

2021

# Statutory Consultations Quarterly Report – Q3 2020/21

This is the third quarterly report highlighting the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. This report provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during the first nine months of 2020/21 with comparative data from 2019/20. The figures contained in this report are extracted from the NI Planning Portal, are provisional, and should not be treated as official statistics.

**\*\*\*THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS NOT CONSIDERED OFFICIAL  
STATISTICS AND SHOULD NOT BE QUOTED AS SUCH\*\*\***



## Contents

Summary infographic.....	3
Introduction .....	4
Statutory consultations.....	4
Statutory consultations response times .....	5
2020/21 in more detail – statutory consultee analysis .....	7
User guidance .....	10

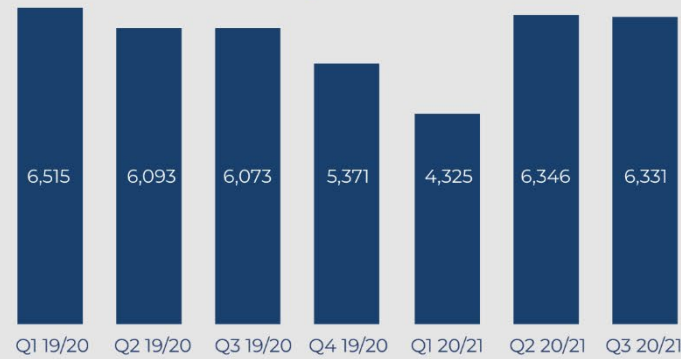
# Planning Statutory Consultations

## Q3 2020/21

**Statutory consultations**, for the purposes of this report, are 'Standard' and 'EIA Standard' consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' on the NI Planning Portal

### Statutory consultations raised

#### Number of statutory consultations raised



**6,331**

statutory consultations were raised in Q3 2020/21. Of these:



**5,996**  
**(95%)**

were on local applications



**328**  
**(5%)**

were on major applications



**7**  
**(0%)**

were on regional applications

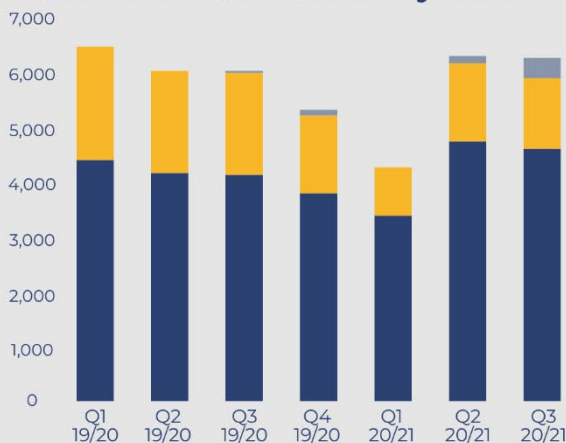
### Statutory consultations response times



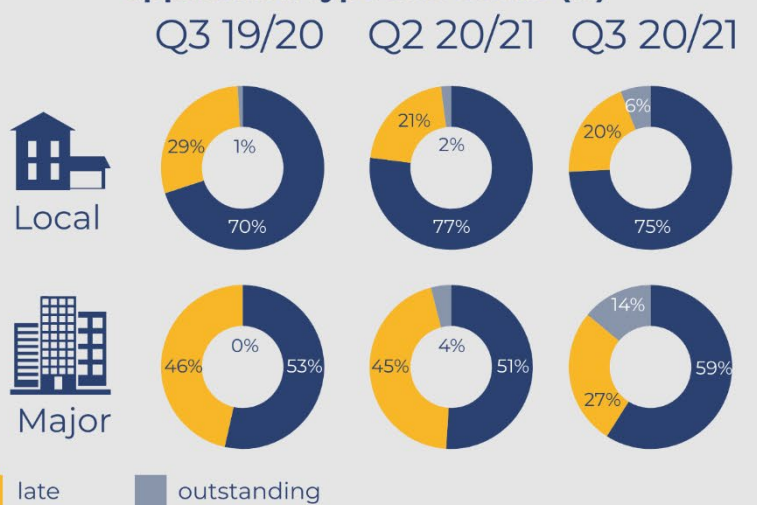
**74%**

of statutory consultations in Q3 2020/21 were responded to on time (i.e. within the 21-day response target or the extended target)

