



National Audit Office

The UK's independent public spending watchdog

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Reference FOI-1758

Date 22 October 2024

FOI REQUEST ON HMRC CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT

Thank you for your email dated 17th October 2024, requesting the supporting data and methodology behind our reporting of the number of hours in total that customers have spent waiting to speak to an HMRC adviser on the telephone. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Having checked our records, I can confirm that we do hold the requested information.

The number '798' years, is made up of three separate calculations and is set out in the table below. The calculations are based on administrative data provided by HMRC on the number of calls each year categorised by different outcome/call route, and the average call waiting time for each category of call.

	2019-20	2022-23
	Hours	Hours
Total call waiting time for calls that are answered ¹	2,837,152	5,600,393
Total call waiting time for calls that are abandoned by the caller before being answered ²	360,855	1,384,947
Total call waiting time for calls that are cut off by HMRC after 70 minutes of waiting ³	0	8,021
Total (in hours)	3,198,007	6,993,361
Total (in years)	365	798

Notes:

1. Calculated using data provided by HMRC on the number of calls each year handled by call advisors and the average waiting time for those calls.
2. Calculated using data provided by HMRC on the number of calls each year abandoned by customers and the average waiting time for those calls.
3. Calculated using data provided by HMRC on the number of calls that reached 70 minutes of waiting time in 2022-23. HMRC did not cut off any calls at 70 minutes in 2019-20.

Our policy is to respond to requests as helpfully and promptly as possible. I therefore hope you are happy with the way we have handled your request. If you are not happy with this response, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days by writing to the NAO FOI Team at FOI@nao.org.uk or by post to: FOI Team, Green 2, National Audit Office, 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SP

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 primary way of escalating your concerns to the Information Commissioner is at: <https://ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>.

Yours sincerely,

**NAO FOI
Officer**