

By Email

Colin Smyth, MSP
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Your Ref: N/A
Our Ref: MC-091-2024

Reply to: Edinburgh Office
Department: Senior Management
Contact: Jennifer Henderson
Telephone: 0131 357 8199
Email: rossecretariat@ros.gov.uk
Date: 23 January 2025

Dear Mr Smyth

REGISTERS OF SCOTLAND – EFW QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE

I am writing to provide the Economy and Fair Work Committee with a quarterly update on the work of Registers of Scotland (RoS) as part of our agreed reporting. For ease of reading, I have outlined the latest updates against relevant headers below.

Performance

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) progress is updated quarterly on our external website and the end of December position is [now available](#).

Overall, open casework volumes continue to reduce and our KPI for reducing longstanding open casework continues to be ahead of the indicator. The operational performance KPI position remains similar to the previous quarter, with Dealing with Whole (DW) cases ahead of the indicator and expected to remain so, whilst continuing to show improvement as further technological enhancements are introduced. First Registrations (FR) KPI is behind indicator due to increase in complex applications and a shift in focus to prioritise the completion of older FR casework and expedite requests. Transfer of Part (TP) indicator is at target.

Property market volumes and our income continue to be at, or around, expected levels and well within the bounds of our forecast.

Transparency of Land Ownership

At the end of December 2024, 95.7% of land mass coverage in Scotland was held in our Land Register (55.3%), casework in progress (6.2%), and Unlocking Sasines data (34.2%). On 16 December Unlocking Sasines data was made available on ScotLIS for business customers via an 'indicative Sasines' layer on the map. Access for members of the public will be available in 2025.

New Registers

Good progress continues to be made on the build of the two new registers required by the Moveable Transactions (Scotland) Act 2023 and we are confident the registers will

be ready to launch on 01 April 2025. The various SSIs required have now been laid and we will be supporting the Minister at the related upcoming Committee appearance.

Finance

We remain on track to deliver a breakeven position again this year, with our fees fully covering our operational expenditure. We have agreed with SG Finance to cover more of our capital budget requirements next year via our fee income meaning that our budget requirements in the draft budget are restricted to (i) a small amount of capital budget for final delivery of the Registers of Moveable Transactions and (ii) ring fenced resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) to cover depreciation.

Customers

A newly launched initiative to provide lending institutions with application status progress reports has resulted in c100% reduction in contact to our Customer Services teams for those receiving these reports. This has reduced net operating costs as part of wider public service reform activity. We continue to receive low complaint levels, with 42 complaints received year to date compared to 52 at the same point last year.

Digital Services

We are on track to expand our automation services to support Dispositions in early February. An initial release of Embedded Title Sheets (ETS), the simplified approach to processing TP applications, has been launched with plans for wider rollout in progress.

Key digital infrastructure sustainability projects are on track for completion in the final quarter. This includes moving out of the Saughton House Datacentre and a project to avoid £1.2m in lifecycle refresh costs over five years by aligning with our cloud-first strategy.

In November, we carried out a live cyber incident exercise to test our technical defences, detection systems, and response procedures, alongside our business incident management processes. The exercise, overseen by an independent expert, confirmed our strong position. Areas for improvement have been identified and will be monitored through internal governance.

People

We have concluded a pay and grading review of roles within our digital, data and technology (DDaT) function with a view to reducing our reliance on Contingent Workers and reducing costs. The proposal will be presented to the SG Remuneration Committee in January and we hope to implement from April.

In Q3 we launched our Employee Value Proposition (EVP), promoting the significant benefits of RoS as a choice employer within a challenging labour market. Our time to hire and the success of our recruitment campaigns for hard-to-fill roles have improved. Alongside a revised DDaT pay framework, our EVP is core to reducing our reliance on contingent workers.

In November, our interim accreditation review against the Investors in People: 'We

Invest in Wellbeing' framework found that RoS has retained gold status and demonstrated further progress, reflecting our ongoing commitment to a supportive and healthy work environment.

The 2024 Civil Service People Survey has now concluded and we will advise the Committee of the results once the Cabinet Office has confirmed these can be publicly released.

Progress against our Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Action Plan has included our first all-colleague D&I webinar, an ongoing communications campaign, input to RoS' EVP and equality analysis of our CSPA results.

Public Service Reform

The RoS Accountable Officer attended the Finance and Public Administration Committee round table session on 07 January 2025. The session, as part of the FPA Committee's budget scrutiny, focused on public service reform. Registers of Scotland remains committed to the principles of public service reform, and we have been actively working on this agenda since 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic demanded a step change in how we deliver our services.

Further Updates

Cohort 6 of Geovation Scotland are now in the 'traction' stage of the accelerator programme, which will include content covering Intellectual Property (IP) protection and preparation for their investor showcase in March. 31 Companies supported by Geovation Scotland have now raised over £4.8m (up £0.2M from last quarter) of funding and investment and have created 78 FTE jobs.

I do hope you find this helpful, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further in relation to the information provided in this update.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J Henderson', written in a cursive style.

JENNIFER HENDERSON
Keeper of the Registers of Scotland