

2022

Statutory Consultations Quarterly Performance Report Q4 2021/22

This quarterly report highlights the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. It provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during 2021/22 with comparative data back to 2019/20. The figures contained in this report are extracted from the NI Planning Portal, are management information, and should not be treated or considered as official statistics.

*****THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS NOT CONSIDERED OFFICIAL
STATISTICS AND SHOULD NOT BE QUOTED AS SUCH*****



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Planning Statutory Consultations

Q4 2021/22

Statutory consultations, for the purposes of this report, are 'Standard' and 'EIA Standard' consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' on the NI Planning Portal

Statutory consultations raised

Number of statutory consultations raised



6,185

statutory consultations were raised in Q4 2021/22. Of these:



5,812
(94%)

were on local applications



373
(6%)

were on major applications



0
(0%)

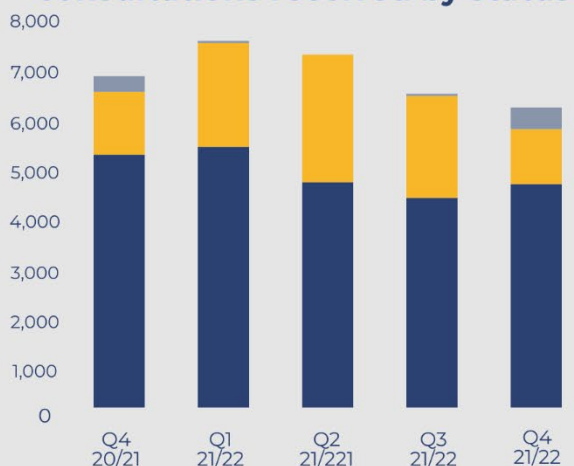
were on regional applications

Statutory consultations response times

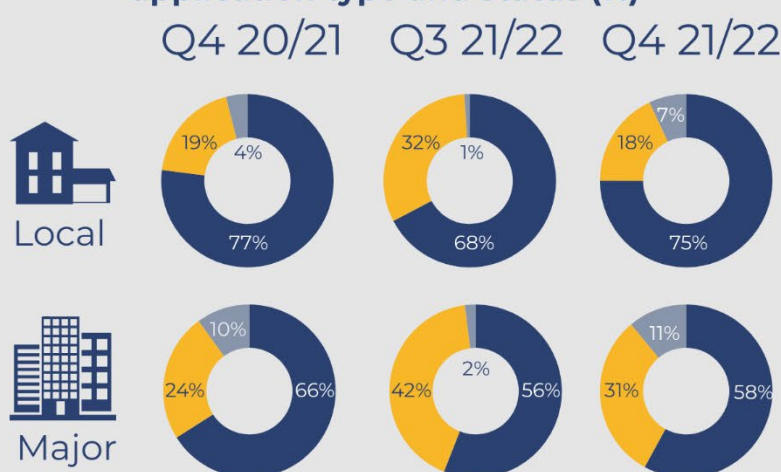


74% of statutory consultations in Q4 2021/22 were responded to on time (i.e. within the 21-day response target or the extended target)

Number of responses to statutory consultations received by status



Responses to statutory consultations received by application type and status (%)

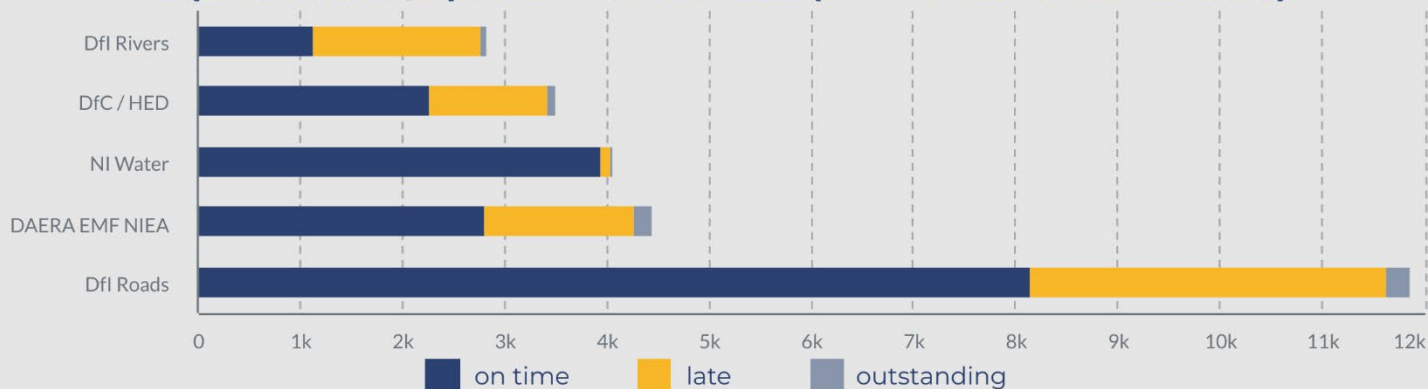


■ on time ■ late ■ outstanding

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Statutory consultees

Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, April 2021 - March 2022 (5 most common consultees)



■ on time ■ late ■ outstanding

Statutory Consultations Quarterly Report – Q4 2021/22

Introduction

This quarterly report highlights the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. It provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during 2021/22 with comparative data from previous years.

The figures contained in this report are extracted from the NI Planning Portal, are management information, and should not be treated as official statistics.

Statutory consultations

During 2021/22 (April 2021 to March 2022) there were 44,339 consultations/advice queries raised. Of these, three-quarters (33,276; 75%) were sent to key statutory consultees¹. Of these 33,276 consultations/advice queries raised, 82% (27,191) were deemed to be statutory consultations². The number of statutory consultations raised by application type is reported in Table 1 below. The series is available from 2019/20.

Table 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type (Quarterly)*

Year	Quarter	Local	Major	Regional	Total
2019/20	Apr-Jun	6,163	352	0	6,515
	Jul-Sep	5,710	392	1	6,103
	Oct-Dec	5,674	404	7	6,085
	Jan-Mar	5,056	331	0	5,387
2020/21	Apr-Jun	4,052	272	1	4,325
	Jul-Sep	6,007	335	0	6,342
	Oct-Dec	5,991	327	7	6,325
	Jan-Mar	6,352	374	3	6,729
2021/22	Apr-Jun	7,091	347	2	7,440
	Jul-Sep	6,837	346	0	7,183
	Oct-Dec	6,085	298	0	6,383
	Jan-Mar	5,812	373	0	6,185

Note: figures reported represent 'Standard' and 'EIA Standard' consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in [User Guidance](#) section.

The number of statutory consultations raised fell during Q4 2019/20 (January to March 2020), compared with earlier quarters in that year. A further decrease was reported for Q1 2020/21 (April to June 2020), with the number of statutory consultations raised down by over one-third (34%) compared with the same quarter a year earlier. It is likely that this decrease was related to the

¹ See [User Guidance](#) for a list of key statutory consultees.

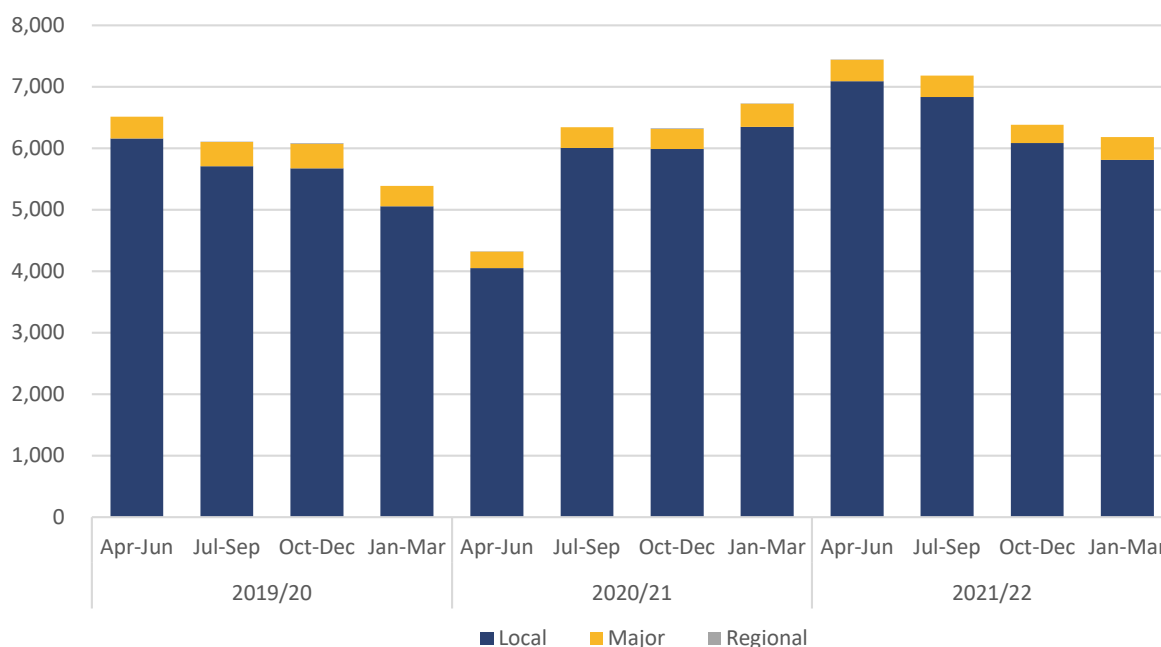
² A statutory consultation for the purpose of this report is considered as a 'Standard' or 'EIA Standard' consultation marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in the [User Guidance](#) section.

reduction in the number of planning applications received over the same period, as a consequence of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

In Q2 2020/21 (July to September 2020), 6,342 statutory consultations were raised; an increase of almost one-half (47%) from the previous quarter and a return to pre-Q4 2019/20 levels; this level of consultation continued during October to December 2020. Consultation then increased in the following two quarters, peaking in the first quarter of 2021/22 (April to June 2021) with 7,440 statutory consultations raised. Statutory consultation remained high in the following quarter before declining in Q3 2021/22. In the most recent quarter there were 6,185 consultations, the lowest level reported since Q1 2020/21.

As in previous quarters, statutory consultations on local planning applications accounted for the vast majority of consultations raised in Q4 2021/22 (94%). See Chart 1.

Chart 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type*



Statutory consultations response times

During 2019/20 the proportion of statutory consultations responded to on time³ was 69%, this rate increased to 76% in 2020/21. In 2021/22 the response rate has returned to 69% with 18,761 out of 27,191 statutory consultations responded to on-time. It is noteworthy that a much higher level of statutory consultation was carried out in 2021/22 (27,191) when compared to previous years (23,721 in 2020/21 and 24,090 in 2019/20).

In the first quarter of 2021/22 the overall response rate was 71%, this was down from 76% reported for the previous quarter and 79% reported for the same period a year earlier. The rate dropped to 64% during the second quarter increasing to 67% in the third quarter and further increasing to 74% in the last quarter of the year. It is important to note the increased volume of consultations raised during the first six months of 2021/22 when considering performance levels over time (see Chart 1).

³ Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Chart 2 below shows the number of responses to statutory consultations by response status. As with previous reports, the number of outstanding statutory consultations is highest in the most recent quarter, primarily a result of lifting the information at a point in time. Quarter four in each year has a higher proportion of outstanding than any other quarter within that year due to the annual position becoming fixed shortly after the year end, with no further revisions being made. Chart 3 provides a proportionate breakdown of these responses.

