

Information Released under Freedom of Information Act

Subject: The number of late filing penalties issued, the number of companies that disputed the late filing penalty and the revenue Companies House received from the penalties during the financial year 2005/2006

Date Released: 6 March 2007

Summary of request: How many companies had incurred penalties from filing compliance failures, the numbers of those companies that refused to pay the fine and the revenue that Companies House collected from those fines for the most recent year.

Information released:

1. How many companies incurred default penalties resulting from filing compliance failures under the Companies Act?

The total number of late filing penalties issued during financial year 2005/06 for failure to file accounts was 203,111. This information is freely available from Companies House website via the following link www.companieshouse.gov.uk then by following the links - about us - Library - Statistics and Surveys - DTI Reports - Companies in 2005/06.

2. What percentage or actual number of companies refused to pay these default penalties?

I should explain that once a company has incurred a late filing penalty we will pursue the company until the debt is paid. Each will have the opportunity to appeal the penalty via the Registrar or if this fails through the independent Complaint's Adjudicator. The only other time we would not pursue the penalty is if we could not contact the company or it became apparent that the company was no longer required. In these cases it would not be in the public interest to spend more public money pursuing the debt so consequently the company is put through the process for dissolution.

During the financial year 2005/06 we received 18,793 disputes. Unfortunately we do not keep statistics which breaks this figure down further. I am unable to say how many companies within this figure eventually paid the penalty, how many are still in the dispute process or how many of this original figure did not pay because the company was, or is in the process of being dissolved. However, I can inform you that 6,235 companies were successful in their appeal and the Registrar used her discretion not to collect the penalty.

3. What is the total annual sum received by Companies House resulting from penalties that have been paid by defaulting companies?

Late filing penalties are surrendered directly to HM Treasury and do form part of the Companies House Trading Fund income. The amount of late filing penalties collected by Companies House in 2005/06 was £30.2m. This information is freely available from the Companies House website via the following link www.companieshouse.gov.uk then by following the links - about us - Library - Corporate documents - Annual Report & Accounts 2005/06.