

Summary of Section 4 monitoring: 1st May 2017 - 30th April 2018

1. General information

147 applications are included in this monitoring update.

1.1 Applications by agency

Agency	Applications submitted
BRC	43
GCP	32
SRC	72
Total	147

1.2 Application criteria

The majority of applications were made on the basis of criteria 'e' (to avoid a human rights breach), when the applicant had recently made further submissions. No applications were made on the basis of criteria 'c' (no viable route of return).¹

See Section 2.1 for a breakdown of application waiting times by criteria.

S4 criteria	Number of applications	Figure as %
a	3	2%
b	6	4%
d	13	9%
e	124	84%
Unknown	1	1%
Total	147	100%

1.3 Application outcomes

¹ This criteria only applies when the Home Secretary has stated there is no viable route of return to a country and, to the best of my knowledge, no such statements have been made.

The majority of applications included in the monitoring have received decisions (aprox.78%).

Application outcome	Count	Figure as %
Positive	76	51.7%
Pending	32	21.8%
Negative	39	26.5%
Total	147	100.0%

1.4 Appeal outcomes

28 of the 39 negative decisions were appealed and had positive outcomes in at least 21 cases.

Appeal outcomes	Number
Allowed	10
Refused	5
Remitted	1
Unknown	2
Withdrawn	10
Total	28

For those cases that were allowed, remitted or withdrawn by the HO, this process resulted in an additional **17 days** of destitution for applicants.

1.5 Requests for further information

Of the 115 cases that had received decisions at the end of the monitoring period, 45% received at least one further information request.

Number of RFIs	Number of applications
0	63
1	34
2	11
3	5
4	2

Total	115
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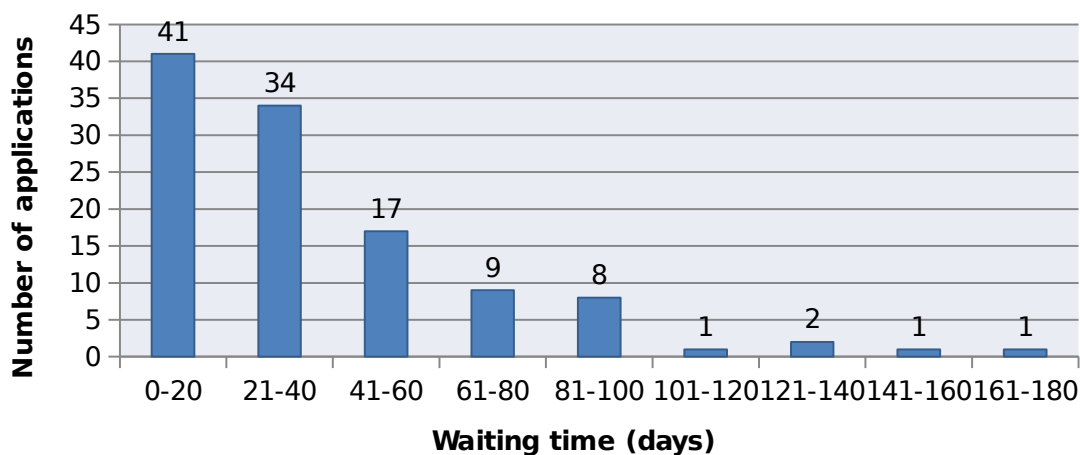
2. Application decision timescales

Based on the 115 applications that had received decisions by the 30th April 2018, the average waiting time between making a Section 4 application and receiving a decision was **37 days**. This has increased by 5 days since March 2018.

It should be noted that there are four outliers² in the data set which, while still providing an important insight into substantial period of time some people have to wait to access Section 4, are skewing the data.

The median³ decision waiting time is **26 days** and the mode⁴ is **22 days**. This difference between the mean, median and mode means the data is likely to be positively skewed. Data is positively skewed when a large number of observations fall into lower value brackets, as can be observed in the chart below:

S4 decision waiting times



It is worth noting that only 7 cases (6% of the 115 cases with decisions) received decisions with the maximum timescale set by the Home Office (5 days).

There are several factors that appear to correlate with longer decision waiting times, which are discussed in the following subsections.

