

# Child Support Agency Case Closure Statistics

Data for June 2014 – September 2017

Quarterly

Published: 06 December 2017  
Great Britain

Official  
Experimental

As part of the Government's Welfare Reform agenda, the child maintenance system has been reformed to encourage and support separated parents to work together in the best interests of their children. Previously, the Child Support Agency (CSA) was the default option for many. Now, where possible, parents are encouraged to make family based arrangements to financially support their children. For parents who are not ready or able to make their own arrangement, the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) was set up in 2012.

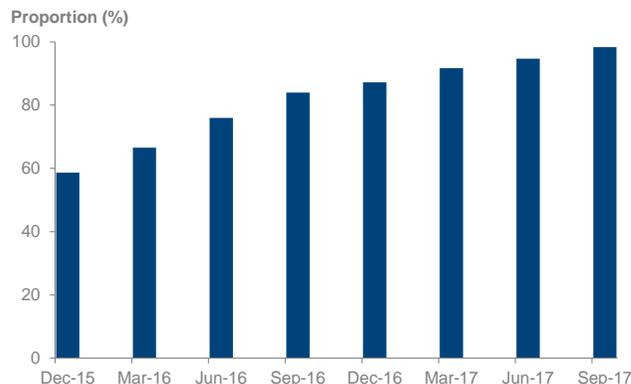
In June 2014 DWP began to close existing CSA cases. As part of the Case Closure process, parents are given the option to make their own family-based arrangements or to apply to the new CMS. This publication details the progress of the CSA Case Closure process. Statistics on the CMS are available at [Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme Statistics](#).

## Main stories as of September 2017

**98% cases with a CSA liability have started the Case Closure process**

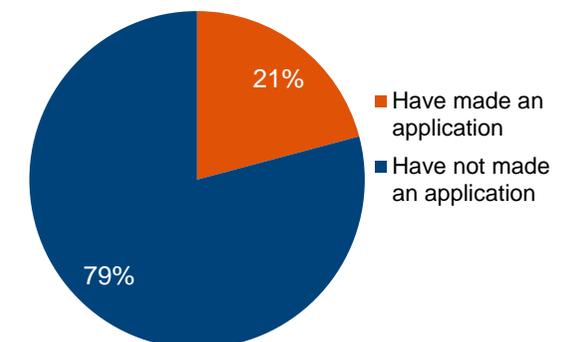
**87% cases selected have ended liability through Case Closure**

**21% of cases where liability has ended via Case Closure have now applied to the new system CMS**



**670,300**

Cases with CSA liability ended through proactive Case Closure



## At a glance

Page

98 per cent of cases have started the proactive Case Closure process

3

The number of cases on CSA has decreased to 906,400 from 1.53 million before Case Closure began

5

62 per cent of CMS applications from proactive Case Closure clients were made before CSA liability was ended

7

CMS has 149,100 arrears only cases from clients who went through the Case Closure process

8

**Author:** Jennifer Gibson and Michael Cole

**Lead Statistician:** Aniel Anand

[cm.analysis.research@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cm.analysis.research@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

**DWP Press Office:** 0203 267 5129

Comments? Feedback is welcome.

Published: 6 December 2017

Next edition: March 2018

© Crown copyright

## What you need to know

The Child Maintenance Service (CMS) was introduced in 2012. We are closing **cases that have a current liability** on the previous CSA system and encouraging clients to either make their own financial arrangements for their children or apply to the new CMS.

In order to do this, DWP is contacting all clients with a current liability on CSA to inform them that their child maintenance liability will end, and offering support to put a new arrangement in place.

Cases are being selected for closure in a structured process where the caseload is divided into five segments, determined by the characteristics of the case. This is known as **Proactive Case Closure**. Details of these proactive selection segments can be found within the [definitions](#).

Two groups of cases are not subject to being selected in this way;

1. **Reactive Case Closure**

Cases where a new application is made to CMS, which relates to a paying parent in a live CSA case, but a different receiving parent. This new application will trigger the process to bring the existing CSA liability to an end.

2. **“Age Out” Cases**

Cases where the youngest child will have reached the age of 20 before the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017, these cases will come to a natural end before the end of the transition period.