Chart 2: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by response status

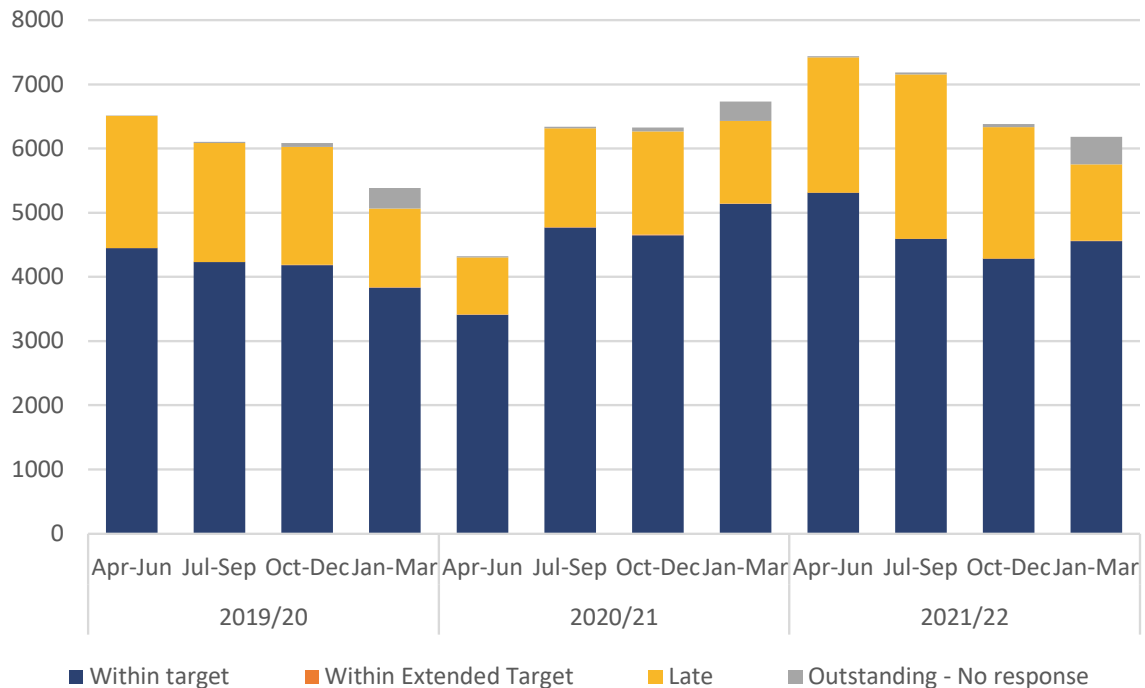
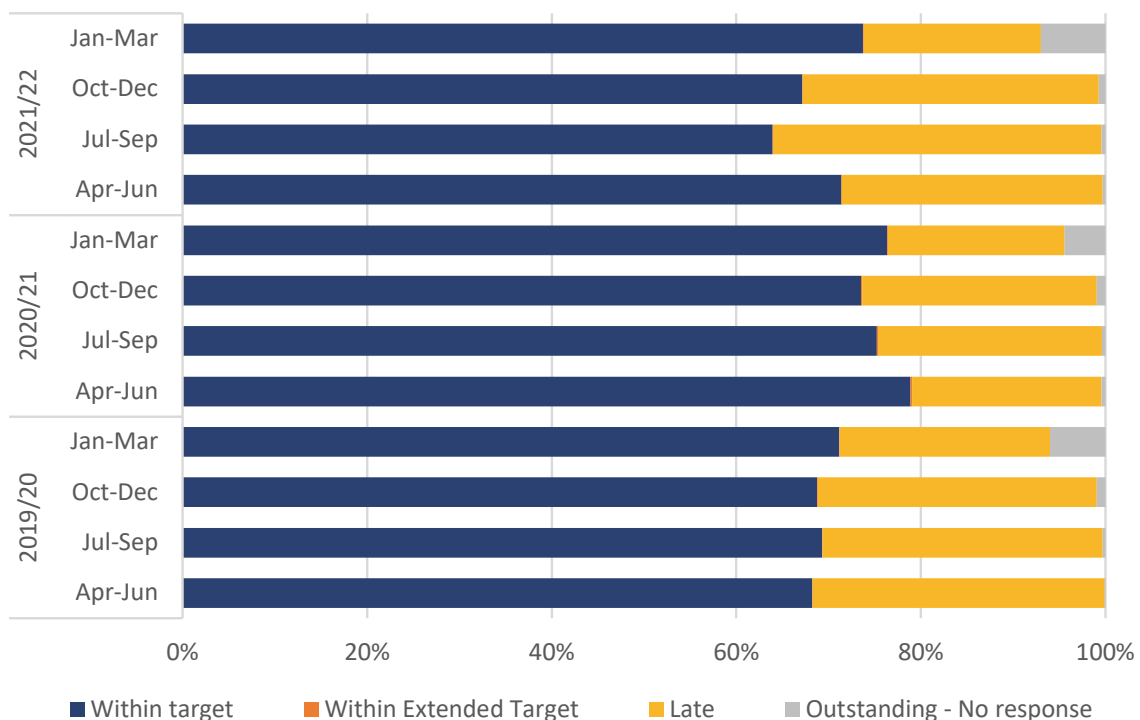


Chart 3: Responses to statutory consultations received by response status (proportions)



During 2019/20 as a whole, 69% of statutory consultations were responded to on time⁴; for local planning application consultations the response rate was 71% and for majors it was just over one-half (52%). In 2020/21 response rates increased with 76% of all statutory consultations being responded to on-time; for local planning applications it was 77% and for majors it was 57%. In the most recent year (2021/22), 69% of statutory consultations were handled on time, with locals reported at 70% and majors at 56%. See Charts 4a, 4b and 4c for further information.

Chart 4a: Responses to statutory consultations received for local planning applications by response status (proportions)

