



National Audit Office

**The UK's independent public spending watchdog**

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Email [FOI@nao.org.uk](mailto:FOI@nao.org.uk)

Reference FOI-1522

Date 13 May 2022

## COMPLAINTS ABOUT CHILD MAINTENANCE SERVICE (CMS)

Thank you for your email of 18 April 2022 in which you requested information about complaints regarding the Child Maintenance Service (CMS).

Your request is being handled under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your specific request is reproduced at Annex A, where we also provide our full response and the information you requested.

We hope you find this response helpful. Annex B sets out the steps you may wish to take if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request for information under the FOIA.

Yours sincerely

**NAO FOI Team**



## Annex A

### Request for information about complaints regarding CMS.

(Your request in italics, NAO response in plain text)

*We are currently conducting research on the CMS and would like to make a formal freedom of information request that statistics are shared with us on how many complaints about the CMS, Gareth Davies has received every year for the last 5 years?*

### **NAO response**

We confirm that we hold information in scope of your request.

This is provided in the following table:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>CMS/Child Maintenance Service</b>	<b>CSA/Child Support Agency</b>	<b>CMS/CSA combined</b>
2017	12	8	20
2018	21	5	26
2019	28	6	34
2020	31	2	33
2021	37	0	37
2022*	10	1	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>161</b>

\*2022 figures up to the time of our handling of this request

Your request specifically asks about complaints regarding CMS, but we have also recorded some complaints about the Child Support Agency (CSA), which was the predecessor organisation to CMS.

We have, therefore, provided this additional information in a way that can be read separately from the CMS data provided.

We do not record whether any correspondence received by the NAO is specifically addressed to Gareth Davies, the NAO's Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). In effect, the NAO is the C&AG's office so all correspondence that comes to the NAO is received and responded to on the C&AG's behalf. The figures we have provided represent complaints received by the NAO, rather than anything addressed to the C&AG in particular.

The figures may include more than one piece of correspondence from the same complainant who raised more than one complaint. We responded separately to each complaint.

Please note that we record correspondence in calendar years, so we have provided information for the full five calendar years from 2017 to 2021, and are additionally providing the current year of 2022 from January to the time of our handling of your FOI request.

## Annex B

### Statement of Policy

Our policy is to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as helpfully and promptly as possible, having regard to the principles set out in the Act. I therefore hope you are happy with the way we have handled your request. If you are not, then you should take the following steps.

In the first instance, within 40 working days, write to the National Audit Office Freedom of Information (FOI) Team at [FOI.requests@nao.org.uk](mailto:FOI.requests@nao.org.uk) or by post\* to:

FOI Team, Green 2, National Audit Office, 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SP

The Head of FOI will arrange a review, which will be conducted by a senior member of staff who was not involved in decisions relating to your original request. Once the review has been completed, we will write informing you of the outcome.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

<https://ico.org.uk/>

or

Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF

**\*Please note: due to the ongoing Coronavirus situation, some restrictions remain regarding staff access to our office premises. Hard copy post sent to our offices may be subject to delay.**