## More information on Ending liabilities and Closing Cases

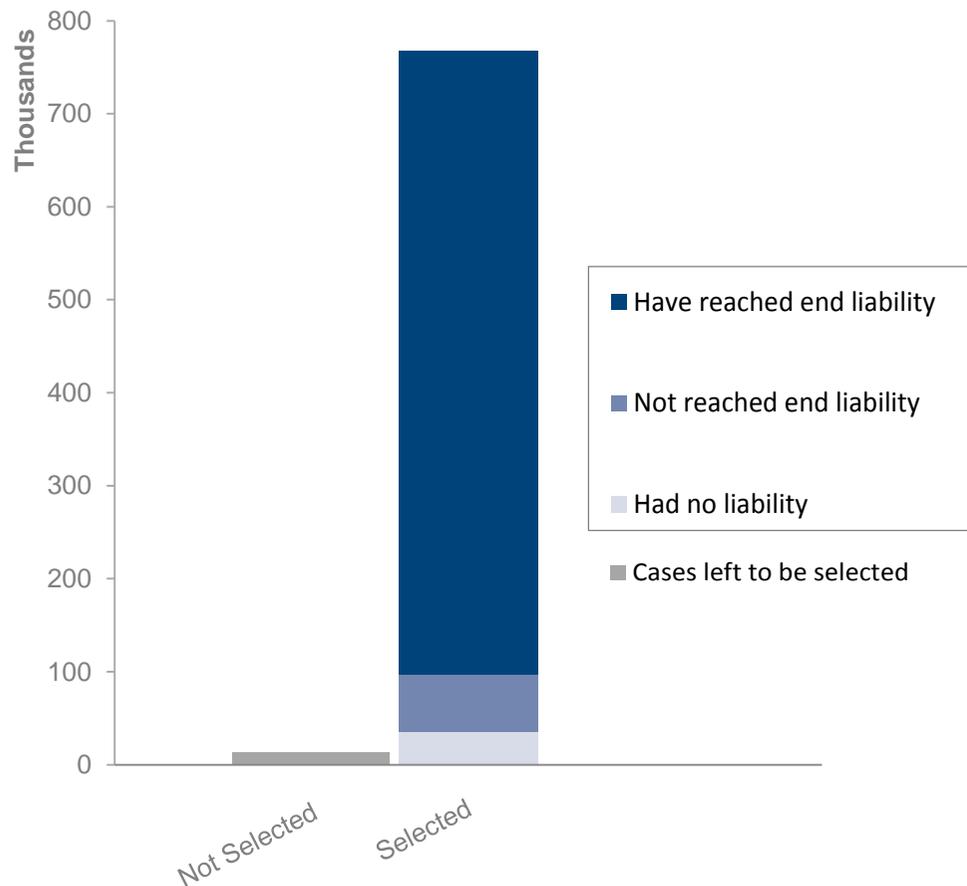
Once liability has ended, no further maintenance accrues on the case but anything outstanding remains owed. This is 6 months after Case Closure selection for proactive cases and 38 days for reactive cases. It does not mean that payments under the CSA case are no longer due – there is likely to be a final scheduled payment for on-going maintenance after the end liability date, and payments towards arrears should keep flowing until the case is fully closed.

Following end liability, clients are contacted about any arrears that remain before the case is closed. Please see the [methodology](#) page for further information.

## Case Closure process

98% of cases have started the proactive Case Closure process and 86% of cases have ended liability.

Number of cases that are part of the case closure process.



The total number of **cases still to be selected**, that is still to start the process, was 13,100 in September 2017, down from 41,500 in June 2017. This decrease is mostly due to the Case Closure process but some cases may close naturally, for example, the qualifying child may have left full-time non-advanced education and no longer qualify for child support payments.

As of September 2017, 669,900 cases have had their **liability ended** through the **proactive** CSA Case Closure process. An additional 27,000 cases have had their liability ended through **reactive** Case Closure. This leaves 61,900 which have started the process but not yet reached the end of their CSA liability.

It was announced on the 30 November 2017 the date by which all current CSA liabilities must be ended has changed to the 31 December 2018. We are currently on track to meet this deadline. Clients who make a CMS application before their CSA liability ends will have continuity of liability between the two cases

