

Legal Services

Request for Information.



Thank you for your request received on 12 March in which you asked,

- 1. Since its inception, how many trainee solicitors have been employed by either the Assembly's Legal Services Department or the Office of the Counsel General?*
- 2. How many of those trainees have been successful in their applications for solicitor posts at any Welsh Government Department in the open competitions?*
- 3. How many solicitors and barristers have been recruited externally?*

Our records began in May 2007, which is when the Government of Wales Act 2006 came into force; and the National Assembly for Wales and Welsh Government were formally separated. At that time the National Assembly for Wales Commission ("the Commission") was also created. The role of the Commission is to provide property, staff and services for the Assembly's purposes. To be clear, the National Assembly is a separate institution from the Welsh Government (which is answering separately).

- 1. Since its inception, how many trainee solicitors have been employed by either the Assembly's Legal Services Department or the Office of the Counsel General?*

Since its inception in 2007, one member of staff who works for the Commission has undertaken a training contract to become a solicitor under the supervision of the Commission. This person was originally recruited into a different role and is still employed by the Commission.

As the Commission's legal department is small (see below), the Commission does not have a training scheme for aspiring solicitors. Therefore, no individual has been recruited by the Commission to fulfil the role of a trainee solicitor.

2. Since its inception, how many trainee solicitors have been employed by either the Assembly's Legal Services Department or the Office of the Counsel General?

As noted above, we are a separate institution from the Welsh Government. So far as the Commission is concerned, no individual has been recruited from among its staff to fulfil a role which requires that person to hold the qualification of solicitor or barrister.

3. How many solicitors and barristers have been recruited externally?

Since its creation in 2007, the Commission has recruited eleven external candidates as legal advisers to the National Assembly. It was a requirement of the recruitment that all of these candidates were qualified as solicitors or barristers.

Although you have not asked the question specifically, you may be interested to know that the Commission currently employs twelve solicitors as legal advisers to the National Assembly.

Your request has been considered according to the principles set out in the Code of Practice on Public Access to Information. The code is published on our website at http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about_us-commission_assembly_administration/abt-foi/abt-foi-cop-pub.htm

If you have any questions regarding this response please contact me. If you feel you have cause for complaint, please follow the guidance at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Buddug Saer
Programme Officer
National Assembly for Wales

Cause for concern or complaint with your FOI response?

If you believe that I have not applied the Code correctly or have not followed the relevant laws, you may make a formal complaint to the Chief Executive and Clerk at the National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay. Details of the Assembly's complaints principles are set out in the Code of Practice on Complaints available on the Internet at <http://www.assemblywales.org/conhome/con-complaint.htm>. Please advise me if you wish to receive a printed copy.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF