

Consultations

2.1 Customer Care Performance Report for the year to 31st March 2004

Our performance for 2003/4 showed improvements in half of our measured areas and the maintenance of high standards in a further three.

The marked declines in timely payment (areas 6 & 16) were the results of a new system implementation and this backlog has been cleared. There was also a drop in performance in the processing of licence applications. This was confined to Quarter 4 and was the result of a temporary shortage of staff.

The time taken to make a decision on grants continues to fall below our target. We are working to address this issue.

Performance Area	Total Cases 2001/02	% within standard 2001/02	Total Cases 2002/03	% within standards 2002/03	Total cases 2003/04	% Within Standards 2003/04
1 We will answer telephone calls promptly – (standard set to 12 sec average ring time.)	see footnote 1	7.2 Secs	386310	6.3 Secs	415654	6.1 secs
2 We will minimise occasions when you cannot contact us by phone – (standard set to >90% of calls answered)	see footnote 1	93.7%	39792	90.7%	41443	90.7%
3 Our website will be available 24/7 – (present contract specifies less than 0.5% downtime)	–	99.47%	–	99.64%	–	99.80%
4 We will despatch all publications – within 5 working days of request (or payment, if priced)	7030	96%	7277	99%	7482	99%
5 We will make a decision on grants – (see footnote 2) within 40 working days following receipt of a valid application	1014	60%	733	59%	501	59%
6 We will pay grants – within 30 working days of a valid claim	1671	87%	1654	85%	702	69%
7 We will respond to consultations – within statutory or other official time-scales	4784	82%	5461	86%	5222	88%
8 We will respond to requests for information or advice from Owners and Occupiers – within 20 working days	172	87%	164	86%	153	89%
9 We will respond to Notices of Intent – within statutory timescales	302	91%	423	90%	255	94%
10 We will respond to consultations under the Town and Country Planning Act – within statutory timescales	1547	79%	2015	83%	1920	84%
11 We will respond to Parliamentary Questions and other requests from MPs & MSPs to the required timescales	120	83%	77	96%	84	92%
12 We will respond to new licence applications and renewals – within 20 working days	698	100%	876	100%	762	80%
13 We will investigate and respond to complaints – within 20 working days of receipt	14	64%	31	81%	24	88%
14 We will refer all unresolved scientific representations on SSSI notification to the Advisory Committee on SSSIs – within 9 weeks of consultation closure	56 objectors on 8 SSSIs	100%	1 objector on 1 SSSI	see footnote 3	2 objectors on 1 SSSI	100%
15 We will respond to requests for environmental information – within 20 days	189	91%	194	94%	260	96%
16 We will pay 95% of trade creditors invoices – within 30 days in accord with the better payment practice code	19370	94%	15953	96%	21681	76%

¹ Recording system was only available in Q4 of 2001/02

² Partial data available due to change of database

³ The reported case was on an existing SSSI not a new site, the nine week referral target did not apply as there is no formal consultation closing date

2.2 Customer Care: Complaints performance

SNH cares about our customers' opinions and believes that we can use any complaints to help us to improve our performance. We have changed the way in which we classify complaints for 2003/4. This will help us to focus on the causes of the problems and deliver a better service.

Complaint decision	Customer Satisfaction			Grand Total
	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	not sure	
Not upheld		3	1	4
Upheld	3	13		16
Withdrawn		4		4
Grand Total	3	20	1	24

Complaint Related to:	Resolved	Status		Grand Total
		Unresolved customer pursuing outside of SNH	Unresolved customer not pursuing	
Access Rights	1			1
Contact Details	5			5
Designated Areas	1	1		2
Freedom of Information	1			1
Role in Planning Process	3		1	4
SNH Grant (including failed applications)	1			1
SNH Publication	2			2
Timeliness	4			4
Other	3	1		4
Grand Total	21	2	1	24

3. SNH responses to Government and other national consultations during the year to 31 March 2004

Sender	Government Yes/No	Topic	Date received	Final Response	paper no
Advisory Committee On Releases To The Environment (ACRE)	Y	Guidance On Post Market Monitoring	22/05/2003	11/08/2003	130/03
Crofters Commission	Y	Proposals For A Crofting Development Programme	26/09/2003	05/01/2004	271a/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	Snares And Traps – The Way Forward	08/09/2003	19/11/2003	246/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	Review Of UK National Lists (NL) and Plant Breeders Rights (PBR) Testing Services And Fees Structure	14/04/2003	01/05/2003	107/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	UK Small Cetacean Bycatch Response Strategy	03/04/2003	12/06/2003	96/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	EEA Core Set Of Indicators Second Round	12/06/2003	12/06/2004	154/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC: Darwin Mounds Candidate Special Area Of Conservation	22/09/2003	19/11/2003	264/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	European Commission – A European Environment And Health Strategy	03/11/2003	07/01/2004	315/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	The Justification Of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004	23/01/2004	11/02/2004	26/04
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	Protecting People And The Environment From Hazardous Waste	05/02/2004	30/04/2004	39/04
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	Water Framework Directive Third Consultation	03/09/2003	22/10/2003	239/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	Consultation on 'Decoupling' Indicators	29/09/2003	02/01/2004	275/03
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs	Y	Changes To The Environmental Protection Act 1990 To Free The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Of Various Constraints Presently Upon It To Enable It Operate More Effectively	22/12/2003	01/03/2004	355/03