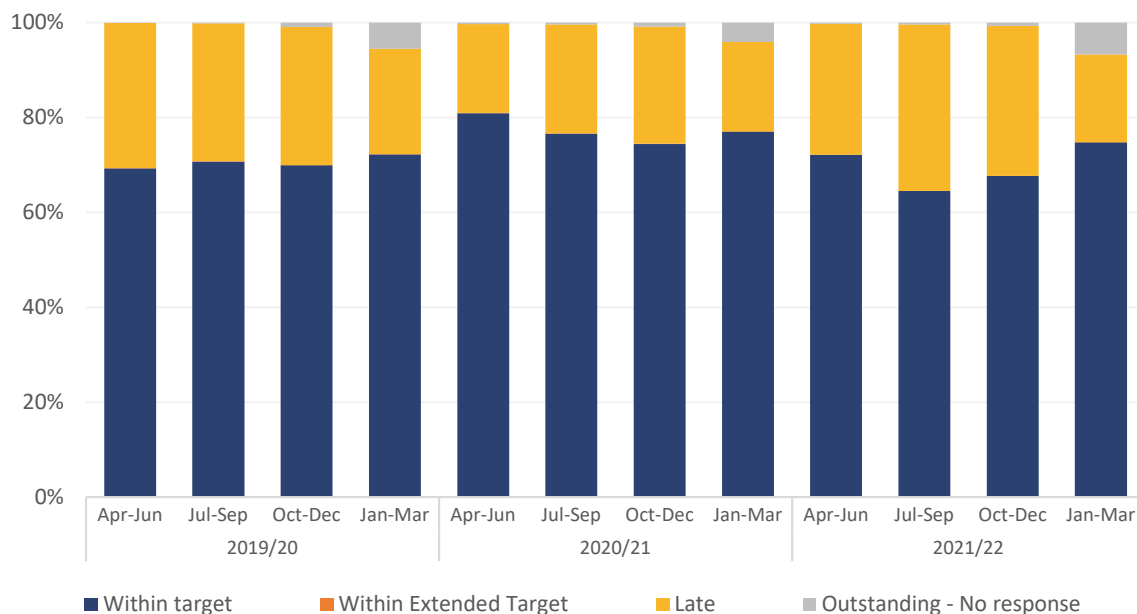
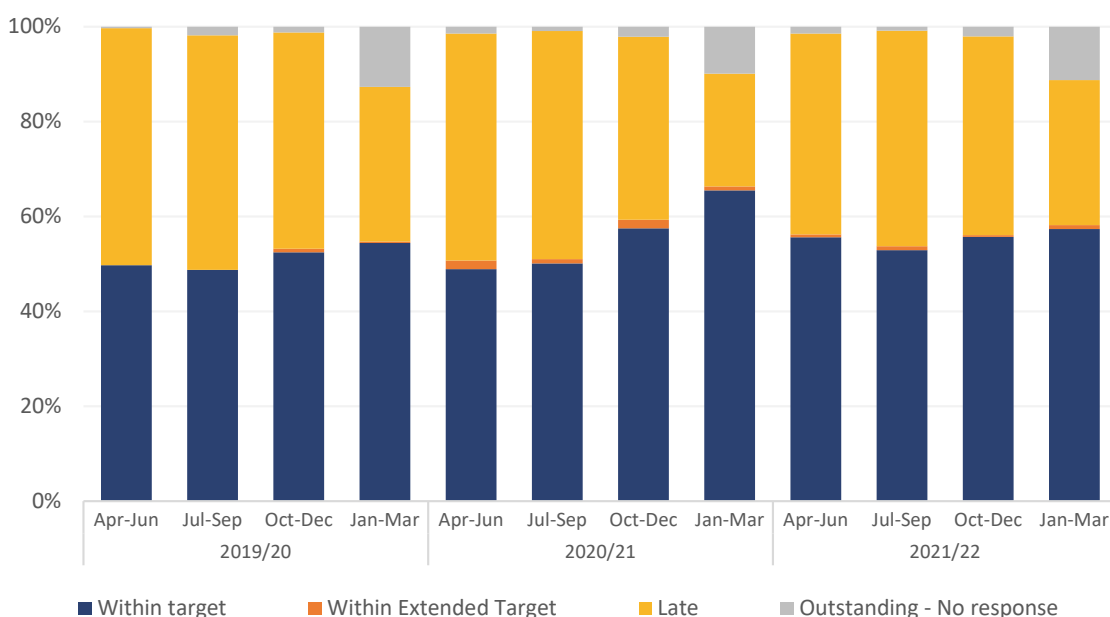
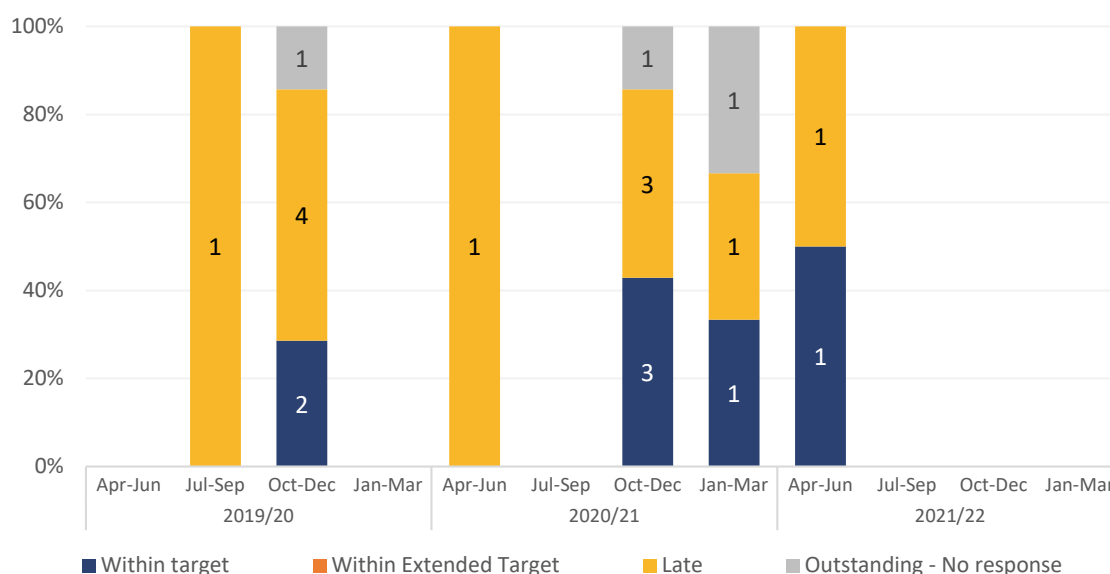


