Wales

	Offence to charge	Average number of days from:		
		Charge to first listing	First listing to completion	Offence to completion
Indictable				
June 1994	36	24	58	119
June 1995	35	25	61	121
June 1996	37	27	60	124
June 1997	37	29	59	124
June 1998	38	26	53	117
June 1999 old basis ⁽²⁾	41	21	52	113
February 2000 old basis	42	9	55	105
September 2000 old basis	35	6	55	96
March 2001 old basis	38	5	52	96
June 1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	41	21	55	117
February 2000 new basis	41	9	59	110
September 2000 new basis	36	6	59	100
March 2001 new basis	38	6	56	100
Summary non-motoring				
June 1994	9	23	36	68
June 1995	15	23	43	82
June 1996	14	25	35	75
June 1997	13	26	37	75
June 1998	13	24	36	73
June 1999 old basis ⁽²⁾	14	18	39	71
February 2000 old basis	15	8	44	67
September 2000 old basis	16	6	39	60
March 2001 old basis	19	7	41	67
June 1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	14	18	43	75
February 2000 new basis	15	9	49	72
September 2000 new basis	16	6	41	62
March 2001 new basis	19	7	45	71
Summary motoring				
June 1994	11	26	42	79
June 1995	11	26	40	77
June 1996	11	28	39	78
June 1997	11	29	37	77
June 1998	12	21	37	70
June 1999 old basis ⁽²⁾	15	16	33	64
February 2000 old basis	14	7	38	59
September 2000 old basis	11	6	34	52
March 2001 old basis	14	6	37	57
June 1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	15	18	41	73
February 2000 new basis	14	8	49	70
September 2000 new basis	11	7	40	57
March 2001 new basis	14	6	43	63
All criminal cases				
June 1994	26	24	51	102
June 1995	27	25	54	105
June 1996	27	27	51	105
June 1997	27	28	50	106
June 1998	28	25	47	100
June 1999 old basis ⁽²⁾	31	19	46	97
February 2000 old basis	32	9	50	90
September 2000 old basis	27	6	48	81
March 2001 old basis	30	6	47	83
June 1999 new basis ⁽²⁾	31	20	50	101
February 2000 new basis	32	9	56	96
September 2000 new basis	27	6	52	86
March 2001 new basis	30	6	52	88

1. The figures in this table exclude defendants who were summonsed to appear in court.

2 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 10: Average time taken for youth defendants in criminal cases by offence type and stage of proceedings, February 1999 to December 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
2000	30	8	58	96	19,901
1999	February	35	23	115	5,057
	June	33	21	105	5,329
	October	32	18	106	4,960
2000	February	31	12	98	5,110
	June	29	8	94	4,677
	September	29	7	95	4,510
	December	29	7	96	5,604
2001	March	33	7	97	5,718
Summary non-motoring					
1999	41	22	39	102	4,808
2000	29	11	46	86	6,675
1999	February	51	24	111	1,585
	June	40	23	100	1,844
	October	30	19	93	1,379
2000	February	29	13	90	1,653
	June	26	10	80	1,603
	September	30	11	88	1,691
	December	31	10	87	1,728
2001	March	30	10	87	1,935
Summary motoring					
1999	59	29	32	120	3,241
2000	55	24	34	113	4,518
1999	February	59	30	133	837
	June	63	30	119	1,433
	October	52	27	110	971
2000	February	61	27	124	1,165
	June	51	24	107	1,036
	September	55	23	109	1,037
	December	54	22	112	1,280
2001	March	57	25	111	1,251
All criminal cases					
1999	38	22	49	109	23,395
2000	33	11	52	96	31,094
1999	February	41	24	116	7,479
	June	40	23	107	8,606
	October	34	19	104	7,310
2000	February	35	14	100	7,928
	June	32	11	93	7,316
	September	33	11	95	7,238
	December	33	9	97	8,612
2001	March	36	10	97	8,904

TABLE 11: Adjudgments for youth defendants in criminal cases by offence type, February 1999 to December 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
Indictable					
1999		55	19	2.5	22
2000		58	19	2.5	23
1999	February	58	18	2.6	23
	June	51	21	2.4	22
	October	56	18	2.6	22
2000	February	56	21	2.4	23
	June	57	19	2.5	23
	September	59	18	2.6	23
	December	61	18	2.7	23
2001	March	58	19	2.5	23
Summary non-motoring					
1999		39	40	1.7	23
2000		46	33	1.9	24
1999	February	36	45	1.5	24
	June	38	43	1.6	24
	October	44	32	2.0	22
2000	February	48	33	1.8	26
	June	43	35	1.8	24
	September	48	32	2.0	24
	December	46	31	2.0	23
2001	March	47	32	2.0	23
Summary motoring					
1999		32	43	1.4	24
2000		34	41	1.4	24
1999	February	43	37	1.5	30
	June	27	49	1.2	22
	October	31	41	1.4	21
2000	February	35	39	1.5	24
	June	33	42	1.4	23
	September	31	43	1.4	23
	December	36	42	1.5	24
2001	March	29	44	1.4	21
All criminal cases					
1999		49	27	2.2	22
2000		52	25	2.3	23
1999	February	52	26	2.2	23
	June	44	30	2.0	22
	October	50	23	2.3	22
2000	February	51	26	2.2	24
	June	51	26	2.2	23
	September	52	24	2.3	23
	December	54	24	2.4	23
2001	March	51	25	2.3	23

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 with the February 2000 survey there is now 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 Ahmed 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 Sessions Areas (PSAs) and clerkships have sometimes been unable to participate in the collection of data due to local circumstances. The table gives the estimated completeness of the data and the number of defendants in each February sample and the March 2001 sample of criminal proceedings. The term completeness in this table refers to the proportion of clerkships (or PSAs 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 PSAs 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.

Previous bulletins

9. 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

Proportion of clerkships (or PSAs before 1994) making returns and sample sizes, 1986 to 2001, February surveys and March 2001 survey

Collection week	Proportion of clerkships (or PSAs 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
March 2001	100.0	8,076	7,933	14,222

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.

responsibility for the surveys from 1 January 1994. When the Home Office conducted the survey the data was collected directly from PSAs rather than clerkships as currently.

Further Information

10. This bulletin has been prepared by the Information Management Unit 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 Jo Peacock at the address below:

Jo Peacock
 Information Management Unit
 Lord Chancellor's Department
 Room 9.21
 Selborne House
 54-60 Victoria Street
 London SW1E 6QW
 Tel: 020 7210 8508
 email: jo.peacock@lcdhq.gsi.gov.uk

11. For further copies of this bulletin contact Rahila Ahmed at the following address:

Rahila Ahmed
 Magistrates' Courts Division
 Lord Chancellor's Department
 4th Floor
 Selborne House
 54-60 Victoria Street
 London SW1E 6QW
 Tel: 020 7210 8796
 email: rahila.ahmed@lcdhq.gsi.gov.uk

12. Press enquiries should be addressed to:

Press Office
 Lord Chancellor's Department
 7th Floor
 Selborne House
 54-60 Victoria Street
 London SW1E 6QW
 Tel: 020 7210 8512/8513
 email: press.office@lcdhq.gsi.gov.uk

