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# News Release

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## Supreme Court's fourth Annual Report and Accounts published

A continuing focus on deciding significant points of public law alongside further developments to making the UK's top court more widely accessible are hallmarks of the last financial year, according to The Supreme Court's Annual Report and Accounts, laid before Parliament today.

Breakdowns of the Court's caseload by subject area are being published for the first time in this report, to assist understanding of trends in the Justices' work. The figures indicate that applications for permission to appeal relating to immigration, judicial review and procedural cases formed a significant proportion of the Court's pipeline of possible hearings between April 2012 and March 2013, and that the Court also dealt with a large number of such applications in family cases. Appeals determined during the year included a large proportion of immigration and extradition cases, within a broad range of topics covered by the Court's judgments.

The report records that almost 260 applications for permission to appeal were made to the Supreme Court over the last financial year, and almost 240 were considered by the Justices over the same period. The proportion of applications granted permission to appeal has returned to the 2010-11 rate of just over one third, following a fall to closer to one in four in 2011-12.

The report indicates a considerable slowing of the trend for the Justices to sit in panels of larger than five, with the number of appeals upon which seven or nine Justices sat falling to approximately 11% of the total hearings during 2012/13 (as opposed to around 24% in both 2011/12 and 2010/11).

In her introduction, Jenny Rowe, Chief Executive of the Supreme Court, describes it as a year "of consolidation in some areas, whilst in others we have continued to make changes of our own", noting continued work on the full integration of the administration of the Supreme Court and Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and a number of service contracts which were reviewed over the year to ensure best value for money. In addition the judicial and staff changes, Jenny notes "significant changes in the environment in which we operate," including some legislative reform affecting the Court.

The Annual Report and Accounts show that the Supreme Court and JCPC spent £13.4m during 2012/13 (more than 40% of which was judicial and staff costs), and recouped almost £7.5m in court fees, contributions from the UK court services, and other income. The Court's net operating cost (excluding diminution in the value of the building) fell by over £0.5m to £5.4m when compared with £5.97m recorded in 2011/12.

In his foreword to the Report, Lord Neuberger pays tribute to Lord Phillips, his predecessor as President of the Court, "for all that he did to establish the UKSC as an institution separate from the United Kingdom Parliament, serving all the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom. Whilst there is much about the work here that is familiar from my time as a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary between 2007 and 2009, there have been significant improvements in the way in which the Justices go about their business, as well as in the way in which the Justices are supported. Above all, there have been great improvements to the openness, visibility and accessibility of the Court."

That commitment to accessibility saw more than 70,000 visitors pass through the Court's doors in the last year, with the 250,000<sup>th</sup> visitor since the Court opened in October 2009 arriving in early March 2013. Virtual visitors have risen considerably, with almost a fifth more unique web visitors over this twelve month period than the previous one. The year also saw the Court work creatively in taking opportunities provided by both social media and external events, such as London's hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, to communicate aspects of its work.

The report also documents the work undertaken to improve further the already high staff engagement score; on the progress of a major project to put the Court in direct control of its information technology contracts and to cut costs in that area; and the continuing efforts to reduce energy consumption in the Court's listed building.

The report also lists the international liaison undertaken by the Justices and senior staff, including giving lectures overseas and welcoming visiting dignitaries to the Court. The aim of this area of activity is to help foster professional relationships with courts across the world, particularly those which share common law jurisprudence, and to support the strengthening of the rule of law in countries where this is fragile.

**Ends**

## **Notes to editors**

The Annual Report and Accounts can be viewed online at:

<http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/news/the-supreme-court-annual-report-and-accounts.html>

## **UKSC contacts:**

Ben Wilson

Tel: 020 7960 1887

[ben.wilson@supremecourt.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ben.wilson@supremecourt.gsi.gov.uk)

Anthony Myers

Tel: 020 7960 1886

[anthony.myers@supremecourt.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.myers@supremecourt.gsi.gov.uk)