#### Number of responses to statutory consultations received by status



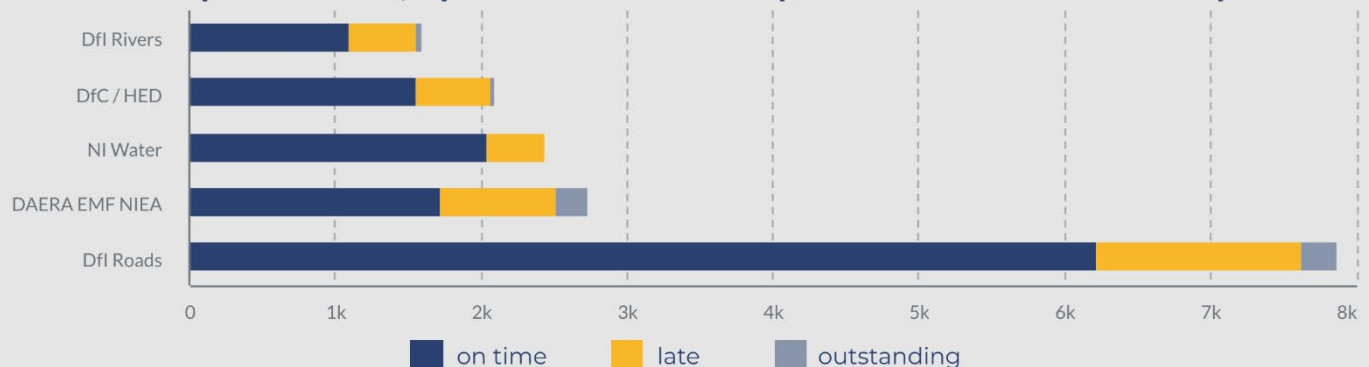
#### Responses to statutory consultations received by application type and status (%)



■ on time ■ late ■ outstanding

### Statutory consultees

#### Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, April - December 2020 (5 most common consultees)



■ on time ■ late ■ outstanding

The information in this report is not considered official statistics and should not be quoted as such

# Statutory Consultations Quarterly Report – Q3 2020/21

## Introduction

This is the third quarterly report highlighting the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. This report provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during the first nine months of 2020/21 with comparative data from 2019/20. **The figures contained in this report are extracted from the NI Planning Portal, are provisional, and should not be treated as official statistics.**

## Statutory consultations

During the first nine months of 2020/21 (April to December 2020) there were 28,262 consultations/advice queries raised. Of these, three-quarters (21,156; 75%) were sent to key statutory consultees<sup>1</sup>. Of these 21,156 consultations/advice queries raised, four-fifths (17,002; 80%) were deemed to be statutory consultations<sup>2</sup>.

The number of statutory consultations raised fell during Q4 2019/20 (January to March 2020), compared with previous quarters. A further decrease was reported for Q1 2020/21 (April to June 2020), with the number of statutory consultations raised down by over one-third (34%) compared with the same quarter a year earlier. It is likely that this decrease was related to the reduction in the number of planning applications received over the same period, as a consequence of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. During Q2 2020/21 (July to September 2020), 6,346 statutory consultations were raised; an increase of almost one-half (47%) from the previous quarter and similar to pre-Q4 2019/20 levels. In the most recent quarter (October to December 2020), 6,331 statutory consultations were raised; similar to the previous quarter and up 4% compared with the same period a year earlier. See Table 1 and Chart 1 for further information.

As in previous quarters, statutory consultations on local planning applications accounted for the vast majority of those raised in Q3 2020/21 (95%).

