



National Audit Office

The UK's independent public spending  
watchdog

Switchboard +44 (0)207 798 7000

Direct Line +44 (0)207 798 7264

Email [FOI@nao.org.uk](mailto:FOI@nao.org.uk)

Reference FOI-1732

Date 16 July 2024

## EFFICIENCY IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Thank you for your request of 6 July 2024 for information about how the £548 million estimated HMCTS direct spend on criminal justice was calculated in our report [Efficiency in the criminal justice system](#). You asked what data set was used and then how this figure was calculated.

Having checked our records, I can tell you that we no longer hold this information. We operate standard [retention periods](#) and dispose of information in accordance with these. Information relating to our value for money studies is retained for 6 years unless there is a particular reason to continue to hold specific documents. This report was published in 2016 and we have not retained information about how the £548m was calculated.

It may be helpful to draw your attention to Annex 2 of the report which sets out our evidence base. Paragraph 3 explains: *"We obtained internal information from the reform unit of HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS). This was based on the management accounts produced for internal use. It allowed us to put a minimum, but not complete, variable cost of a court day in the Crown Courts and magistrate' courts respectively. This included staff costs, judicial costs and juror costs."*

You may therefore wish to contact HMCTS for further information. The contact email address for FOI requests is: [data.access@justice.gov.uk](mailto:data.access@justice.gov.uk)

I hope this response is helpful. **Annex A** sets out the steps you may wish to take if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request for information under FOIA.

Yours sincerely,

**FOI and Correspondence Officer**

## **Annex A**

### **Statement of Policy**

Our policy is to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as helpfully and promptly as possible, having regard to the principles set out in the Act. I therefore hope you are happy with the way we have handled your request. If you are not, then you should take the following steps.

In the first instance, within 40 working days, write to the National Audit Office Freedom of Information (FOI) Team at [FOI@nao.org.uk](mailto:FOI@nao.org.uk) or by post to:

FOI Team, Green 2, National Audit Office, 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SP

The FOI & Correspondence Manager will arrange a review, which will be conducted by a senior member of staff who was not involved in decisions relating to your original request. Once the review has been completed, we will write informing you of the outcome.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The primary way of escalating your concerns to the Information Commissioner is at: <https://ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>

Alternatively, you can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> or Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF.