



Hugh Henry MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Chief Executive's Office  
1A Parliament Square  
Edinburgh  
EH1 1RF  
DX 549306  
LP1 Edinburgh 10

11 October 2012

Dear Mr Henry

**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION S4W-09532**  
***Divorce Cases***

The Cabinet Secretary in his response to the above PQ indicated that it relates to operational matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Court Service corporate body. I am now writing to you in response to the matter you have raised.

**S4W-09532** asks: *how long it takes for divorce cases to be (a) heard and (b) concluded in each sheriff court.*

For the purposes of responding "heard" has been interpreted as relating to those cases where a formal court hearing (a proof) has been allocated for the purposes of hearing evidence. A proof date is set once the court agrees that parties are in a position to proceed to that stage.

The table below indicates the average period (in weeks), by court, between the registration of an ordinary divorce case and a) the proof date and b) the final disposal of the case. The averages cover 970 cases entering the system over the past 4 years.

Aberdeen Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof Diet (Weeks)	58
	Average Time to Final Disposal (Weeks)	74
Airdrie Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof Diet (Weeks)	64
	Average Time to Final Disposal (Weeks)	80
Alloa Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	75
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	83
Arbroath Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	57
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	81
Ayr Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	64
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	94
Banff Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	56
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	64

Campbeltown Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	83
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	98
Cupar Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	70
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	86
Dingwall Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	63
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	103
Dumbarton Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	72
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	83
Dumfries Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	65
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	85
Dundee Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	51
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	60
Dunfermline Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	83
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	100
Dunoon Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	70
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	83
Duns Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	58
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	76
Edinburgh Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	53
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	65
Elgin Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	46
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	60
Falkirk Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	59
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	83
Forfar Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	105
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	121
Fort William Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	49
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	63
Glasgow Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	72
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	95
Greenock Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	48
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	66
Haddington Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	44
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	53
Hamilton Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	60
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	78
Inverness Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	65
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	78
Jedburgh Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	63
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	81
Kilmarnock Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	76
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	91
Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	77
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	100
Kirkcudbright Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	131
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	134
Kirkwall Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	49
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	86
Lanark Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	59
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	78
Livingston Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	54
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	70

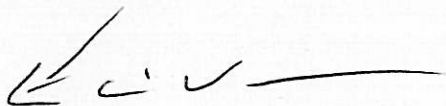
Oban Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	49
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	58
Paisley Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	61
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	80
Perth Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	53
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	70
Peterhead Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	48
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	58
Portree Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	69
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	74
Selkirk Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	47
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	57
Stirling Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	72
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	87
Stonehaven Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	45
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	51
Stornoway Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	49
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	51
Stranraer Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	60
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	75
Tain Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	43
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	58
Wick Sheriff Court	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	43
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	75
<b>National</b>	Average Time to Proof (Weeks)	<b>60</b>
	Average Time to Final Disp (Weeks)	<b>77</b>

Where a formal proof date is not allocated in an ordinary divorce action (15,200 cases) the national average between registration and disposal, over the same period, is 21 weeks.

The equivalent average for divorces proceeding under the simplified divorce procedure (27,500 cases) is 5 weeks.

A copy of this letter will be placed in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre and published on the Scottish Court Service website.

Yours sincerely



Eric McQueen  
Interim Chief Executive  
0131 444 3301  
[emcqueen@scotcourts.gov.uk](mailto:emcqueen@scotcourts.gov.uk)

49	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
50	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
51	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
52	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
53	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
54	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
55	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
56	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
57	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
58	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
59	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
60	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
61	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
62	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
63	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
64	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
65	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
66	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
67	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
68	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
69	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
70	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
71	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
72	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
73	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
74	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
75	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
76	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
77	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
78	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
79	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
80	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
81	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
82	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
83	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
84	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
85	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
86	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
87	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
88	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
89	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
90	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
91	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
92	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
93	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
94	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
95	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
96	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
97	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
98	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
99	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical
100	Average Time to Final Disposition (Weeks)	Medical

The national average between registration and disposal over the entire period is 21 weeks.

The equivalent average for divorce proceedings under the simplified divorce procedure (21,000 cases) is 2 weeks.

A copy of this report will be placed in the court's information Center and published on the Court's Court Services website.

Very truly yours,



Chief Executive  
 Court Services  
 1011 4th Street  
 Sacramento, California 95833