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By Email Only

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Economy and Fair Work
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Your Ref: N/A
Our Ref: MC-05-2022

Reply to: Edinburgh Office
Department: Senior Management
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Date: 06 May 2022

Dear Ms Baker

REGISTERS OF SCOTLAND MONTHLY UPDATE

As described in my letter dated 01 April 2022, I am writing to provide the committee with an update on the end year position of Financial Year 2021-2022, as follows:-

Performance

The latest performance metrics for RoS have been [published on our website](#). In summary we have met or exceeded all the FY21/22 targets we have set for: clearing the backlog of cases, processing at least 60% of dealing with whole, first registrations and transfers of part within 35 days, achieving at least 93% application quality and achieving at least 80% customer satisfaction. As mentioned in my update of 04 February 2022, the 2021 Civil Service People Survey results have been embargoed outwith the Civil Service to date, however, the Cabinet Office have now released the results and I am pleased to report that our engagement score remained steady at 66%. The full results are now available [in the public domain](#).

We have now [published our updated Corporate Plan](#) for next five years (2022-2027) and defined our updated key performance indicators (KPIs) for FY22/23. They are focussed in similar areas to the KPIs for FY21/22 with an ongoing emphasis on measuring our progress with clearing the backlog of cases, turning around new cases more quickly, and delivering the benefits of a complete land register, whilst ensuring that quality is maintained and that we continue to inspire our people.

We hope that these targets will continue to ensure our customers remain highly satisfied with the services we provide. During the last financial year, we continued to capture our customer satisfaction score via a short survey that went out to our Top 100 customers each quarter and Top 400 customers once a year. We had a benchmark set for this Customer Satisfaction Score of 80% and the last survey we ran returned a satisfaction score of 92%. Obviously, we are very pleased to receive such a high score and recognition from our customers, but the survey was short and limited in what it could tell us.

We are now members of the Institute of Customer Service and have been working with them to move across to their much more in-depth Business Benchmarking Survey, which is used by public and private sector organisations across the UK. This not only allows us to directly compare ourselves to similar organisations but also build a huge

resource of customer data on which to identify and base our priorities for improvements. This information is also going to provide customer insight that really allow us to fully support our value of customer focus and build a customer centric organisation that exemplifies an excellent customer experience.

We ran a pilot of the new survey and followed that with one across our Top 400 customers. That survey has been used to set our benchmark and we received a score of 77.3 for customer satisfaction. The average for the national public sector bodies is 76.9 for satisfaction so our scores are already above the public sector averages, but we are setting ourselves the target of attaining a score of 78.0 by March 2023 and thereafter increasing that score by between 0.5 and 1.0 each year across our five-year corporate plan.

For completeness, further to my letter of 1 April 2022, I have provided an updated table at Annex A, which shows the number of dispositions received, processed and outstanding by year and by Land Register county, as at the end of March 2022. I must stress again the importance of remembering that the legal effect of registration backdates to the date when I received the application and that homeowners are not restricted from doing anything with their property whilst the application is outstanding. It is also possible for applicants to request expedite of their application where that is necessary.

Legislation

Over the last period we have continued to work closely with the Coronavirus Recovery and Reform (S) Bill team and SGLD as the Bill has navigated stage 1. The provisions affecting the role of the Keeper and digital submission to the registers continue to have cross party support. On a related matter we have been investigating the possibility of making a provision to allow the Keeper to issue digital extracts (copies with legal equivalence to original documents) from certain registers.

Transparency of Land Ownership

We continue to make good progress in delivering the benefits of a complete land register. Our estimations are that over 86% of addresses that regularly transact, and close to 55% of Scotland's total land mass is registered or in the process of being registered. In parallel, we are making significant progress with unlocking Sasines to provide greater insights into ownership of land and property in Scotland, with approximately 23% of Scotland's land mass now through the Sasines search process, [as illustrated in this map](#), which is now available on our RoS website. In total across registered land, draft registrations and unlocked Sasines information, we have collated ownership information for over 78% of Scotland's land mass, and we are moving continually closer to the point at which we can confidently answer the question of 'Who owns Scotland?'