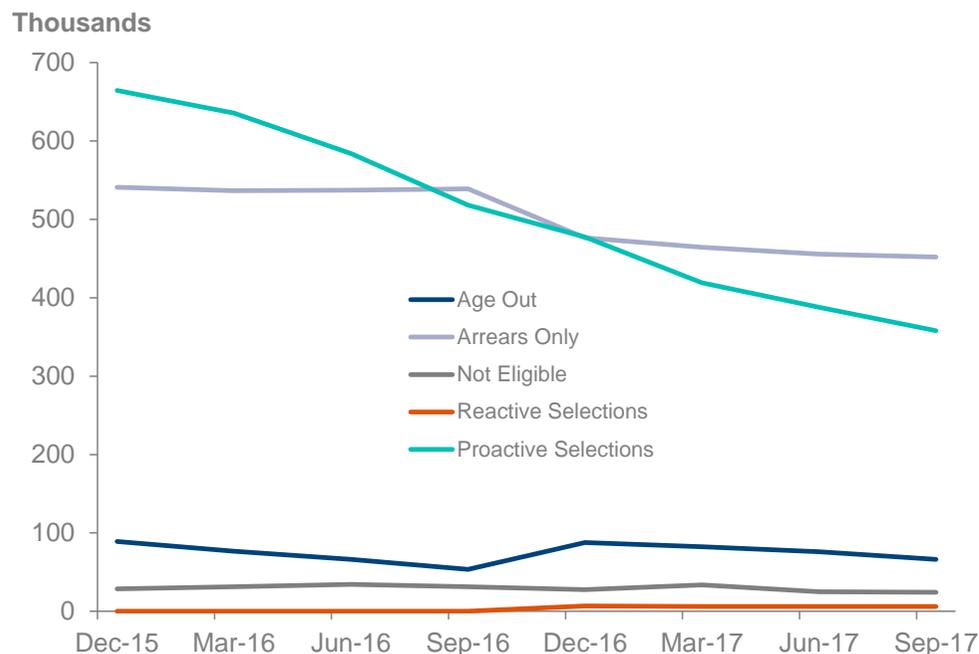
A total of 439,500 CSA cases have been fully **closed** as a result of the Case Closure process, 411,300 **proactively** and 28,200 **reactively**. This is 53% of all cases going through the case closure process.

See **Table 1.1** and **Tables 4.1 to 4.4** for full data.

# CSA Caseload

The number of cases on CSA has decreased to 906,400 from 1.53 million before Case Closure began

Number of cases on CSA since June 2014



The **CSA caseload** shows the number of cases still open with the CSA. It includes the following cases:

- Those that have been selected and are in the process of having liability ended
- Those that have not yet been selected for Case Closure
- All cases which have ended liability but are not yet closed

Once a case is closed it is removed from the caseload.

The largest individual category of cases remaining on CSA is **Arrears Only**. There are 451,900 Arrears Only cases in September 2017. Arrears Only cases are the last to be selected for Case Closure.

**Proactive** cases are consistently declining as they are being closed as part of the Case Closure process.

There has been a change in data source in September 2016 corresponding to when segment 5 cases were first selected. This change in data source occurs every time we begin selecting cases from a new segment, and impacts comparability across time. This is noticeable from a change in trend in the number of cases on the CSA caseload at September 2016.

See **Tables 2.1 - 2.2** for full data.

## More information on Child Support Agency Caseload

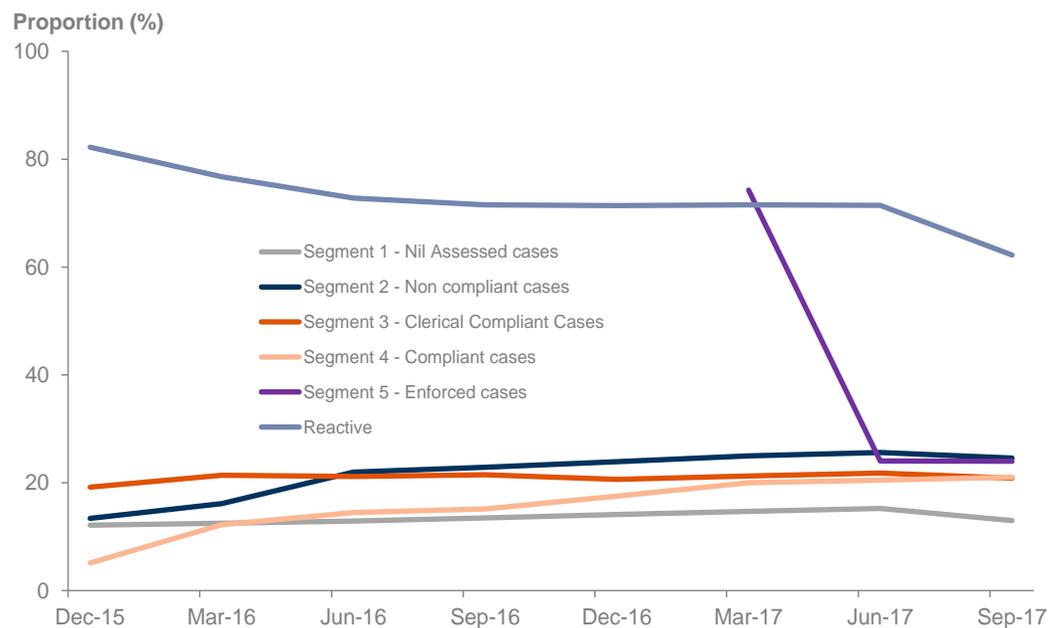
The CSA caseload, reported in table 2.2, will differ from the Case Closure position, reported in tables 3.1-3.3. Case Closure position figures will include cases that are no longer part of the CSA caseload but were part of the Case Closure process i.e. cases that have now been closed, but CSA caseload figures will not.

