
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Neil McIvor
Head of Profession for Statistics
Department for Work and Pensions
(By email)

20 April 2017

Dear Neil

COMPLIANCE RATES OF MAINTENANCE DIRECT AND DIRECT PAY SCHEMES

As you are aware, my team contacted you last year regarding the calculation of compliance rates in Maintenance Direct cases published by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) in *Child Support Agency quarterly summary of statistics*¹, which covers the 1993 and 2003 statutory child maintenance schemes, and in Direct Pay cases published by DWP in *2012 statutory child maintenance scheme*².

The specific concern we raised was about the assumption made that child maintenance liabilities in Maintenance Direct and Direct Pay cases are always paid in full. In June 2016 you stated your intention to review the appropriateness of this assumption once more statistical evidence was available.

We welcome the publication in December 2016 of the results of the survey that was carried out on the Direct Pay scheme³, which includes information on the effectiveness of Direct Pay arrangements. I am pleased to hear that you plan to review this information further to determine if there is robust evidence to change the assumptions used regarding Maintenance Direct and Direct Pay liabilities, and that you intend to separate out the compliance figure by different payment types in the next *2012 statutory child maintenance scheme* statistical release, to better distinguish the Direct Pay compliance assumption from the Collect and Pay data. I look forward to seeing these improvements to the statistics.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Humpherson

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-statistics--2>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-the-2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-maintenance-service-direct-pay-clients-survey>