

THE IMPACT OF SUMMARY JUSTICE REFORM ON SUMMARY PROSECUTIONS

The following figures are early indications of the impact of Summary Justice Reform on the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Full figures for the first six months of the reforms, covering March to August 2008, will be published in September.

The figures demonstrate that:

- ◆ On average, 5% fewer direct measures (4,079) were issued monthly by COPFS in the first three months of SJR than in 2007-08 (Average 4,293 per month).
- ◆ There is no truth in the claim that there has been a drop of between 50% and 75% in the number of prosecutions in court.
- ◆ It was anticipated that the reforms would result in 17% fewer prosecutions in court. On average, there has been a fall of only 13% in the Sheriff Court (7,079) in the first three months of SJR compared to 2007-08 (Average 8,092 per month).

Use of Direct Measures

Table 1 shows the number of direct measures issued monthly by Procurators Fiscal in 2007-08, before the implementation of Summary Justice Reform, and the average monthly figure over the course of the full year.

Table 1

Month	Number of Direct Measures Issued By COPFS
April 2007	3,720
May	4,595
June	4,211
July	4,516
August	6,234
September	5,791
October	4,421
November	4,016
December	2,961
January 2008	3,716
February	3,496
March	3,838
Monthly Average	4,293

Table 2 shows the number of direct measures issued monthly by Procurators Fiscal in the first full three months of 2008-09 after the implementation of Summary Justice Reform, and the average monthly figure which is 5% less than the 2007-08 monthly average.

Table 2

Month	Number of Direct Measures Issued By COPFS
April 2008	3,860
May	4,239
June	4,139
Monthly Average	4,079

Sheriff Court Prosecutions

Table 3 shows the number of new Sheriff Court prosecutions by month in 2007-08, before the implementation of Summary Justice Reform, and the average monthly figure over the course of the full year.

Table 3

Month	Number of Sheriff Court Prosecutions
April 2007	8,292
May	9,286
June	8,466
July	8,440
August	8,994
September	7,781
October	8,204
November	8,155
December	7,327
January 2008	8,339
February	7,265
March	6,552
Monthly Average	8,092

Table 4 shows the number of new Sheriff Court prosecutions by month in the first full three months of 2008-09 after the implementation of Summary Justice Reform, and the average monthly figure which is 13% less than the 2007-08 monthly average.

Table 4

Month	Number of Sheriff Court Prosecutions
April 2008	6,451
May	7,107
June	7,678
Monthly Average	7,079