The new Register of Persons Holding a Controlled Interest in Land went live on 01 April 2022. To date relatively few applications have been received, but this was anticipated as there is a 12-month transition period before criminal penalties for failure to supply information are applied. Work continues to publicise and raise awareness of this new register and to ensure that all customer queries about how to use the new register are addressed promptly, and our guidance is regularly updated.

RoS will have a role to play in supporting the new Register of Overseas entities, which will be established during 2022 by Companies House as part of the new Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022, recently passed by the UK

Parliament. RoS legal and policy colleagues are very well engaged in the RoE implementation group and have already done significant work to define the anticipated delivery requirements for RoS before and after commencement of the scheme.

Digital

I am delighted to report that RoS won the 'A Modern Civil Service' award at the recent Operational Delivery Profession (ODP) awards for our work on the Digital Submission Service. Securing this award means recognition that we are a business that truly pushes the boundaries in terms of digital transformation and innovation. The service was recognised for embodying the Modern Civil Service vision - to be skilled, innovative and ambitious – and for highlighting the commitment of RoS colleagues to go above and beyond in order to promote modernisation and reform within government.

A long-standing customer request has been for RoS to provide the ability for customers to self-serve copy deeds (currently customers need to contact customer services to obtain copies of deeds we hold). As a result of having been able to migrate all our deeds into the cloud and build an appropriate digital service to enable customers to search for, pay for, and download the Sasines deeds they wish to obtain. We have been testing this system in private beta over the past couple of months and the full service will go live for customers in May.

You will recall at the EFW Committee session to review the Digital Regulations, the committee asked if more rural and remote solicitors were appropriately supported by our digital tools. RoS approached solicitors based in and covering Scotland's west coast, western and northern isle communities to seek their views on the benefits and disbenefits of digital application submissions. The direct feedback was wholly supportive of the logistical and financial benefits to them and their clients from being able to carry out end to end digital registration applications. The reality of this is that it removes the time and cost burdens of surface mail and reduces the need and cost of paper and legal document storage. It was also expressed that they feel it places them on a more level playing field with their central belt based colleagues and competitors.

The one element that can cause issues is the ongoing requirement to scan very large title plans as some solicitors only have the equipment to do this in one of their offices, so they still have to post these to colleagues to complete the function on their behalf. RoS has the non-digital approach to support these circumstances and will continue to work closely with customers to identify collective and local solutions.

A continued focus on improving our product sustainability has seen significant progress towards removing the dependency on Legacy IT systems; this includes our mapping tools, document archiving and data amendment forms leveraging our strategic cloud platform.

In April RoS was shortlisted for the Geography in Government Award for its work in the migration of the spatial data it holds. This recognises the work of RoS to reduce data and hardware risks and further secure the national dataset - the Land Register.

Continued development and rollout of Register Land & Property (460 firms have now been onboarded) along with the introduction of new internal tooling (Settle UI) to our registration teams are contributing towards an enhanced digital registration capability and optimised operational processes.

Digital Workplace: In support of our transition to a hybrid working model, we have continued to invest and deliver against our Digital Workplace Strategy. Aligned to business outcomes, we continue to realise the value of our Microsoft365 investment. In Q4 we completed a successful proof of concept for a new corporate content management platform. This aims to provide colleagues with a productive and collaborative content management capability, whilst also empowering the information governance policies of our organisation. Wider delivery of this project will commence in Q1 FY22/23.

In addition, unified integration with our onsite communication tooling has been implemented, enabling a refined experience between on-site meeting rooms and remote workers.

Cybersecurity: Our Cybersecurity roadmap seen the successful beta delivery of “End Point Visibility and Protection”. This initiative provides RoS with readiness and confidence in protecting against known security vulnerabilities and being capable of responding rapidly to day zero vulnerabilities. Moving to live in Q1, this initiative will deliver on-premises tenant segregation, supporting secure, multi-tenancy business opportunities.

