

# Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service



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Dear Ms Baillie

## SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION S5W-08666

The Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs in her response to the above PQ indicated that it relates to operational matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Court and Tribunals Service corporate body. I am now writing to you in response to the matter you have raised.

**S5W-08666** asks: *To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding what the (a) average and (b) longest waiting time has been for a power of attorney request to be completed in each of the last five years.*

The registration of Powers of Attorney (PoA) falls under the remit of the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). From readily available records, it has not been possible to derive the average and longest waiting times for the entire period asked for. The table below however provides this information from June 2015 onwards, expressed in 6 monthly intervals.

The table below reflects the two different types of PoA application:

- Postal
- Online

There has been a 45% increase in the number of PoA applications lodged in the last 5 years. As a result, waiting times have increased and additional staff have been deployed each year. In addition, a program of work has now been commissioned to ensure the current delays are reduced in the coming months

<b>June to December 2015</b>	<b>Postal</b>	<b>Online</b>
Longest	30 days	19 days
Average	24 days	8 days

<b>January to June 2016</b>	<b>Postal</b>	<b>Online</b>
Longest	68 days	44 days
Average	47 days	22 days

<b>July to December 2016</b>	<b>Postal</b>	<b>Online</b>
Longest	92 days	63 days
Average	79 days	49 days

<b>January to April 2017</b>	<b>Postal</b>	<b>Online</b>
Longest	94 days	59 days
Average	89 days	51 days

The 45% increase in applications is a positive signal that more people are viewing PoA as a vital part of long term lifestyle planning. Therefore, while the delays are not acceptable as a service standard and we are working to reduce these, in the vast majority of cases there is no urgency in the issue of a PoA. Where an urgent need for a PoA exists, we provide an expedited service and since January 2017 these have been processed within an average of 2 days.

PoA waiting times are reported each week in the 'News' section of the OPG website <http://www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk/general/news>

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



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