Table 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type*

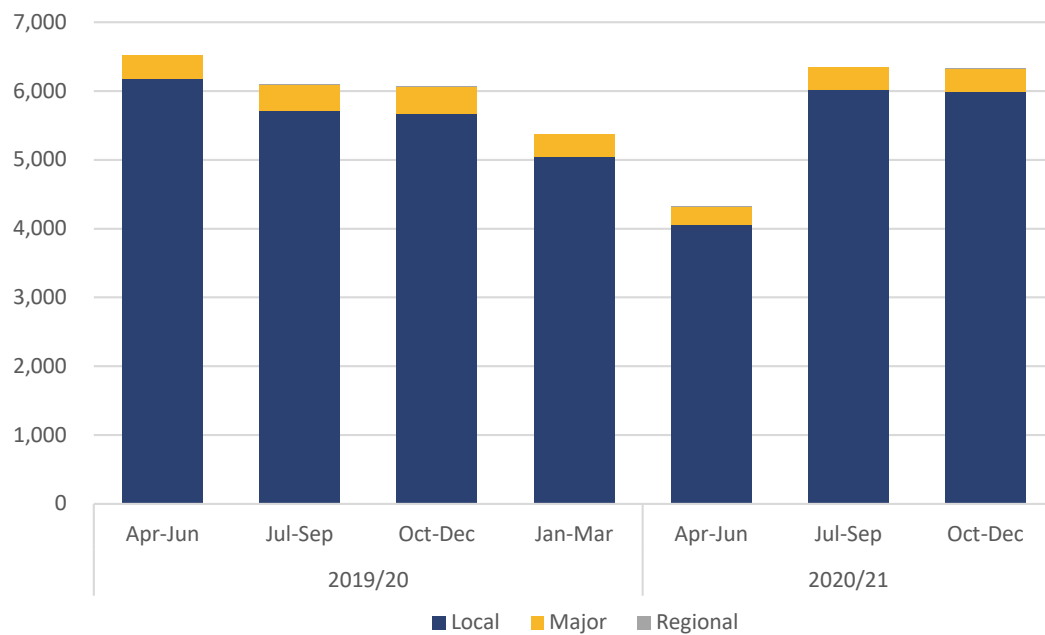
Year	Quarter	Local	Major	Regional	Total
2019/20	Apr-Jun	6,165	350	0	6,515
	Jul-Sep	5,710	382	1	6,093
	Oct-Dec	5,665	403	5	6,073
	Jan-Mar	5,042	329	0	5,371
2020/21	Apr-Jun	4,051	273	1	4,325
	Jul-Sep	6,011	335	0	6,346
	Oct-Dec	5,996	328	7	6,331

Note: figures reported represent 'Standard' and 'EIA Standard' consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in [User Guidance](#) section.

<sup>1</sup> See [User Guidance](#) for a list of key statutory consultees.

<sup>2</sup> A statutory consultation for the purpose of this report is considered as a 'Standard' or 'EIA Standard' consultation marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in the [User Guidance](#) section.

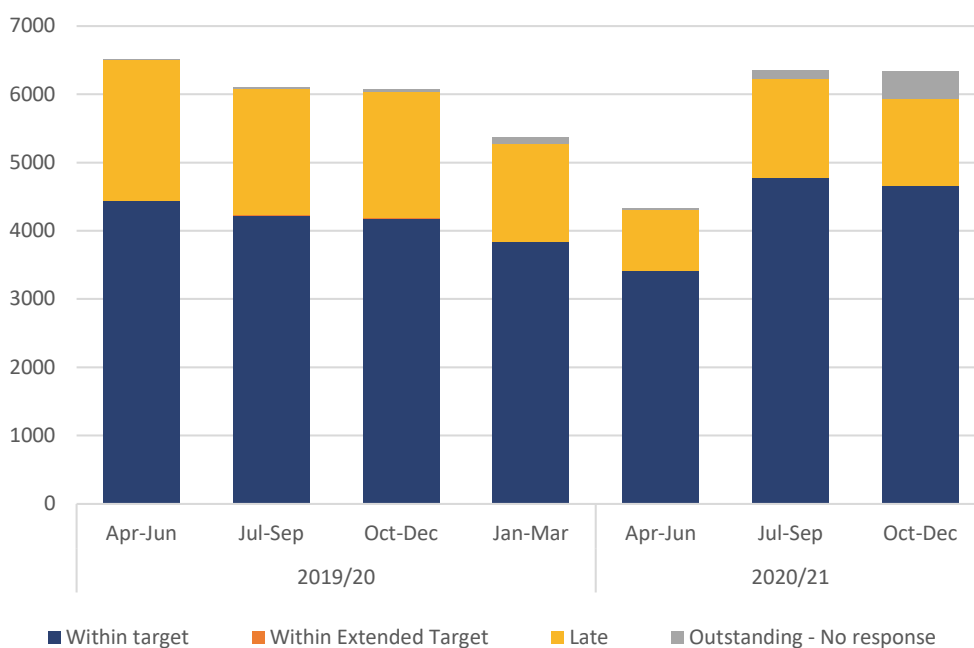
Chart 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type*