In line with our Information Security Management System (ISMS) programme, Q1 will continue to focus on improving our organisational security posture through access management controls and cyber threat response refinement.

Geovation Scotland

Recruitment of Cohort 4 of the Geovation Scotland accelerator programme has now been completed. I will share the full details of the successful companies with the Committee as soon as it has been publicly announced.

Startup companies Student Bubble and EOLAS Insights Ltd from cohort 3 of the Geovation accelerator have now moved into the ‘to-market’ support phase of the programme. During this phase they will continue to receive arms-length support from the Geovation team while preparing their businesses for growth, investment and new partnerships.

People

The final elements of the 2021/2022 pay deal have been implemented. We are one of the few public sector organisations to have implemented a 36-hour week and this change has been positively received by colleagues.

Stakeholder Engagement

We continue to host regular webinars on a variety of topics to support our customers in making best use of our services. We have held the first of a series of policy and practice workshops during the past quarter and have hosted a virtual launch event for our updated Corporate Plan 2022-2027. Later in May we will be re-running our MSP/MP breakfast briefings to provide an opportunity for parliamentarians to join us virtually to find out more about what we do and how we can support their constituents.

Finances

We are currently finalising our annual accounts for 2021-22, that are due to be published in September. In contrast to 2020-21, our income (just over £90 million) will

have fully covered all our running costs. In addition, we have drawn down capital budget from the Scottish Government to cover the costs of developing the new registers on behalf of Ministers, and AME budget to cover non-cash provisions. Our current projections are that we will continue to be broadly self-financing in future years, with income from fees matching the cost to serve customers.

Other Matters

Ukraine: RoS is working, in collaboration with colleagues across UK and Scottish Government and in line with my statutory obligations, to ensure the sanctions regime is effective as regards land and property in Scotland. Outside our usual work I am pleased to be able to share that RoS colleagues have been involved in support the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Following a request for support from Scottish Government colleagues, RoS volunteered to support the customer journey mapping and digital system development activity to support the process of refugees getting to Scotland and being matched to suitable accommodation. This type of service design work is an area where RoS has significant experience and it therefore seemed appropriate to offer our skills to support this urgent and important activity.

Hybrid working: Following the lifting of COVID restrictions our buildings are now fully open and all colleagues are able to book a desk or a collaboration space when they wish to attend the building. A robust system of re-inducting colleagues into the building on their first day of attendance is in place to ensure health and safety measures are adhered to, and all colleagues are familiarised with the new building layout and desk set up so that they can make efficient use of the facilities to deliver their work. Most colleagues have expressed a preference to continue to work in a hybrid fashion and we intend to support this. We have good quantitative evidence that an effective system of hybrid working will be an efficient way of colleagues working at optimal productivity, whilst supporting their wellbeing, reducing costs and ensuring RoS can meet our climate targets. Most importantly we believe that hybrid working will enable us to deliver the best services to our customers. We will therefore monitor building occupancy rates and continue to sub-lease unused space to other organisations.

Register of Moveable Transactions: Early engagement and discovery work on the development of the two new Registers proposed under the Moveable Transactions (Scotland) Bill continues.

I hope the Committee find this update useful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further in relation to the information provided in this letter. I will be in touch at the beginning of June to begin the new monthly reporting approach, starting with an update on the end of April position of the 2022-2023 Financial Year.

