

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service



Alison McInnes MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Chief Executive's Office
Parliament House
Parliament Square
Edinburgh
EH1 1RQ

28 April 2015

DX 549306
LP1 Edinburgh 10

Dear Ms McInnes

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS S4W-25116 AND S4W-25117

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice, in his response to the above PQs, indicated that they related to operational matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service corporate body. Accordingly, I have set out below a response to each of your questions.

S4W-25116 asks: *what the (a) latest and (b) average time has been for each (i) sheriff and (ii) justice of the peace court to finish sitting in each month since June 2013.*

The level of operational detail requested is monitored at local courts and is not available centrally through our management information system.

However I can assure you Sheriff Courts and Justice of the Peace Courts buildings are routinely open from 9.00am to 5.00pm. Within each court building a multiple number of courts can operate concurrently, generally sitting between 9.30am and 4.30pm. The actual start and finish time of each court is dependent on the demands and progress of each day's business. Outwith these core times the court remains flexible to deal with any business, including custody cases and urgent orders that require to be dealt with on a specific day.

S4W-25117 asks: *what the average time applicants for emergency orders have had to wait to find out if an order has been granted by each (a) sheriff and (b) justice of the peace court in each month since June 2013.*

All applications of an emergency nature, which may include urgent child protection orders or interim interdicts are heard by a member of the judiciary on the day the application is presented in court. Applicants and/or their legal representatives are party to the hearing and therefore immediately aware of the outcome. The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service also have in place procedures which allow urgent applications to be dealt with outwith office hours.

I hope that this information is helpful. A copy of this letter will be placed in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre and published on the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric McQueen', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric McQueen
Chief Executive
0131 444 3301
emcqueen@scotcourts.gov.uk