### Statutory consultations response times

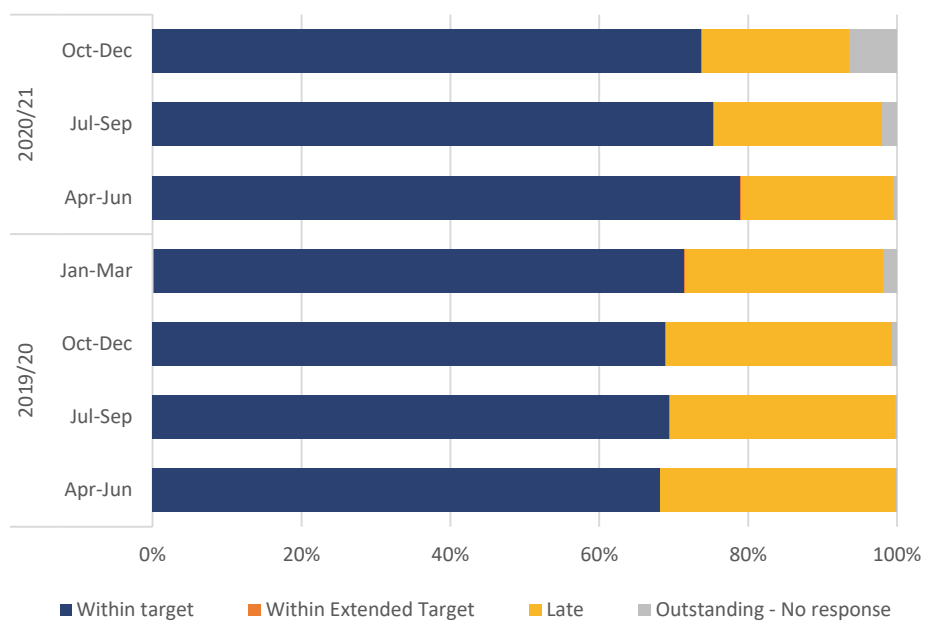
During 2019/20 the proportion of statutory consultations responded to on time<sup>3</sup> each quarter remained fairly consistent (ranging from 68 – 71%). During Q1 2020/21 this increased to 79% and although the proportions reported for the most recent two quarters have declined from this high to 75% in Q2 2020/21 and 74% in Q3 2020/21, these levels are still higher than any quarter in the previous year. As would be expected, the proportion of outstanding statutory consultations is highest in the most recent quarter (Charts 2 and 3).