Yours sincerely



JENNIFER HENDERSON
Keeper of the Registers of Scotland

Annex A – Disposition Data

Create Year	Applications Received	Status		Percentage	
		Complete	Open	Complete	Open
2017	152,417	149,287	3,130	98%	2%
2018	146,211	134,443	11,778	92%	8%
2019	152,049	137,598	14,451	90%	10%
2020	122,423	106,554	15,869	87%	13%
2021	165,621	142,614	23,007	86%	14%
2022	33,247	27,083	6,164	81%	19%
Grand Total	771,968	697,569	74,399	90%	10%

County / Create Year	Applications Received	Status		Percentage	
		Complete	Open	Complete	Open
Aberdeen (ABN)	53,493	47,184	6,399	88%	12%
2017	10,482	10,186	296	97%	3%
2018	9,862	8,626	1,236	87%	13%
2019	10,448	9,180	1,268	88%	12%
2020	8,231	6,974	1,257	85%	15%
2021	12,110	10,281	1,829	85%	15%
2022	2,360	1,937	513	82%	22%
Angus (ANG)	36,261	32,728	3,583	90%	10%
2017	7,061	6,892	169	98%	2%
2018	6,776	6,173	603	91%	9%
2019	7,122	6,330	792	89%	11%
2020	5,730	5,021	709	88%	12%
2021	8,087	7,045	1,042	87%	13%
2022	1,485	1,267	268	85%	18%
Argyll (ARG)	12,570	9,786	2,805	78%	22%
2017	2,427	2,344	83	97%	3%
2018	2,356	1,868	488	79%	21%
2019	2,397	1,777	620	74%	26%
2020	1,950	1,324	626	68%	32%
2021	2,889	2,093	796	72%	28%
2022	551	380	192	69%	35%
Ayr (AYR)	49,540	45,672	3,931	92%	8%
2017	9,765	9,603	162	98%	2%
2018	9,402	8,767	634	93%	7%
2019	9,623	8,862	761	92%	8%
2020	8,038	7,088	950	88%	12%
2021	10,589	9,533	1,056	90%	10%
2022	2,123	1,819	368	86%	17%
Berwick (BER)	4,189	3,378	824	81%	20%
2017	890	829	61	93%	7%
2018	794	636	158	80%	20%
2019	748	567	181	76%	24%
2020	640	480	160	75%	25%
2021	965	742	223	77%	23%
2022	152	124	41	82%	27%
Banff (BNF)	6,725	5,668	1,070	84%	16%

2017	1,371	1,311	60	96%	4%
2018	1,206	998	208	83%	17%
2019	1,256	1,010	246	80%	20%
2020	1,081	838	243	78%	22%
2021	1,523	1,275	248	84%	16%
2022	288	236	65	82%	23%
Bute (BUT)	3,316	2,754	571	83%	17%
2017	645	621	24	96%	4%
2018	619	507	112	82%	18%
2019	642	510	132	79%	21%
2020	557	428	129	77%	23%
2021	714	569	145	80%	20%
2022	139	119	29	86%	21%
Clackmannan (CLK)	6,548	6,118	438	93%	7%
2017	1,321	1,292	29	98%	2%
2018	1,332	1,247	85	94%	6%
2019	1,238	1,175	63	95%	5%
2020	1,042	955	87	92%	8%
2021	1,304	1,174	130	90%	10%
2022	311	275	44	88%	14%
Caithness (CTH)	3,839	3,244	601	85%	16%
2017	761	729	32	96%	4%
2018	784	660	124	84%	16%
2019	733	613	120	84%	16%
2020	586	452	134	77%	23%
2021	801	655	146	82%	18%
2022	174	135	45	78%	26%
Dumbarton (DMB)	29,297	27,918	1,417	95%	5%
2017	5,786	5,670	116	98%	2%
2018	5,558	5,299	259	95%	5%
2019	6,191	5,863	328	95%	5%
2020	4,864	4,631	233	95%	5%
2021	5,772	5,423	349	94%	6%
2022	1,126	1032	132	92%	12%
Dumfries (DMF)	13,133	11,004	2,149	84%	16%
2017	2,620	2,500	120	95%	5%
2018	2,494	2,169	325	87%	13%
2019	2,646	2,125	521	80%	20%
2020	2,056	1,597	459	78%	22%
2021	2,833	2,210	623	78%	22%
2022	484	403	101	83%	21%
East Lothian (ELN)	12,130	10,736	1,411	89%	12%
2017	2,349	2,301	48	98%	2%
2018	2,375	2,191	184	92%	8%
2019	2,512	2,282	230	91%	9%
2020	2,052	1,759	293	86%	14%
2021	2,403	1,898	505	79%	21%
2022	439	305	151	69%	34%
Fife (FFE)	50,987	46,754	4,311	92%	8%
2017	9,992	9,774	218	98%	2%
2018	9,781	9,095	686	93%	7%