3. SNH responses to Government and other national consultations during the year to 31 March 2004
(continued)

Sender	Government Yes/No	Topic	Date received	Final Response	paper no
Department Of The Environment, Food And Rural Affairs/Forestry Commission	Y	Achieving The Sustainable Management Of Wild Deer In England	22/01/2004	21/04/2004	19/04
Department Of Trade & Industry	Y	Collection Of Regional And Local Electricity Consumption Data	17/04/2003	27/05/2003	110/03
Department Of Trade & Industry	Y	The Electronic Communications Regulatory Regime	02/02/2003	12/06/2003	116/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Offshore Wind Farm Development Strategic Environmental Assessment SEA	30/05/2003	30/05/2003	136/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Social And Environmental Guidance To The Gas And Electricity Markets	06/06/2003	10/07/2003	148/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Operating And Financial Review Working Group On Materiality	30/06/2003	17/09/2003	178/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Nuclear Sites And Radioactive Substance Bill	06/08/2003	10/09/2003	221/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Flood And Coastal Defence Project	13/10/2003	02/12/2003	287/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Modernising The Policy For Decommissioning The UK's Nuclear Facilities	30/11/2003	05/02/2004	338/03
Department Of Trade And Industry	Y	Proposals For Intermediate Level Radioactive Substitution	03/02/2004	01/03/2004	34/04
Environment Agency	Y	Model Procedures For The Management Of Land Contamination (CLR111)	03/09/2003	19/11/2003	238/03
Environment Agency	Y	Ecological Risk Assessment	03/02/2004	02/04/2004	31/04
European Commission	Y	D.G. Environment Consultation On Financing Of Natura Report	01/05/2003	09/05/2003	115/03
Forestry Commission Scotland	Y	A Review Of Land Managed By Forestry Commission Scotland	05/12/2003	27/02/2004	341/03
Historic Scotland	Y	Revised Criteria And Guidance For Defining National Importance, Under The Terms Of The Ancient Monuments And Archaeological Areas Act 1979	12/03/2004	10/06/2004	67/04
Historic Scotland	Y	Protecting Our Marine Historic Environment: Making The System Work Better	26/03/2004	29/06/2004	82/04
Institute Of Chartered Accountants	N	Accounting For Public Service	07/05/2003	11/08/2003	120/03
Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Y	Revision Of The JNCC Guidelines On Minimising Acoustic Disturbance To Marine Mammals	12/12/2003	11/02/2004	348/03
Lord Chancellor's Department	Y	Consultation – How Can The Public Sector Provide Information On, Build Confidence In The Way It Handles Personal Details	27/04/2003	27/05/2003	114/03
Marine and Coastguard Agency	Y	Control and Management Of Ships' Ballast Water And Sediments For Diplomatic Conference In February 2004	06/10/2003	30/11/2003	279/03
National Library	Y	A Draft Strategy For The National Library Of Scotland	11/01/2004	12/01/2004	13/04
Office Of Telecommunications (OFTEL)	Y	Consultation Document On The Grant Of The Electronic Communications Code	07/04/2003	15/04/2003	105/03
Plantlife	N	The Global Strategy For Plant Conservation	29/09/2003	27/10/2003	273/03
Research Councils UK	Y	RELU Online Consultation	21/07/2003	26/08/2003	206/03
Review Of The Marine Conservation Working Group	Y	Report To Government	09/03/2004	07/05/2004	61/04
Royal Commission On Environmental Pollution	Y	Choice Of Topic For The RCEP's 26th Report	04/04/2003	28/05/2003	100/03
Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution	Y	Royal Commission Study On The Use Of Energy Crops For Heat And Power Production	28/09/2003	03/10/2003	237/03
Royal Commission On Environmental Pollution	Y	Study On Urban Environment	20/10/2003	19/11/2003	300/03
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Y	Radioactive Substances Act 1993 Application By UKAEA To Dispose Of Radioactive Waste From Dounreay	17/12/2003	12/02/2004	351/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Draft Commission Regulation To Exempt Certain Categories Of Agricultural State Aid From The Prior Notification Process	15/04/2003	01/05/2003	108/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Control Of Pollution (Oil Storage) (Scotland) Regulations 2003	03/4/2003	24/06/2003	95/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Modernising Scotland's Social Housing	15/05/2003	24/06/2003	125/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Milk Quotas: Consultation On Amendments To The Dairy Produce Quotas Regulations 2002	19/05/2003	24/06/2003	128/03
Scottish Executive	Y	The Freshwater And Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1976 Review Of The Systems Of Protection Orders	03/04/2003	27/06/2003	97/03
Scottish Executive	Y	EC Draft New Chemicals Regulations	09/06/2003	07/07/2003	151/03

3. SNH responses to Government and other national consultations during the year to 31 March 2004
(continued)

Sender	Government Yes/No	Topic	Date received	Final Response	paper no
Scottish Executive	Y	Proposals For Amendments To The Waste Management Licensing Regulations	30/06/2003	09/09/2003	174/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Review Of The Structure And Functions Of Historic Scotland	30/06/2003	17/09/2003	177/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Consultation On Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) In Scotland	07/07/2003	14/08/2003	191/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Modernising Public Local Inquiries Public Consultation	07/07/2003	18/11/2003	192/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Strategic Review Of Inshore Fisheries	10/07/2003	18/08/2003	194/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Draft Local Governance (Scotland) Bill: Consultation	11/07/2003	18/09/2003	197/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Building (Scotland) Act 2003 Consultation On Building Regulations	15/07/2003	13/10/2003	200/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003 Draft Orders, Regulations And Guidance Policy Consultation No1	17/07/2003	24/09/2003	202/03
Scottish Executive	Y	The Draft Code Of Practice Under Section 60 Of The Freedom Of Information (Scotland) Act	04/08/2003	27/10/2003	219/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Consultation On The Legislative Proposals Contained Within The Review Of Non – Native Species Policy	20/08/2003	26/09/2003	229/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 Community Right To Buy Consultation On Draft Regulations	21/08/2003	22/10/2003	232/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Consultation On The Removal Of Legal Impediments To E-Planning: The Town And Country Planning (Electronic Communication) (Scotland) Order 2003	25/08/2003	24/10/2003	234/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Best Value In The Wider Public Sector	03/09/2003	01/12/2003	240/03
Scottish Executive	Y	River Basin District Proposals For Scotland	08/09/2003	07/11/2003	243/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Consultation on Restricting The Marketing And Use Of Short Chain Chlorinated Paraffins In Scotland	08/09/2003	19/11/2003	244/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Scotland's Transport – Proposals For A New Approach To Transport in Scotland	18/09/2003	17/12/2003	263/03
Scottish Executive	Y	1) Croft Housing 2) Croft Land Use	26/09/2003	05/01/2004	271/03
Scottish Executive	Y	CAP Reform Opportunities For Scotland	08/10/2003	05/01/2004	281/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Draft Water Services (Scotland) Bill Consultation On Proposed Provision	15/10/2003	12/01/2004	291/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Improving Controls On Emissions Of Volatile Organic Compounds Due To The Use Of Organic Solvents	06/10/2003	25/11/2003	293/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Guidance On Waste Incineration (Scotland) Regulations 2003	06/10/2003	22/12/2003	294/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Gaelic Language Bill	16/10/2003	06/01/2004	299/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Monitoring And Enforcing Mineral Permissions	23/10/2003	12/01/2004	305/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Tourism Framework For Action 2002:05	03/11/2003	25/11/2003	314/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Proposed EU Directive On The Management Of Waste From The Extractive Industries	18/11/2003	19/01/2004	330/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Regional Advisory Councils (RAC's)	30/11/2003	03/02/2004	336/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Transposition Of EC Directive 2003/11/EC Into Regulations For Great Britain Placing Controls On Releases Of Pentabromodiphenyl Ether And Octabromodiphenyl Ether	10/12/2003	16/01/2004	343/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Animal Health And Welfare Strategy – Scottish Implementation Plan	18/12/2003	27/02/2004	352/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Reducing Landfill: A Landfill Allowance Scheme	18/12/2003	23/01/2004	353/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 Crofting Community Right To Buy	19/12/2004	27/02/2004	354/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Strategic Environmental Assessment	22/12/2003	16/03/2004	356/03
Scottish Executive	Y	Scottish Planning Policy (SSP) Planning For Rural Development	29/01/2004	21/04/2004	28/04
Scottish Executive	Y	Waste From Mines, Quarries And Agricultural Premises	03/02/2004	25/03/2004	32/04
Scottish Executive	Y	Preparing For A New GB Strategy On Bovine Tuberculosis	11/02/2004	13/04/2004	43/04
Scottish Executive	Y	Part1 Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 Consultation On Draft Guidance For Local Authorities/National Park Authorities	17/02/2004	07/05/2004	48/04
Scottish Executive	Y	Consultation On Draft Scottish Planning Policy 17 Planning For Transport	17/02/2004	13/04/2004	49/04
Scottish Executive	Y	CAP Reform Consultation Paper On Cross Compliance (Good Agricultural And Environmental Condition	25/02/2004	13/05/2004	53/04
Scottish Executive	Y	Scottish Rural Partnership Fund	09/03/2004	26/05/2004	62/04