Chart 2: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by response status*



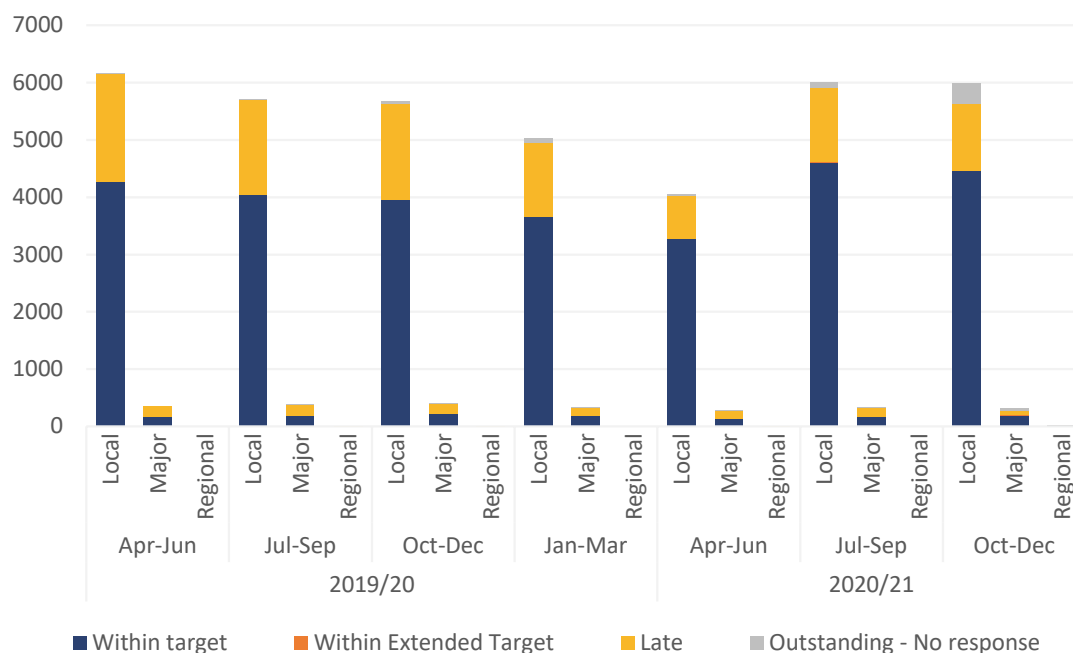
<sup>3</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Chart 3: *Responses to statutory consultations received by response status (proportions)*



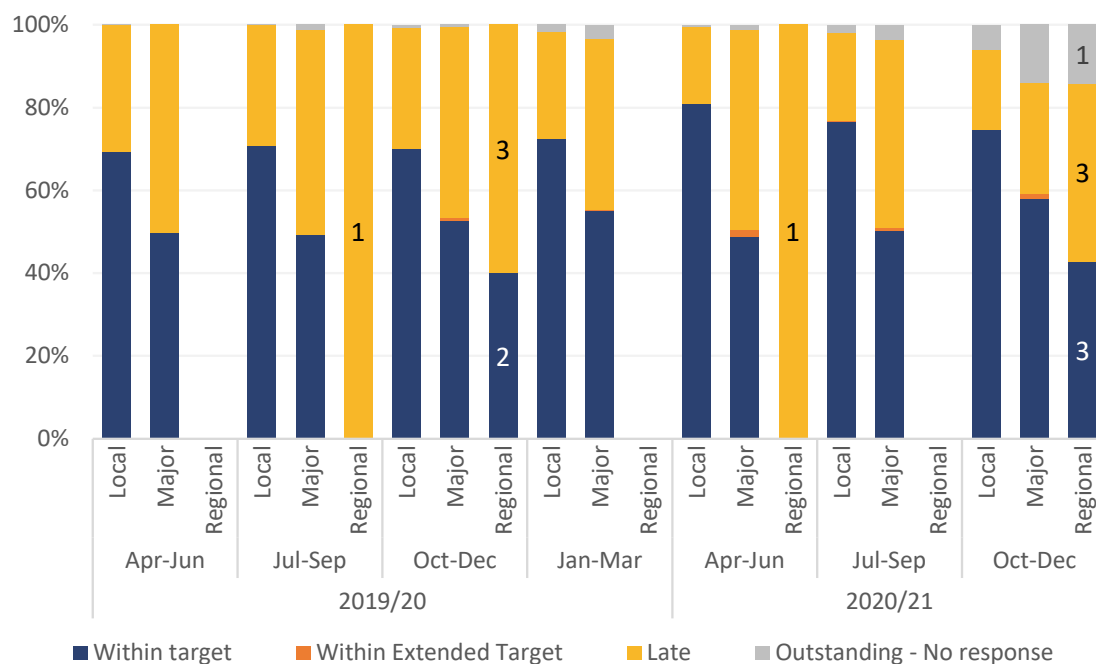
During 2019/20 as a whole, 71% of all statutory consultations for local planning applications were responded to on time<sup>4</sup>. This figure was just over one-half (52%) for major applications over the same period. During the first nine months of 2020/21, 77% of statutory consultations for local applications were handled on time, with majors reported at 54% (Charts 4 and 5). In Q3 2020/21 nearly three-fifths of statutory consultations for majors were responded to on time (59%); the highest proportion reported for any quarter in the time series presented.