2019	10,123	9,294	829	92%	8%
2020	8,264	7,363	901	89%	11%
2021	10,796	9,432	1,364	87%	13%
2022	2,031	1,796	313	88%	15%
Glasgow (GLA)	83,763	80,302	3,576	96%	4%
2017	16,903	16,681	222	99%	1%
2018	15,953	15,505	448	97%	3%
2019	16,398	15,866	532	97%	3%
2020	12,777	12,235	542	96%	4%
2021	18,401	16,966	1,435	92%	8%
2022	3,331	3,049	397	92%	12%
Inverness (INV)	22,100	17,922	4,216	81%	19%
2017	4,401	4,264	137	97%	3%
2018	4,180	3,524	656	84%	16%
2019	4,367	3,469	898	79%	21%
2020	3,446	2,512	934	73%	27%
2021	4,658	3,414	1,244	73%	27%
2022	1,048	739	347	71%	33%
Kincardine (KNC)	11,276	9,703	1,589	86%	14%
2017	2,160	2,119	41	98%	2%
2018	2,084	1,856	228	89%	11%
2019	2,142	1,800	342	84%	16%
2020	1,733	1,435	298	83%	17%
2021	2,615	2,093	522	80%	20%
2022	542	400	158	74%	29%
Kinross (KNR)	2,491	2,000	494	80%	20%
2017	443	425	18	96%	4%
2018	500	430	70	86%	14%
2019	551	444	107	81%	19%
2020	397	291	106	73%	27%
2021	515	357	158	69%	31%
2022	85	53	35	62%	41%
Kirkcudbright (KRK)	5,629	4,384	1,251	78%	22%
2017	999	951	48	95%	5%
2018	1,037	812	225	78%	22%
2019	1,070	806	264	75%	25%
2020	936	649	287	69%	31%
2021	1,310	967	343	74%	26%
2022	277	199	84	72%	30%
Lanark (LAN)	80,910	75,706	5,331	94%	7%
2017	15,553	15,172	381	98%	2%
2018	15,596	14,877	719	95%	5%
2019	16,509	15,591	918	94%	6%
2020	13,133	12,085	1,048	92%	8%
2021	16,730	14,981	1,749	90%	10%
2022	3,389	3,000	516	89%	15%
Midlothian (MID)	100,486	93,247	7,361	93%	7%
2017	20,213	20,063	150	99%	1%
2018	18,789	18,049	740	96%	4%
2019	19,852	18,735	1,117	94%	6%
2020	15,521	13,715	1,806	88%	12%

