

Our Ref: 2015-174/175/176

Date: September 2015

Subject: Restraint orders

These requests asked about restraint orders and SFO investigations.

As is clear from the information below, the SFO deals with the small number of the very most serious or complex fraud cases and the various types of figures you have asked for can vary significantly from year to year. Each SFO case is different, and even amongst our caseload there can be considerable variation in the scale or type of offences alleged or committed. Therefore, it is important to recognise that these types of figures are representative of the circumstances of the particular set of cases in progress during any particular year, rather than patterns of SFO activity. It should also be noted that scale – in the sense of the value of any alleged wrongdoing or criminal proceeds – is only one factor that is considered when assessing whether allegations should be investigated by the SFO.

Restraint orders obtained in investigations for all types of SFO cases

For each of the 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years, the requests asked for information about the total number of restraint orders obtained by the SFO in the course of investigations into all types of cases and the number of restraint orders obtained within a two-month period of an investigation being opened. No restraint orders have been obtained within two months of an investigation being opened. The total numbers of orders are shown in the table below.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Number of restraint orders	8	2	5

Formal investigations opened by the SFO for all types of SFO cases

For each of the 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years, the requests asked for information about the total number of investigations opened and the total number of investigations referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Ten investigations were opened in 2011-12; 14 in 2012-13; and 12 in 2013-14. As the CPS is a prosecutor, the SFO does not refer investigatory work to the CPS.

The number, value and payments made towards compensation orders for all types of SFO cases

The Court can order compensation to be paid in the following ways:

- making a confiscation order and order that all (or a specified amount) of the monies paid to satisfy this order are to be paid as compensation to victims; or
- making a stand-alone compensation order, which can be either on its own or in addition to a separate confiscation order, where all monies paid to satisfy the order are to be paid to victims.

For each of the 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years, the requests asked for information about the total number of compensation orders obtained by the SFO in all types of cases, the total value of compensation orders obtained, and the value of payments made as compensation to victims. This is shown in the table below.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Number of stand-alone compensation orders	1	2	0
Number of confiscation orders through which compensation was ordered to be paid	2	10	10
Value of stand-alone compensation orders	£150,000	£5,025,426	0
Value of compensation to be paid from confiscation	£231,539	£7,001,966	£2,868,954
Value of payments towards stand-alone compensation orders	0	£5,000,000	0
Value of payments distributed as compensation paid out of confiscation orders	£1,560,183	£1,300,827	£1,221,884