Chart 4: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by planning application type and response status*



<sup>4</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Chart 5: *Responses to statutory consultations received by planning application type and response status (proportions)*



Note: due to the small numbers of responses to statutory consultations on regionally significant ('regional') applications, associated proportions reported in the above chart should be treated with caution; the numbers of such responses have been included as data labels, where relevant.

## 2020/21 in more detail – statutory consultee analysis

Statutory consultations received by statutory consultees for the first three quarters of 2020/21 are presented in Table 2 below<sup>5</sup>. During the first quarter of 2020/21 there were 4,325 statutory consultations received, increasing to 6,346 in the second quarter with numbers returning to a similar level to those in the first three quarters of 2019/20. In the most recent quarter (October to December 2020), 6,331 statutory consultations were raised; similar to the previous quarter.

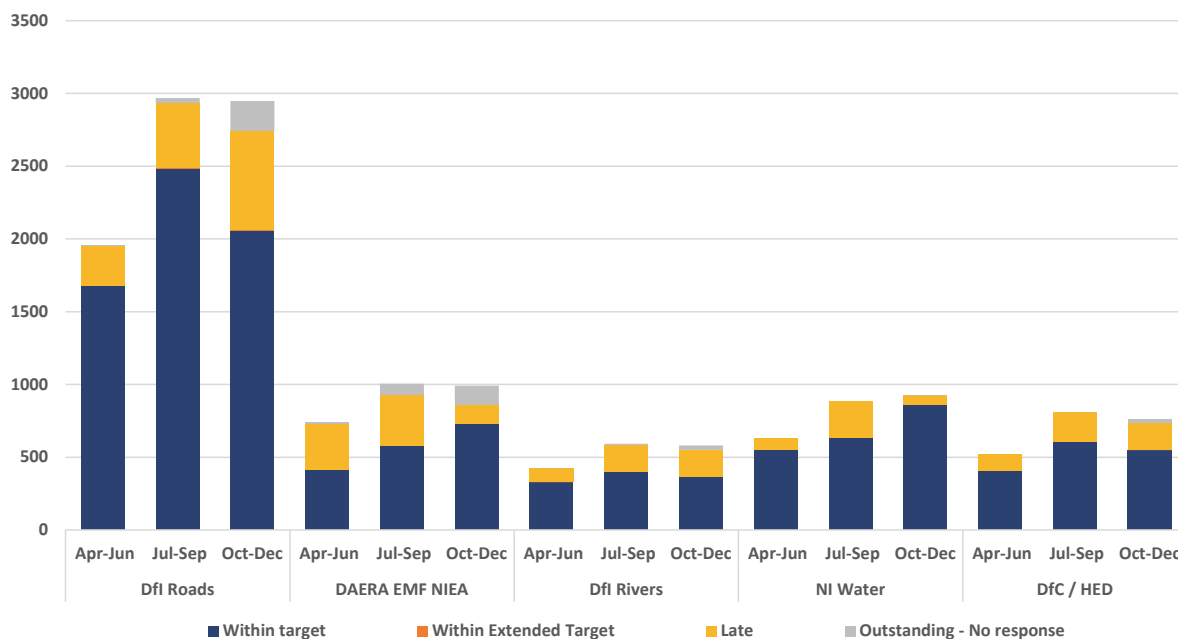
Table 2: *Number of statutory consultations received by planning application type, 2020/21 Q1-Q3*

Quarter	Local	Major	Regional	Total
Apr-Jun	4,051	273	1	4,325
Jul-Sep	6,011	335	0	6,346
Oct-Dec	5,996	328	7	6,331
<b>Year to date total</b>	<b>16,058</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17,002</b>

<sup>5</sup> Note: the number of statutory consultations raised by planning authorities in a given period will equal the number of statutory consultations received by statutory consultees in the same period. In effect, these terms are interchangeable.

Of the 6,331 statutory consultations received in Q3 2020/21, DfI Roads received 47%, DAERA EMF NIEA 16%, NI Water 15%, DfC / HED 12% and DfI Rivers 9%; together these five consultees accounted for 98% of the statutory consultations raised during the quarter (Chart 6).<sup>6</sup> This is similar to the position recorded in previous quarters.

