

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service



Mr Jamie Greene MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Chief Executive's Office
Parliament House
Parliament Square
Edinburgh
EH1 1RQ
DX 549306
LP1 Edinburgh 10

21 November 2024

Dear Mr Greene

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION S6W-30860

The Cabinet Secretary in her 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.

S6W-30860 asks: how many (a) High, (b) Sheriff and (c) Justice of the Peace Court trials (i) have been delayed since April 2024 and (ii) were delayed in each year since 2017-18

The table below shows the total number of trial adjournments for each financial year, regardless of the reason. It is important to note that a single trial can experience multiple adjournments throughout its progression due to the complexities inherent in criminal proceedings. Therefore, these figures represent the total number of adjournments and should not be interpreted as the number of unique cases.

Business Type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024 YTD
High Court	60	83	83	49	213	167	132	61
Sheriff and Jury	437	145	859	1,161	2,114	3,290	3,070	1,410
Sheriff Summary	18,943	15,727	15,385	13,845	25,333	24,547	18,272	9,173
JP Summary	4,739	3,886	3,592	2,788	3,690	4,501	3,377	1,541

Trials may be adjourned on defence or Crown motion. Trials may also be adjourned on the motion of the court due to lack of court time.

The average monthly percentage of trials adjourned, due to lack of court time, from 2020-21 to September 2024 is 2%.

Overall trial adjournments, as a percentage of trials called, is below pre-pandemic levels at 29%.

The increase in the number of solemn adjournments is a result of the increase in solemn trial courts and the number of trials being called.

The decision to adjourn a trial is solely for the presiding judiciary having regard to the unique circumstances in each case.

The Scottish Court and Tribunal Service publishes a range of data on criminal business on our website at [Publications | Scottish Courts](#). The Monthly Criminal Management Information (MCMI) report contains extensive data in relation to the throughput of criminal business, including trial adjournments.

The MCMI provides data from 2019-20 and is updated monthly.

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 'Malcolm Graham', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Malcolm Graham
Chief Executive
0131 444 3308
mgraham1@scotcourts.gov.uk