

Forestry Commission 2013 Annual Report on Statistical Surveys

Introduction

1. This report provides information on the statistical surveys run or commissioned by the Forestry Commission (including surveys run by, or in association with, the Northern Ireland Forest Service) in 2012-13, sets out the programme of surveys proposed for 2013-14, and presents outline plans for the following two years.
2. From 1 April 2013, Natural Resources Wales took over the functions previously carried out by the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales and Forestry Commission Wales. The plans for 2013-14 to 2015-16 listed here include plans for forestry surveys to be run by Natural Resources Wales.
3. The report covers regular and ad hoc statistical surveys of businesses and local authorities and provides a summary of the estimated administrative burden costs to businesses and local authorities throughout the United Kingdom of these surveys.
4. The administrative burden cost is the estimated cost of the staff time required to fill in the survey questionnaires. The methodology and hourly rates used for calculating these administrative burden costs is consistent with the approach used across all UK Government Departments. The Survey Control Unit within the Office for National Statistics (ONS) produce annual reports summarising the administrative burden costs across Government Departments and are available from the ONS website at www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/all-releases.html?definition=tcm%3A77-210555

Administrative Burden Cost - Summary

5. For surveys in 2012-13, the total administrative burden cost across the UK was around £4,700 (Table 1). This comprised costs of around £2,500 for businesses in England, £400 for businesses in Wales, £1,600 for businesses in Scotland and £200 for businesses in Northern Ireland. This was lower than the level planned (a total of £9,300), mainly as a result of a change in the approach for the National Forest Inventory survey of woodland owners from what had been originally planned.

6. Plans for surveys to run in 2013-14 have an estimated administrative burden cost of £5,400 across the UK. Outline plans have an estimated administrative burden cost of £5,400 in 2014-15 and £3,900 in 2015-16.

Table 1: Administrative burden cost summary

	£ thousand				
Year	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2010-11	3.7	1.8	0.7	1.0	0.1
2011-12 revised	5.4	2.6	1.9	0.8	0.1
2012-13	4.7	2.5	0.4	1.6	0.2
2013-14 forecast	5.4	2.4	0.6	2.2	0.2
2014-15 forecast	5.4	1.7	2.0	1.6	0.2
2015-16 forecast	3.9	1.7	0.4	1.6	0.2

Note:

1. Figures have been independently rounded to the nearest £100 in the tables, so constituent parts may not sum to totals.

Regular surveys of businesses and local authorities

7. The Forestry Commission regularly carries out seven voluntary surveys of businesses in the UK. These are undertaken on an annual basis and comprise:

- Four surveys of the UK timber industry (sawmill survey, survey of round fencing manufacturers, private sector softwood removals survey and survey of UK pellet and briquette production). Results from the surveys are published in *Forestry Statistics* and other National Statistics and Official Statistics releases, and are also used in compiling UK statistical returns for international organisations.
- A survey of forest nurseries, used to provide information on improved stock in the Official Statistics release "*Nursery Survey*".
- A survey of woodland owners in Great Britain, as part of the National Forest Inventory (NFI), to obtain background information on selected sample squares. The survey, started in 2012-13, also covers local authorities that own woodland. Results from this survey will be used in NFI Official Statistics reports.
- A survey of woodfuel users in Scotland is used to estimate the extent of woodfuel use in Scotland, with results published in the Official Statistics reports on "*Woodfuel Demand and Usage in Scotland*".

8. Administrative burden costs for regular surveys were around £3,600 for UK businesses and local authorities in 2012-13 (Table 2). This is expected to increase to around £5,100 in 2013-14 as a result of a planned increase in the number of woodland owners to be surveyed as part of the National Forest Inventory. Outline plans for 2014-15 and 2015-16 expect administrative burden costs to return to 2012-13 levels.

Table 2: Administrative burden cost: regular surveys

	£ thousand				
	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Regular surveys					
2010-11	1.2	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.0
2011-12 revised	1.2	0.4	0.1	0.6	0.1
2012-13	3.6	1.5	0.4	1.6	0.2
2013-14 forecast	5.1	2.2	0.6	2.2	0.2
2014-15 forecast	3.6	1.5	0.4	1.6	0.2
2015-16 forecast	3.6	1.5	0.4	1.6	0.2

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Ad hoc surveys of businesses and local authorities

9. The number of ad hoc surveys and their total burden vary from year to year, depending on the requirements for research related to policy development and monitoring. Two ad hoc surveys were run in 2012-13, with a combined administrative response burden of around £1,100 (Table 3):

- A wood packaging survey was run across the UK to evaluate the quantity of timber used in the manufacture and repair of wood pallets. Results from the survey were reported in *“Timber Utilisation Statistics 2012”* (not Official Statistics).
- A survey of local authorities in England was run by Forest Research to scope the extent of local authority woodland and management arrangements. Results from the survey do not contribute to Official Statistics.

10. The wood packaging survey is expected to continue in 2014-15 and 2015-16. In addition, Natural Resources Wales expect to run three ad hoc forestry-related surveys (of farmers, of community woodland groups and of enterprises) in Wales in 2014-15, all of which are expected to contribute to Official Statistics. Estimated administrative response burdens for the ad hoc surveys of businesses and local authorities identified to date are expected to total around £1,900 in 2014-15 and around £300 in 2015-16.

Table 3: Administrative burden cost by type of survey

	£ thousand				
	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Ad hoc surveys					
2010-11	2.3	1.4	0.6	0.3	0.0
2011-12 revised	4.2	2.2	1.8	0.1	0.0
2012-13	1.1	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2013-14 forecast	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
2014-15 forecast	1.9	0.2	1.6	0.0	0.0
2015-16 forecast	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

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