

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service



Liam Kerr MSP
The Scottish Parliament
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Chief Executive's Office
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4 April 2019

Dear Mr. Kerr,

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION S5W-22031

The Cabinet Secretary in his response to the above PQ indicated that it related to operational matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service corporate body. I am now writing in response to the matter raised.

S5W-22031 asks the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the work by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service to collect and report management information on the time taken from first diet to verdict in sheriff and jury cases.

The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service has collected data from 2017-18 about the time between first diet and verdict in Sheriff and Jury cases.

The data shows that for 2017-18:

- The average number of weeks between first diet and verdict, where the accused's first diet appearance was from custody, was 5 weeks. The desired maximum period for custody cases is 7 weeks.
- The average number of weeks between first diet and verdict, where the accused's first diet appearance was not from custody, was 8 weeks. The desired maximum period for non-custody cases is 9 weeks.

The 'desired maximum period' is not an official target. It is a useful working period that allows the Crown and defence sufficient time to prepare for the trial diet, making best use of available resources.

The SCTS will continue to collect this data in order to monitor the average time periods. While we have no immediate plans to publish this data, we do publish quarterly official statistics on criminal court activity and will consider the inclusion of this data in a future enhancement.

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 be 'Eric McQueen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eric McQueen
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