Further details of the CSA caseload can be found in the [Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics](#).

# Applications to the Child Maintenance Service

## 21 per cent of all cases that have had their CSA liability ended by Case Closure have made an application to CMS

CMS applications following active ending of CSA liability, by Case Closure type and segment



Parents whose CSA case is being closed may make a Family-Based Arrangement or, if they are unable or unwilling to do this, may apply to the CMS.

The likelihood of a CMS application depends on the characteristics of the case, so the **proactive cases** have been further split by their selection criteria, known as **Segments**. The application rates across the Segments have been fairly steady since June 2016, with the biggest change coming from segment 4 cases which have shown a steady increase in applications to CMS over time.

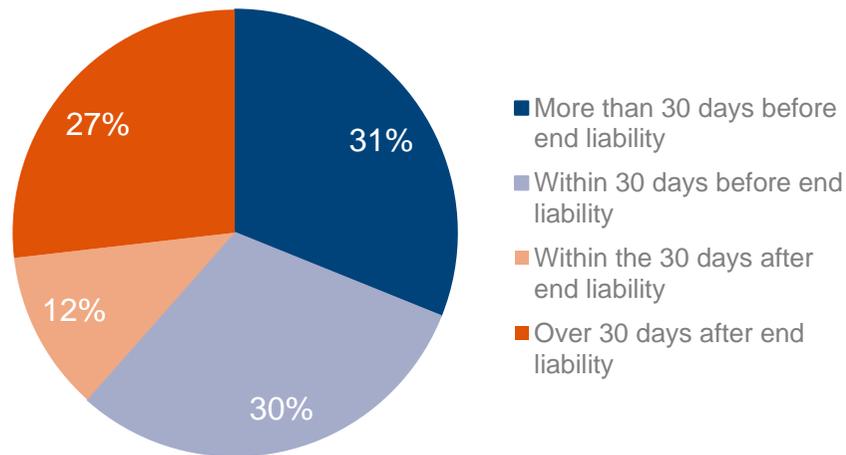
The proportion of **reactive cases** with an application to CMS has declined in the last quarter. This is likely due to the composition of the cases: as the Case Closure process nears its end, the reactive cases will be increasingly atypical of the original population.

Note that the March 17 figure for Segment 5 is based on a relatively small number of cases as Segment 5 has only been selected for closure since March 2017, and these may not be typical of later cases.

See **Tables 5.1-5.2** and **Table 6** for full data.

## 62 per cent of CMS applications from proactive Case Closure clients were made before CSA liability was ended

Proportion of cases making a CMS application by end liability date, September 2017



As of September 2017, 128,400 cases that have had their liability ended on CSA through proactive Case Closure have made an **application to CMS**.

Of these 128,400 cases, 62 per cent have made an application to CMS before their CSA liability was ended. 12 per cent made applications to CMS in the month following liability coming to an end, and 27 per cent were made more than a month after liability ended.

See **Tables 5.3-5.4** for full data.