Chart 4b: Responses to statutory consultations received for major planning applications by response status (proportions)



⁴ Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Chart 4c: *Responses to statutory consultations received for regionally significant planning applications by response status (proportions)*



Note: due to the small numbers of responses to statutory consultations on regionally significant ('regional') applications, associated proportions reported in the above chart should be treated with caution; the numbers of such responses have been included as data labels.

2021/22 in more detail – statutory consultee analysis

Statutory consultations received by statutory consultees in 2021/22 are presented in Table 2 below⁵. The first quarter of 2021/22 recorded the highest number (7,440) of statutory consultations raised since the beginning of 2019/20, when figures were first reported. Quarter two (July to September 2021) remained high with 7,183 statutory consultations raised. In the latter two quarters of the year the number of statutory consultations declined, returning to levels normally raised quarterly.

Table 2: *Number of statutory consultations received by planning application type, 2021/22 Q1-Q4*

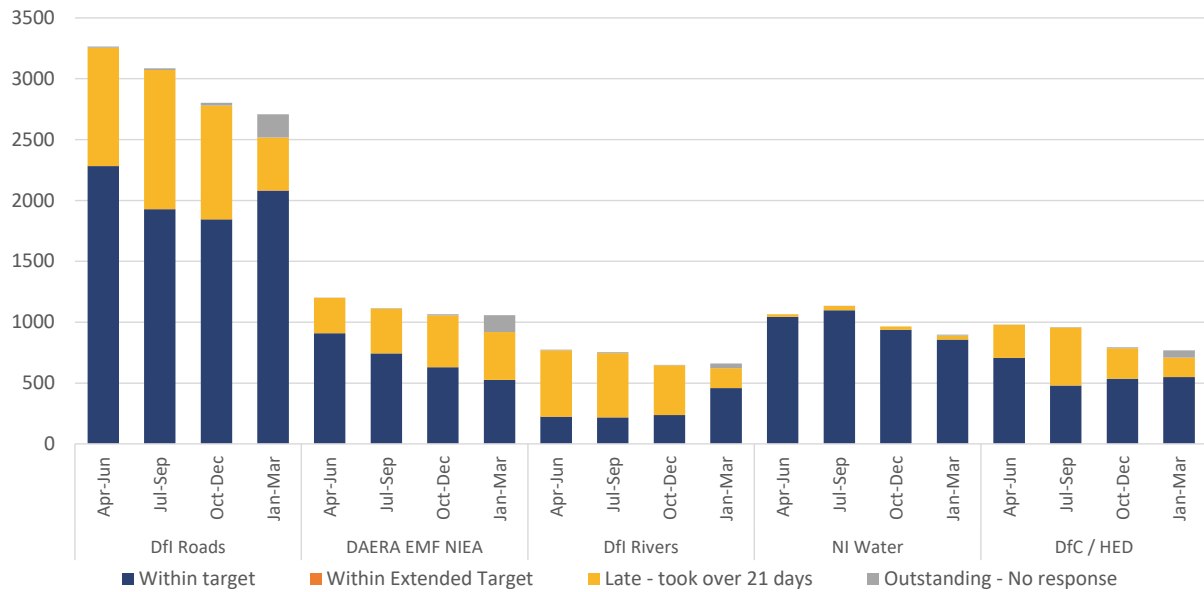
Quarter	Local	Major	Regional	Total
Apr-Jun	7,091	347	2	7,440
Jul-Sep	6,837	346	0	7,183
Oct-Dec	6,085	298	0	6,383
Jan-Apr	5,812	373	0	6,185
2021/22	25,825	1,364	2	27,191

Of the 6,185 statutory consultations received in Q4 2021/22, DfI Roads received 44%, DAERA EMF NIEA 17%, NI Water 15%, DfC / HED 12% and DfI Rivers 11%; together these five consultees

⁵ Note: the number of statutory consultations raised by planning authorities in a given period will equal the number of statutory consultations received by statutory consultees in the same period. In effect, these terms are interchangeable.

accounted for 98% of the statutory consultations raised during the quarter (Chart 6).⁶ This is similar to the position recorded in previous quarters.