3. SNH responses to Government and other national consultations during the year to 31 March 2004 (continued)

Sender	Government Yes/No	Topic	Date received	Final Response	paper no
Scottish Executive	Y	Environmental And Rural Development Committee: CAP Reform	17/03/2004	17/03/2004	76/04
Scottish Parliament	Y	Inquiry Into Renewable Energy	14/11/2003	23/01/2004	321/03
Scottish Parliament	Y	Genetically Modified Crops	14/11/2003	14/01/2004	325/03
SportScotland	Y	Lottery Fund Strategy Review	10/07/2003	18/09/2003	199/03
The Scottish Parliament	Y	The Environment Levy Bill	17/02/2004	08/04/2004	47/04
The Strategy Unit	Y	UK Fisheries Project Consultation Paper	10/07/2003	19/08/2003	193/03
Transport Initiatives Edinburgh Ltd	N	Investment In Travel Improvements Edinburgh's Congestion Charging Scheme	08/10/2003	17/12/2003	285/03
University Of Lancaster	N	Project ISOLUS; Interim Storage Of Laid-Up Submarines Consultation On ISOLUS Outline Proposals	22/09/2003	12/12/2003	265/03
Welsh Historic Monuments	Y	Review Of The Historic Environment In Wales	07/4/2003	20/06/2003	104/04
Welsh Historic Monuments	Y	Review Of The Historic Environment In Wales	29/09/2003	24/10/2003	274/03

4. Public Access to environmental information under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992 – a statement

Background

As a government body with responsibilities for the environment, Scottish Natural Heritage is subject to the Environmental Regulations 1992, the UK statutory instrument implementing the EC Directive of Freedom of Access to information on the Environment.

These regulations give the public a general right of access to environmental information held by SNH, unless there are 'substantive reasons for refusing'. SNH is obliged to respond to requests, and give a full written explanation for refusal or restriction of access.

The SNH Approach

SNH welcomes the regulations, which complement its open and accountable operating style. SNH has developed policies for the application of the Regulations, in liaison with sister agencies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These are also consistent with the Scottish Executive's Code of Practice on Access to Information.

There is a presumption in favour of release of information unless the reasons for refusal are compelling – for instance, if disclosing the details about a rare species could endanger them. Enquiries may be referred back to the customer if fulfilling the request is likely to create an unreasonable amount of extra work / or if a charge is likely to be made.

As well as responding to specific requests, SNH publishes an extensive range of information about the Scottish environment in the form of research reports, policy statements, guidance notes, information leaflets and booklets and Annual Reports. Information is also provided on our website.

A catalogue of publications is available free of charge from:

Design and Publications,
Scottish Natural Heritage,
Battleby,
Redgorton,
Perth. PH1 3EW

Tel 01738 444177
Fax 01738 827411

Publications can also be ordered directly from our web site: www.snh.org.uk.

5. Summary of all consultation cases received by SNH in the year to 31 March 2004

Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Grand Total
Agriculture Related Casework	22	16	18	69	125
Data Protection Act – Data Request			1	1	2
Environmental Protection	66	97	72	88	323
Forestry	137	141	171	175	624
Freedom of Information Act – Information Request				6	6
Fresh Water Fish Farms	2	2	9	3	16
Heritage Tax Relief		1	2	1	4
Invasive Species	8	23	1	2	34
Maritime	105	72	60	78	315
National Consultations			2	3	5
Notice of Intent	98	84	75	75	332
Old Case Types			1		1
Owner/Occupier Advice (not relating to Nol)	72	46	46	48	212
Planning Related Cases	535	566	637	597	2335
Plans and Strategies	27	30	20	36	113
Renewables	101	101	81	95	378
Roads and Transport Works	42	49	29	42	162
Site Search	116	122	115	122	475
Species	233	387	92	103	815
Utilities	39	46	41	69	195
Grand Total	1603	1783	1473	1613	6472