

1 Information

1.1 Introduction and summary

Questions about the Single Housing Benefit (HB) Extract and its predecessors, the Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) and Housing Benefit Strategy Division – Information and Analysis Division (HBSD-IAD) scans, have been asked since Wave 14 of the local authority (LA) Omnibus Survey in order to find out how much time per month they usually take to run. At Waves 14-17 we asked LAs to split the length of time it takes to run the scan by the time it takes to carry out the actual run and the time taken for follow-up queries, however, for this survey we asked LAs to combine the two. For this reason, it is not possible to compare the findings at Wave 18 with previous waves.

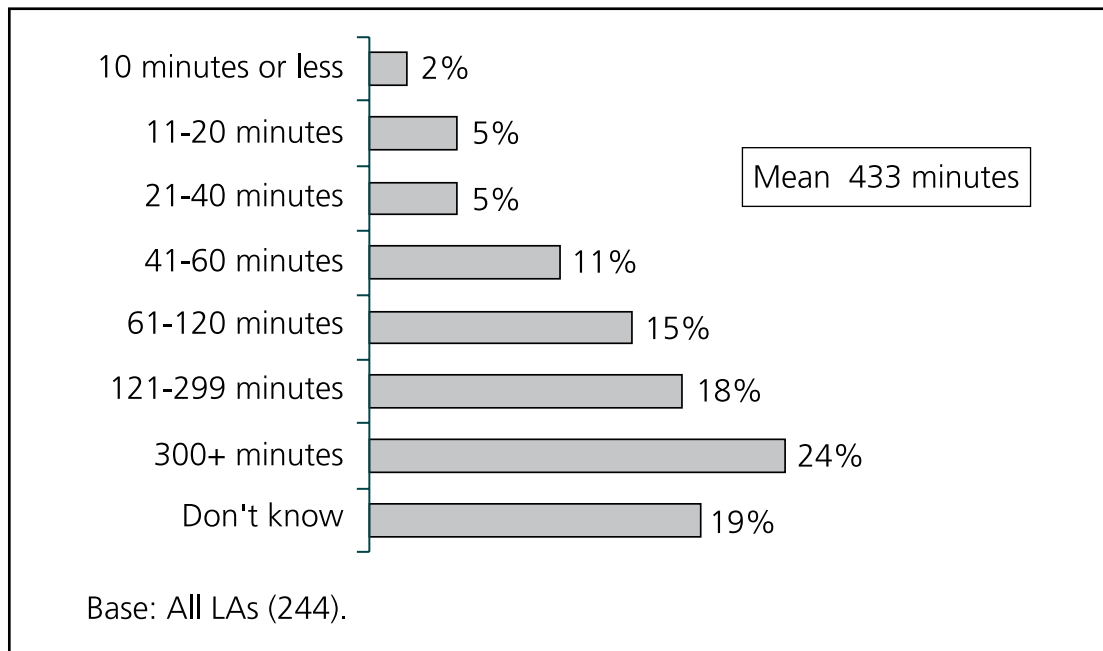
The key findings based on all LAs answering are summarised in this section. These are followed by the main findings which include charts plus commentary highlighting the key sub-group differences.

At Wave 18, the average (or mean) amount of time spent by LAs on the Single HB Extract data scan per month (including the time taken to extract the data from the system plus any follow-up queries or issues) was 433 minutes (just over seven hours). The median on the other hand stands at 146 minutes. A quarter (24 per cent) of LAs said that this scan took them five hours or more.

1.2 Main findings

The following details the main findings and includes charts for all questions plus commentary highlighting the key sub-group differences.

Figure 1.1 On average, how many hours and minutes per month would you say it usually takes to run the Single HB Extract data scan from your system? This time should include any time taken to deal with issues and queries related to extracting the Single HB Extract from your system



The average amount of time spent by LAs on the Single HB Extract data scan per month was 433 minutes (just over seven hours). As Table 1.1 shows, the average amount of time spent varied by LA type and size of caseload. English districts spent significantly less time than Scottish authorities, English metropolitan districts, English unitary authorities and London boroughs. Although it would seem that Welsh authorities were also spending less time on it, these findings are not significant because of the small base size of just 11 Welsh authorities answering. Not surprisingly, high caseload authorities spent significantly more time on it than low and medium caseload authorities.

Table 1.1 Average amount of time spent to run the SHBE data scan by LA type and caseload

	Base	Average amount of time spent	
		Mean	Median
LA type			
Welsh	11	169	128
Scottish	22	489	185
English unitary	29	584	200
English metropolitan	27	661	278
English districts	138	255	104
London boroughs	17	1,173	240
Caseload			
Low	65	299	98
Medium	91	230	108
High	88	720	229

It is also interesting to look at the findings by software provider. Although some of the base sizes are very small and therefore, these findings should be treated with some caution, it is possible to say that the average amount of time spent by LAs with Anite Pericles software was significantly higher than those that used Academy (Capita), IBS and Northgate (I world/SX3). In addition, when using the mean to make comparisons, those LAs with Civica (Sanderson), IBS and Northgate (I World/SX3) spent significantly longer on the data scan than Academy (Capita). However, these differences were no longer significant when using the median.

Table 1.2 Average amount of time spent to run the SHBE data scan by software provider

Software provider	Base	Average amount of time spent	
		Mean	Median
Anite Pericles	11	1,952	1,208
Civica (Sanderson)	7	586	58
Northgate (I World SX3)	99	504	232
IBS	36	328	86
Academy (Capita)	87	166	82
In-house	2	70	70