Chart 6: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, 2021/22 Q1 – Q4 (5 most common consultees)*



During 2021/22 across all statutory consultees the proportion of responses received on time⁷ ranged from 40% – 100%. In all, 69% of statutory consultation were responded on time during 2021/22 quarter; below the 76% reported for 2020/21.

Table 3 provides response information for the four quarters of 2021/22 with the overall annual figure reported for each statutory consultee.

⁶ See [User Guidance](#) for a full list of key statutory consultees.

⁷ Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Table 3: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultees, 2021-22 Q1-Q4

Statutory Consultee	Quarter 2021/22	On time	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	Apr-Jun	2,282	3,265	70%
	Jul-Sep	1,931	3,086	63%
	Oct-Dec	1,846	2,803	66%
	Jan-Mar	2,085	2,708	77%
	2021/22	8,144	11,862	69%
DAERA EMF NIEA	Apr-Jun	910	1,203	76%
	Jul-Sep	743	1,115	67%
	Oct-Dec	631	1,065	59%
	Jan-Mar	526	1,057	50%
	2021/22	2,810	4,440	63%
DfI Rivers	Apr-Jun	224	775	29%
	Jul-Sep	217	753	29%
	Oct-Dec	237	650	36%
	Jan-Mar	459	660	70%
	2021/22	1,137	2,838	40%
NI Water	Apr-Jun	1,045	1,065	98%
	Jul-Sep	1,099	1,134	97%
	Oct-Dec	939	965	97%
	Jan-Mar	857	898	95%
	2021/22	3,940	4,062	97%
DfC / HED	Apr-Jun	708	979	72%
	Jul-Sep	480	959	50%
	Oct-Dec	536	794	68%
	Jan-Mar	550	768	72%
	2021/22	2,274	3,500	65%
HSENI	Apr-Jun	40	46	87%
	Jul-Sep	24	29	83%
	Oct-Dec	24	27	89%
	Jan-Mar	20	23	87%
	2021/22	108	125	86%
DfE / GSNI	Apr-Jun	27	29	93%
	Jul-Sep	27	27	100%
	Oct-Dec	17	19	89%
	Jan-Mar	14	15	93%
	2021/22	85	90	94%
Belfast International Airport	Apr-Jun	48	48	100%
	Jul-Sep	40	42	95%
	Oct-Dec	28	28	100%
	Jan-Mar	22	22	100%
	2021/22	138	140	99%
Belfast City Airport	Apr-Jun	22	22	100%
	Jul-Sep	29	29	100%
	Oct-Dec	14	14	100%
	Jan-Mar	17	17	100%
	2021/22	82	82	100%

Table 3 continued:

Statutory Consultee	Quarter 2021/22	On time	Total	% on-time
City of Derry Airport	Apr-Jun	2	2	100%
	Jul-Sep	0	0	-
	Oct-Dec	2	2	100%
	Jan-Mar	6	6	100%
	2021/22	10	10	100%
NIHE	Apr-Jun	6	6	100%
	Jul-Sep	5	9	56%
	Oct-Dec	14	16	88%
	Jan-Mar	8	11	73%
	2021/22	33	42	79%
Overall Totals	Apr-Jun	5,314	7,440	71%
	Jul-Sep	4,595	7,183	64%
	Oct-Dec	4,288	6,383	67%
	Jan-Mar	4,564	6,185	74%
	2021/22	18,761	27,191	69%

Table 4 has been included to enable comparisons to be made at individual consultee level with the previous year.

Table 4: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee, 2020-21 Q1-Q4

Statutory Consultee	Quarter 2020/21	On time	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	Apr-Jun	1,680	1,954	86%
	Jul-Sep	2,485	2,966	84%
	Oct-Dec	2,056	2,946	70%
	Jan-Mar	2,221	3,041	73%
	2020/21	8,442	10,907	77%
DAERA EMF NIEA	Apr-Jun	414	740	56%
	Jul-Sep	580	1,004	58%
	Oct-Dec	728	992	73%
	Jan-Mar	841	1,059	79%
	2020/21	2,563	3,795	68%
DfI Rivers	Apr-Jun	327	425	77%
	Jul-Sep	402	592	68%
	Oct-Dec	365	578	63%
	Jan-Mar	366	698	52%
	2020/21	1,460	2,293	64%
NI Water	Apr-Jun	550	630	87%
	Jul-Sep	630	883	71%
	Oct-Dec	858	926	93%
	Jan-Mar	929	949	98%
	2020/21	2,967	3,388	88%

Table 4 continued:

Statutory Consultee	Quarter 2020/21	On time	Total	% on-time
DfC /HED	Apr-Jun	407	521	78%
	Jul-Sep	606	807	75%
	Oct-Dec	550	763	72%
	Jan-Mar	660	834	79%
	2020/21	2,223	2,925	76%
HSENI	Apr-Jun	5	9	56%
	Jul-Sep	13	22	59%
	Oct-Dec	31	46	67%
	Jan-Mar	29	34	85%
	2020/21	78	111	70%
DfE / GSNI	Apr-Jun	13	14	93%
	Jul-Sep	21	22	95%
	Oct-Dec	15	18	83%
	Jan-Mar	22	27	81%
	2020/21	71	81	88%
Belfast International Airport	Apr-Jun	4	12	33%
	Jul-Sep	19	22	86%
	Oct-Dec	25	25	100%
	Jan-Mar	33	43	77%
	2020/21	81	102	79%
Belfast City Airport	Apr-Jun	14	14	100%
	Jul-Sep	18	18	100%
	Oct-Dec	20	20	100%
	Jan-Mar	20	20	100%
	2020/21	72	72	100%
City of Derry Airport	Apr-Jun	0	1	0%
	Jul-Sep	2	2	100%
	Oct-Dec	6	6	100%
	Jan-Mar	7	7	100%
	2020/21	15	16	94%
NIHE	Apr-Jun	4	5	80%
	Jul-Sep	2	4	50%
	Oct-Dec	5	5	100%
	Jan-Mar	15	17	88%
	2020/21	26	31	84%
Overall Totals	Apr-Jun	3,418	4,325	79%
	Jul-Sep	4,778	6,342	75%
	Oct-Dec	4,659	6,325	74%
	Jan-Mar	5,143	6,729	76%
	2020/21	17,998	23,721	76%

Tables 5 (a-c) below provide an annual breakdown for 2021/22 by statutory consultee and planning application type.

Table 5a: Statutory consultation on local planning applications 2021-22

Statutory Consultee	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding No response	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	7,888	1	3,319	214	11,422	69%
DAERA EMF NIEA	2,697	0	1,302	140	4,139	65%
DfI Rivers	1,040	0	1,514	44	2,598	40%
NI Water	3,794	0	94	5	3,893	97%
DfC/HED	2,166	0	1,107	67	3,340	65%
HSENI	96	0	13	3	112	86%
DfE/GSNI	77	0	1	1	79	97%
Belfast International Airport	135	0	2	0	137	99%
Belfast City Airport	70	0	0	0	70	100%
City of Derry Airport	10	0	0	0	10	100%
NIHE	21	0	4	0	25	84%
Total	17,994	1	7,356	474	25,825	70%

Table 5b: Statutory consultation on major planning applications 2021-22

Statutory Consultee	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding No response	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	248	7	163	21	439	58%
DAERA EMF NIEA	113	0	173	15	301	38%
DfI Rivers	96	1	131	12	240	40%
NI Water	146	0	19	4	169	86%
DfC/HED	107	1	49	3	160	68%
HSENI	12	0	1	0	13	92%
DfE/GSNI	7	0	2	1	10	70%
Belfast International Airport	3	0	0	0	3	100%
Belfast City Airport	12	0	0	0	12	100%
NIHE	12	0	5	0	17	71%
Total	756	9	543	56	1,364	56%

Table 5c: Statutory consultation on regionally significant planning applications 2021-22

Statutory Consultee	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding No response	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	0	0	1	0	1	0%
DfE/GSNI	1	0	0	0	1	100%
Total	1	0	1	0	2	50%

User guidance

Notes on data source

An extract of all consultations/advice queries raised from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 were transferred on 3 May 2022 from the Northern Ireland Planning Portal. The data were then validated. The relevant data is lifted at least one month after the end of the reference period to allow for the 21 day target response date, which applies to most statutory consultations, to have elapsed.

List of key statutory consultees

- Belfast City Airport
- Belfast International Airport
- City of Derry Airport
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Environment, Marine and Fisheries (EMF) and Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Department for Communities (DfC) / Historic Environment Division (HED)
- Department for the Economy (DfE) / Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI)
- DfI Rivers
- DfI Roads
- Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
- Northern Ireland Water

Future developments

As work progresses in this area it is intended to widen the list of key statutory consultees to include local planning authorities. Work is ongoing to quality review and ensure that all statutory planning consultations issued are fully captured. Future quarterly reports will include an update of any quality improvements introduced. As a result figures may be revised, however, the scale of any such change is envisaged to be small.