2.1 Section 4 application criteria and waiting times

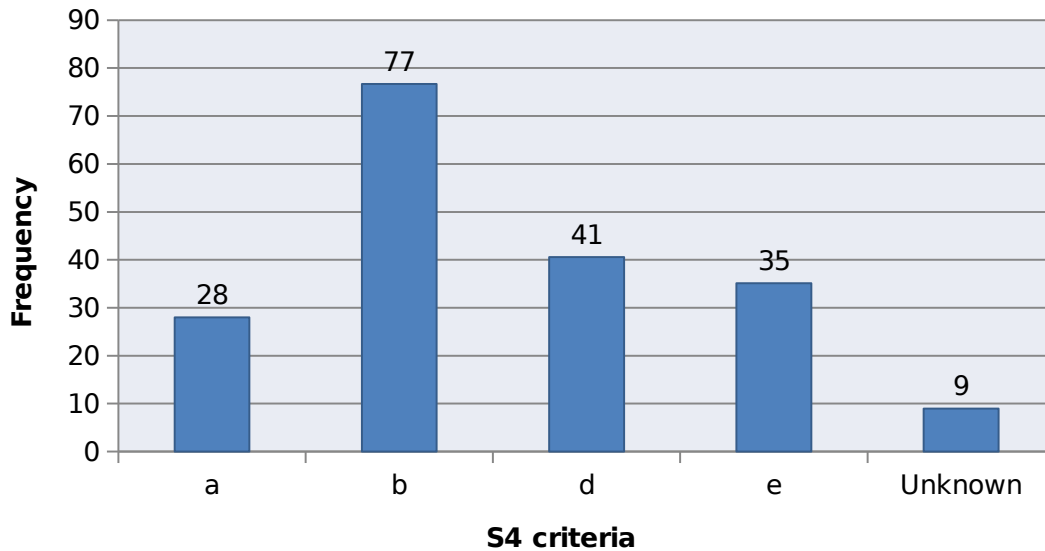
² An observation that lies far from the other values in a dataset.

³ The middle number in a dataset

⁴ The number that appears most frequently in a dataset

The chart below shows average decision times by application criteria. As may be expected given the level of evidence required, applications submitted under criteria 'b' (medical impediment to travel) have the longest average waiting period.

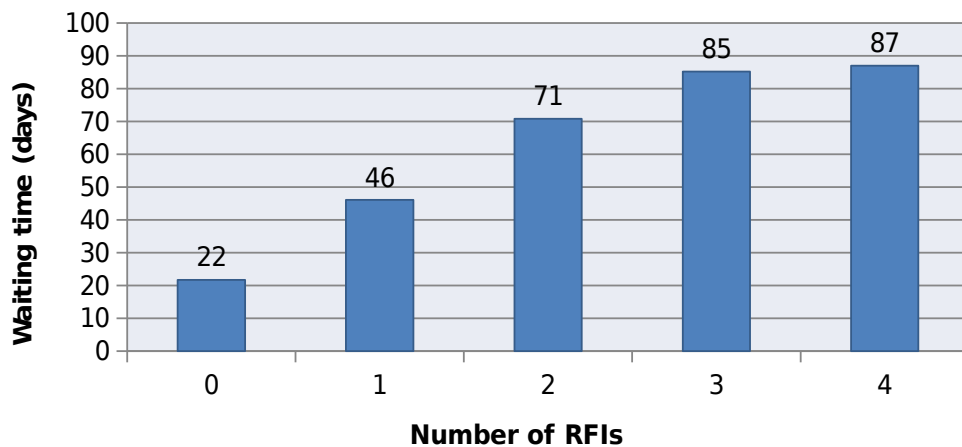
Average waiting times by S4 criteria



2.2 RFIs and waiting times

Again as would be expected, application waiting times increase the more RFIs an applicant receives