### More information on Child Maintenance Service Applications

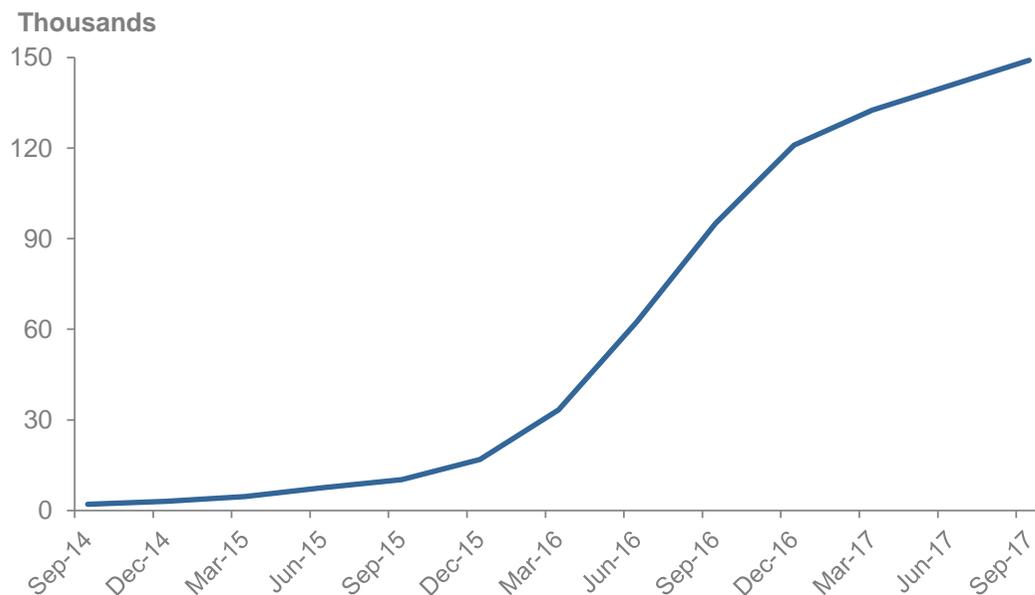
Applications data are determined by linking individual personal details from cases that have ended liability with the equivalent information in the 2012 scheme managed by CMS.

The underlying applications data uses the same source data found within the [Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme Statistics](#). This information considers all applications, and does not consider the current status of the case. Some of these cases may have subsequently closed. Please see the [methodology](#) page for further information.

## CSA arrears only caseload on CMS

CMS has 149,100 arrears only cases from clients who went through the Case Closure process

CSA arrears only caseload each month since September 2014



Where cases that have arrears but no current liability (including where liability has been ended by Case Closure) are closed on CSA, they are moved over to CMS automatically by the department.

As of September 2017, there were 149,100 of these **arrears only** cases on CMS, 94 per cent from **proactive** Case Closure and 6 per cent from **reactive** Case Closure. This is an increase of 6 per cent from June 2017. The sharp increase from November 2015 is due to increased intake following the early stages of the Case Closure process. Since December 2016 the arrears only intake has slowed due to changes in operational priorities.

See **Table 7.1- 7.3** for arrears only breakdowns.

Note that CSA intake and caseload figures were previously published in the 2012 [Child Maintenance Scheme Statistics](#).

## **Methodology**

### **Data Sources**

The administrative data used within this publication are derived from the Child Maintenance administrative systems; Child Support Computer System (CSCS); Child Support System 2 (CS2) and Clerical Case Database (CCD) for 1993/2003 scheme cases and the Siebel source system for 2012 scheme cases.

### **Caseload**

The 1993/2003 scheme caseload is sourced from the same data found within the existing Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics.

The June 2014 caseload was linked with Case Closure planning information in order to provide an estimated segment breakdown of the caseload.

The current caseload has been linked with Case Closure records in order to give an accurate segment as of the current month. Further detail is available below. [Child Support Agency Statistics](#)

### **Case Closure Position**

Details of 1993/2003 scheme cases have been linked with Case Closure selection records in order to determine how many cases have been selected.

Cases that are due to be selected are identified using a scan of the CS2 computer system and interrogation of CSCS and CCD system data.

### **Ending liabilities and closing cases**

Details of 1993/2003 scheme cases have been linked with Case Closure selection records in order to determine how many cases have ended liability, how many did not have a liability and how many have completed Case Closure.

Following end liability, clients are contacted about any arrears that remain before the case is closed.

### **Applications to the 2012 Scheme**

Application data are determined by linking individual personal details from cases that have ended liability with the equivalent information in the 2012 scheme.

An application, or arrears only case, following Case Closure is counted where the personal details of both parents can be linked between systems.

## Arrears only cases on 2012 system

Arrears only cases are based on the same methodology as for applications; however the current methodology aligns the caseload figures to that those previously published in the 2012 [Child Maintenance Scheme Statistics](#). These are cases that have not made application to the Child Maintenance Scheme following case closure, but had 1993 or 2003 scheme arrears moved over to the 2012 system.