2021	21,971	19,161	2,810	87%	13%
2022	4,140	3,524	738	85%	18%
Moray (MOR)	9,809	8,406	1,420	86%	14%
2017	2,008	1,977	31	98%	2%
2018	1,814	1,566	248	86%	14%
2019	1,890	1,611	279	85%	15%
2020	1,561	1,249	312	80%	20%
2021	2,117	1,660	457	78%	22%
2022	419	343	93	82%	22%
Nairn (NRN)	1,981	1,719	264	87%	13%
2017	435	424	11	97%	3%
2018	406	374	32	92%	8%
2019	343	306	37	89%	11%
2020	324	252	72	78%	22%
2021	422	319	103	76%	24%
2022	51	44	9	86%	18%
Orkney & Zetland (OAZ)	7,864	5,892	1,992	75%	25%
2017	1,632	1,599	33	98%	2%
2018	1,579	1,118	462	71%	29%
2019	1,535	1,071	464	70%	30%
2020	1,263	777	486	62%	38%
2021	1,530	1,079	451	71%	29%
2022	325	248	96	76%	30%
Peebles (PBL)	3,454	2,925	537	85%	16%
2017	695	657	38	95%	5%
2018	711	578	133	81%	19%
2019	591	497	94	84%	16%
2020	586	473	113	81%	19%
2021	729	604	125	83%	17%
2022	142	116	34	82%	24%
Perth (PTH)	26,845	22,349	4,522	83%	17%
2017	5,100	4,940	160	97%	3%
2018	5,027	4,271	756	85%	15%
2019	5,213	4,240	973	81%	19%
2020	4,321	3,332	989	77%	23%
2021	6,038	4,704	1,334	78%	22%
2022	1,146	862	310	75%	27%
Renfrew (REN)	49,084	46,449	2,706	95%	6%
2017	9,428	9,339	89	99%	1%
2018	9,244	8,987	257	97%	3%
2019	9,744	9,306	438	96%	4%
2020	8,003	7,429	574	93%	7%
2021	10,546	9,536	1,010	90%	10%
2022	2,119	1,852	338	87%	16%
Ross & Cromarty (ROS)	12,219	9,606	2,624	79%	21%
2017	2,395	2,329	66	97%	3%
2018	2,331	1,793	538	77%	23%
2019	2,295	1,772	523	77%	23%
2020	1,944	1,337	607	69%	31%
2021	2,705	1,989	716	74%	26%

2022	549	386	174	70%	32%
Roxburgh (ROX)	7,934	6,703	1,243	84%	16%
2017	1,622	1,568	54	97%	3%
2018	1,523	1,268	255	83%	17%
2019	1,524	1,247	277	82%	18%
2020	1,277	1,042	235	82%	18%
2021	1,651	1,300	351	79%	21%
2022	337	278	71	82%	21%
Seabed (SEA)	18	8	10	44%	56%
2017	1	1		100%	0%
2018	2	1	1	50%	50%
2019	9	5	4	56%	44%
2020	2		2	0%	100%
2021	4	1	3	25%	75%
Selkirk (SEL)	3,119	2,720	405	87%	13%
2017	612	599	13	98%	2%
2018	588	508	80	86%	14%
2019	562	466	96	83%	17%
2020	529	457	72	86%	14%
2021	698	588	110	84%	16%
2022	130	102	34	78%	26%
Stirling (STG)	31,438	28,989	2,496	92%	8%
2017	6,459	6,359	100	98%	2%
2018	6,153	5,763	390	94%	6%
2019	6,163	5,729	434	93%	7%
2020	5,037	4,488	549	89%	11%
2021	6,354	5,597	757	88%	12%
2022	1,272	1053	266	83%	21%
Sutherland (STH)	2,856	2,149	711	75%	25%
2017	516	486	30	94%	6%
2018	531	386	145	73%	27%
2019	623	452	171	73%	27%
2020	452	306	146	68%	32%
2021	577	417	160	72%	28%
2022	157	102	59	65%	38%
Wigtown (WGN)	4,019	3,379	643	84%	16%
2017	772	743	29	96%	4%
2018	733	605	128	83%	17%
2019	786	654	132	83%	17%
2020	615	463	152	75%	25%
2021	928	761	167	82%	18%
2022	185	153	35	83%	19%
West Lothian (WLN)	21,530	20,067	1,498	93%	7%
2017	4,600	4,539	61	99%	1%
2018	4,091	3,926	165	96%	4%
2019	4,203	3,943	260	94%	6%
2020	3,475	3,117	358	90%	10%
2021	4,336	3,790	546	87%	13%
2022	825	752	108	91%	13%
Grand Total	771,968	697,569	74,399	90%	10%