



Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission  
Freedom of Information Act Focal Point  
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Marie Griffiths  
[request-30219-  
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx](#)

Our Ref. VTR 659

Date: 23 March 2010

Dear Ms Griffiths,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 5 March 2010. Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Please find below a copy of your request together with a corresponding response.

### **Your request**

1. *How many requests do you get under the DPA each year?*
2. *How do you verify the authenticity of DPA requests?*
3. *Do you conduct regular DPA audits / have an auditing policy?*
4. *Do you maintain data on errors in information covered by the DPA?*
  - a. *If so, please provide data for the past 5 years.*

### **Our response**

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (the Commission) took over responsibility for the Child Support Agency (CSA) on 1 November 2008.

The Commissions Data Protection Team deal with all Subject Access Request (SARs), providing a client with all of the information held on them about their child maintenance case.

1. The table below details the number SAR's received by the CSA over the last five calendar years. Additionally, the latest available information is also included in the table below from 1 January to 11 March 2010.

<b>Jan - Dec</b>	<b>Personal Information requested - Electronic</b>	<b>Personal Information requested – paper based</b>	<b>Total SARs received</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>1772</b>	<b>1865</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>1860</b>	<b>1886</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>2385</b>	<b>2324</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3084</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3383</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>393</b>

**Notes to the table:**

- The information provided during 2005 – 2007 reflects the number of SARs received requesting information which is held about a client which is either paper based or electronic. Any one request could reflect both forms of information held by the CSA about a client, therefore figures can not be added to show the total number of SAR's received.
  - From 2008 SAR's figures reflect the total number of individual requests. This combines information held electronically or paper based.
2. Under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), a SAR must be made in writing and must containing sufficient information to enable the CSA to identify an individual. The CSA will verify the identity of the person by checking the name and address provided in the request against the data held on its computer systems. If a child support reference number or a national insurance number are supplied, these are also used to verify the individual. If there are any discrepancies in the information supplied, the CSA will ask the applicant, to provide a proof of his name and address.
  3. The CSA conducts regular audits on its business functions and utilises both internal and external auditors. The most recent SAR audit took place during 2007/2008.
  4. We have interpreted 'errors in information covered by the DPA' as 'errors identified within a case by the DPA'. If this interpretation is not correct, please tell us how you understand this term and your clarification will be treated as a new request.

The DPA does not record the number of errors identified within a particular case. However, if an error is identified, the CSA ensures the information is corrected in compliance with the fourth Data Protection Principle.

We hope you find the information you have been provided with helpful. If you have any queries about this letter please contact us quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

**Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission  
Freedom of Information Act Focal Point**

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**Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act**

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing [FOI.FocalPoint@childmaintenance.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FOI.FocalPoint@childmaintenance.gsi.gov.uk) or by writing to Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, Freedom of Information Act Focal Point, PO Box 61791, London, SW1P 9NT. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).