## Definitions

<b>CMS</b>	Child Maintenance Service
<b>1993/2003 Total Caseload</b>	The total number of cases on the CSA 2003 and 1993 Schemes.
<b>2012/CMS Application</b>	The number of new applications received to the 2012 statutory scheme. These figures do not include arrears only cases on the 2012 System.
<b>Age out</b>	Cases where the youngest child will have reached the age of 20 before the 31st December 2017. These cases will be exempt from the Case Closure process unless they become linked to a new Child Maintenance Service application. This is because these cases will come to a natural end before the end of the transition period.
<b>Arrears Only on 2012 System/CMS</b>	These are cases that have not made application to the Child Maintenance Service following Case Closure, but had 1993 or 2003 scheme arrears. These arrears are moved over to the 2012 system and are designated transitioned arrears. Further details on transitioned arrears can be found in the following ad-hoc statistical publication: <a href="#">Child Support Agency arrears transitioned to the Child Maintenance Service system: November 2014 to June 2017</a>
<b>Arrears only within Case Closure Process</b>	Cases without an on-going maintenance liability, and arrears on the 1993/2003 schemes.
<b>Case Closure</b>	The process of ending liability and closing all cases on the CSA (1993/2003) schemes.
<b>Case Group</b>	Where a non-resident parent has more than one case. All of his/her cases are linked together as a case group.
<b>Completed Case Closure</b>	Following end liability, clients are contacted about any arrears that remain. Once this activity has been completed, the case is classed as closed.

<b>End liability</b>	When on-going maintenance liability stops accruing under CSA calculation rules. This is 6 months after Case Closure selection for proactive cases and 38 days for reactive cases. It does not mean that payments under the CSA case are no longer due – there is likely to be a final scheduled payment for on-going maintenance after the end liability date, and payments towards arrears should keep flowing until the case is fully closed.
<b>Not Eligible for Case Closure</b>	<p>These are cases within the CSA caseload which will not have liabilities ended as part of the Case Closure process and are not classed as age out or arrears only. A case is not eligible for Case Closure for several reasons for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The case is not part of the 'Live' CSA caseload.</li> <li>- The case is now cancelled/ withdrawn, and is awaiting full closure.</li> <li>- This could be due to a death on the case.</li> </ul>
<b>Proactive Case Closure</b>	The structured process of selecting CSA cases for closure.
<b>Reactive Case Closure</b>	Where a new application is made to the Child Maintenance Service, which relates to a paying parent in a live CSA case (1993 or 2003 Scheme), but a different receiving parent. This new application will trigger the process to bring the existing child maintenance liability to an end.
<b>Segment 1 - Nil Assessed cases</b>	These are all cases where liability is assessed as nil. Cases from this segment were selected from June 2014.
<b>Segment 2 - Non compliant cases</b>	These are cases where the non-resident parent is not complying with his/her obligation to pay child maintenance or is assessed and non-charging. This segment excludes cases which are subject to a deduction from earnings order, a regular deduction order, where a deduction from earnings request has been granted and where enforcement action is on-going. Cases from this segment were selected from January 2015.
<b>Segment 3 - Clerical Compliant Cases</b>	Segment 3 are all clerical cases (these are cases that are not managed on the main computer systems) that do not fall within Segment 1 or 2 or 5 (so excluding deduction from earnings order, deduction from earnings request and regular deduction order cases and cases where enforcement action is on-going). Cases from this segment were selected from May 2015.
<b>Segment 4 - Compliant cases</b>	Segment 4 are all non-clerical cases that do not fall within Segment 1 or 2 or 5 (so excluding deduction from earnings order, deduction from earnings requests and regular deduction order cases and cases where enforcement action is on-going). Cases from this segment were selected from May 2015.

## **Segment 5 - Enforced cases**

Segment 5 are all cases where:(a) the method of payment of child maintenance is by (i) deduction from earnings order; (ii) deduction from earnings request; or (iii) regular deduction order; and (b) all cases where an enforcement action is currently in progress including liability orders (and all subsequent action that flows from such orders); lump sum deduction orders; freezing orders; setting aside of disposition orders and their Scottish equivalents. Cases from this segment were selected from August 2016 for Clerical cases and September 2016 for on system cases.

## **Where to find out more**

For more information on CSA Case Closure please see [Child Maintenance: Ending Liability Scheme](#).

For more information regarding the Child Support Agency Caseload please see the [Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics](#).

For more information regarding the Child Maintenance Service Caseload please see the 2012 [Child Maintenance Scheme Statistics](#).

## **Feedback Welcome**

The Department for Work and Pensions is always glad to hear the comments and views of customers on the CSA Case Closure Statistics.

Please email [cm.analysis.research@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cm.analysis.research@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).