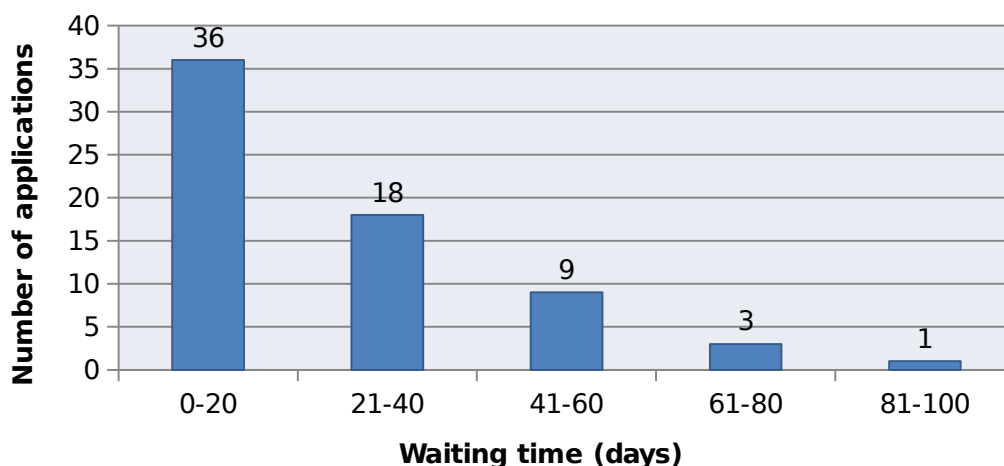
Average waiting times by no. RFIs received



2.3 Application submission method and waiting times

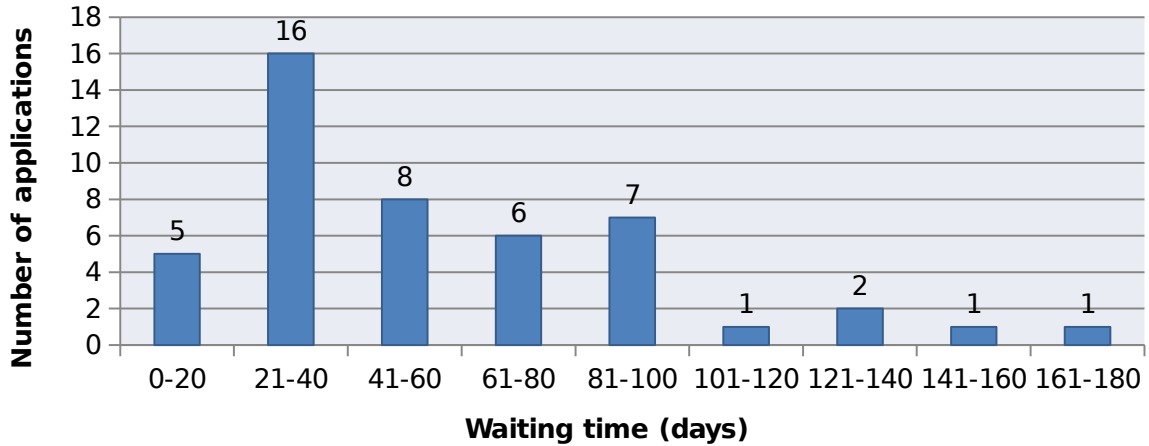
Applications submitted by phone to Migrant Help have longer waiting times than those emailed directly to AS correspondence. The average waiting time for an application submitted via AS correspondence is **24 days**. The chart below shows the distribution of applications submitted in this way. There are three outliers in this data set (waiting times that exceed 67 days).

Waiting time: AS Correspondence



The average waiting time for an application phoned to Asylum Helpline is **57 days**. The chart below shows the distribution of applications submitted in this way. There is one outlier in this data set (an application that took 176 days to receive a decision).

Waiting time: Asylum Helpline



2.4 Pending applications

32 applications were pending at the end of the monitoring period. As of the 30th April 2018, those applications had been waiting an average of **53 days** for a decision. This potentially reflects the substantial delays in asylum support decision making after the Home Office introduced a new data management system (ATLAS) in March 2018.

3. Caseworker time

Caseworker time calculations are based on data gathered at British Red Cross and Scottish Refugee Council. Section 4 applications at Govan Community Project are generally completed by volunteers and there is not capacity to collect this information.

For each client, caseworkers spent on average:

1 hour 30 minutes assisting them to gather evidence for and submit a Section 4 application.

When applicable, **1 hour 15 minutes** assisting them to respond to RFIs or chase up applications.

When applicable, **2 hours** assisting them to prepare for appeals.