Chart 6: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, 2020/21 Q1 - Q3 (5 most common consultees)*



During Q3 2020/21 across all statutory consultees the proportion of responses received on time<sup>7</sup> ranged from 63 - 100%. In all, 74% of statutory consultation were responded on time during this quarter; below the 79% reported for Q1 but similar to the previous quarter (75%). This reduction from the Q1 position is likely to have been driven by the increased levels of consultations received during the second and third quarters (Table 3). It is noteworthy however that the overall quarterly response rates this year have been higher than any quarter in the previous year.

<sup>6</sup> See [User Guidance](#) for a full list of key statutory consultees.

<sup>7</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.



*Table 3: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee, 2020-21 Q1-Q3*

Statutory Consultee	Quarter 2020/21	On time <sup>8</sup>	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	Apr-Jun	1,680	1,954	86%
	Jul-Sep	2,487	2,968	84%
	Oct-Dec	2,062	2,948	70%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>6,229</b>	<b>7,870</b>	<b>79%</b>
DAERA EMF NIEA	Apr-Jun	414	740	56%
	Jul-Sep	581	1,005	58%
	Oct-Dec	728	992	73%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>1,723</b>	<b>2,737</b>	<b>63%</b>
DfI Rivers	Apr-Jun	327	425	77%
	Jul-Sep	403	593	68%
	Oct-Dec	367	581	63%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>1,599</b>	<b>69%</b>
NI Water	Apr-Jun	550	630	87%
	Jul-Sep	630	883	71%
	Oct-Dec	859	927	93%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>2,039</b>	<b>2,440</b>	<b>84%</b>
DfC / HED	Apr-Jun	407	521	78%
	Jul-Sep	606	807	75%
	Oct-Dec	550	763	72%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>1,563</b>	<b>2,091</b>	<b>75%</b>
HSENI	Apr-Jun	6	9	67%
	Jul-Sep	13	22	59%
	Oct-Dec	31	46	67%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>65%</b>
DfE / GSNI	Apr-Jun	13	14	93%
	Jul-Sep	21	22	95%
	Oct-Dec	15	18	83%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>91%</b>
Belfast International Airport	Apr-Jun	4	12	33%
	Jul-Sep	19	22	86%
	Oct-Dec	25	25	100%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>81%</b>
Belfast City Airport	Apr-Jun	14	14	100%
	Jul-Sep	18	18	100%
	Oct-Dec	20	20	100%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100%</b>
City of Derry Airport	Apr-Jun	0	1	0%
	Jul-Sep	2	2	100%
	Oct-Dec	6	6	100%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>89%</b>
NIHE	Apr-Jun	4	5	80%
	Jul-Sep	2	4	50%
	Oct-Dec	5	5	100%
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>Apr-Jun</b>	<b>3,419</b>	<b>4,325</b>	<b>79%</b>
	<b>Jul-Sep</b>	<b>4,782</b>	<b>6,346</b>	<b>75%</b>
	<b>Oct-Dec</b>	<b>4,668</b>	<b>6,331</b>	<b>74%</b>
	<b>Year to date</b>	<b>12,869</b>	<b>17,002</b>	<b>76%</b>

<sup>8</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

## **User guidance**

### Notes on data source

An extract of all consultations/advice queries raised from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 were transferred on 1 February 2021 from the Northern Ireland Planning Portal. The data were then validated. The relevant data is lifted at least one month after the end of the reference period to allow for the 21 day target response date, which applies to most statutory consultations, to have elapsed.

### List of key statutory consultees

- Belfast City Airport
- Belfast International Airport
- City of Derry Airport
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Environment, Marine and Fisheries (EMF) and Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Department for Communities (DfC) / Historic Environment Division (HED)
- Department for the Economy (DfE) / Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI)
- DfI Rivers
- DfI Roads
- Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
- Northern Ireland Water

### Future developments

As work progresses in this area it is intended to widen the list of key statutory consultees to include local planning authorities. Work is ongoing to quality review and ensure that all statutory planning consultations issued are fully captured. Future quarterly reports will include an update of any quality improvements introduced. As a result figures may be revised, however, the scale of any such change is envisaged to be small.