

Forestry Commission

2012 Annual Report on Statistical Surveys in Scotland

Purpose

1. This report provides information on the statistical surveys carried out or authorised by the Forestry Commission in 2011-12, sets out the programme of surveys proposed for 2012-13, and presents outline plans for the following two years.
2. The report covers regular and ad hoc statistical surveys of businesses and local authorities in Scotland. Some of these surveys run at the same time in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, so summary information for the four countries and UK totals are presented in an Annex.

Administrative Burden Cost - Summary

3. The administrative burden cost, previously called the response burden, 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 has been revised since last year's report, to ensure a consistent approach across all UK Government Departments. The revisions to the methodology and hourly rates have led to a reduction in the estimated administrative burden costs for all surveys.
4. 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.
5. For surveys in 2011-12, the total administrative burden cost was around £3,200 (this equates to around £16,800 using the previous methodology and hourly rates). This was slightly lower than the level planned, mainly as a result of the discontinuation of the woodfuel boiler survey.
6. The programme of surveys to run in 2012-13 is expected to have an estimated administrative burden cost in Scotland of £3,500. Outline plans for future years have an estimated administrative burden cost of £3,500 for 2013-14 and £3,100 for 2014-15.

Regular Surveys of Businesses and Local Authorities

7. The Forestry Commission regularly carries out five voluntary surveys of businesses in the UK to gather information on sawmills, round fencing, private sector removals, pellet manufacture and forest nurseries. Results from the first four surveys and other enquiries to wood processing industries are published in Forestry Statistics and other statistical publications available on the Forestry Commission website, and are also used

in compiling UK statistical returns for international organisations. These surveys are reviewed each year with the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics. Since 2007, a small survey of forest nurseries provides information on the use of improved stock.

8. A survey to estimate the extent of industrial use of woodfuel in Scotland is also run annually, with results published in Woodfuel Demand and Usage reports.

9. There is an annual survey of woodland owners as part of the National Forest Inventory, to obtain background information on selected sample squares.

10. In 2011-12, a total of around 2,400 businesses and local authorities in Scotland were approached, with an estimated burden of £3,000 for businesses and £100 for local authorities. It is planned that these seven regular surveys will continue to run each year with little change, giving a total annual burden of around £3,100.

Ad Hoc Surveys in 2011-12

11. A Plant Health Service Import/ Export Customer Survey was run across Great Britain in 2011-12. In addition, two surveys were run in 2011-12 but not included in last year's plans. A decision support systems survey was run across Great Britain to assess the use of such systems and a wood packaging survey was run across the UK to evaluate the quantity of timber used in the manufacture and repair of wood pallets. Together, these three ad hoc surveys approached around 75 businesses in Scotland, with a burden of around £100.

Ad Hoc Surveys - Plans for 2012-13

12. The wood packaging survey is expected to continue in 2012-13. Together with other miscellaneous business surveys not yet identified, it is expected that ad hoc surveys in 2012-13 will cover up to 470 businesses, with a burden up to £500.

Ad Hoc Surveys – Outline Plans

13. Ad hoc business surveys in 2013-14 and 2014-15 are currently expected to cover fewer than 500 businesses with a total annual burden of up to £500.

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