

NUMBER OF LAWS INTRODUCED OVER THE LAST YEAR SOARS 41%

Issued by Mattison Public Relations on behalf of Sweet & Maxwell
May 26 2011

RECORD NUMBER OF LAWS INTRODUCED

51% INTRODUCED IN THE RUN UP TO THE GENERAL ELECTION IN MAY 2010

ALMOST 14 NEW LAWS INTRODUCED PER WORKING DAY IN 2010

The number of new laws introduced in the UK in the last year (to December 31 2010) has leapt by 41% to 3,506 up from 2,492 in the previous year reveals research by Sweet & Maxwell, the leading legal information provider.*

Sweet & Maxwell, a Thomson Reuters company, says that this works out as almost 14 new laws (13.8) being passed every working day in 2010 and is the highest number of laws introduced in any year. For example during Margaret Thatcher's period as Prime Minister an average of just 1,724 laws per year were passed.

A last minute push from the Labour Government to pass through planned legislative changes in the run up to the general election on May 6th could explain the sudden increase.

Data from Westlaw UK, Sweet & Maxwell's market leading online legal information service, shows that 51% of the new laws (1788) were introduced in the first four months of 2010 (to April 30th).

Major legal changes introduced in 2010 included:

- Digital Economy Act 2010 – which obliges ISPs to disconnect persistent illegal file sharers
- Equality Act 2010 – which made employers liable if an employee suffers harassment from a customer or client and limits employers from asking candidates pre-employment health questions
- New power for the Information Commission, including the ability to fine businesses and sole traders up to £500,000 for serious breaches of the Data Protection Act
- The power for HMRC to publish the names and addresses of tax evaders in a "name and shame" policy
- Making it compulsory for VAT registered businesses with a turnover of £100,000 or more have to file tax returns and make payments to HMRC online rather than by post

As part of their pre-election pledge, the Conservatives had announced that they would introduce less new laws and actively cut the legislative burden for businesses.

Commentators have questioned over how easy it will be for the Coalition to implement their comprehensive reform agenda without having to increase substantial amounts of new legislation.

Business lobby groups in particular will be keeping a close eye on how closely the Government sticks to its promise.

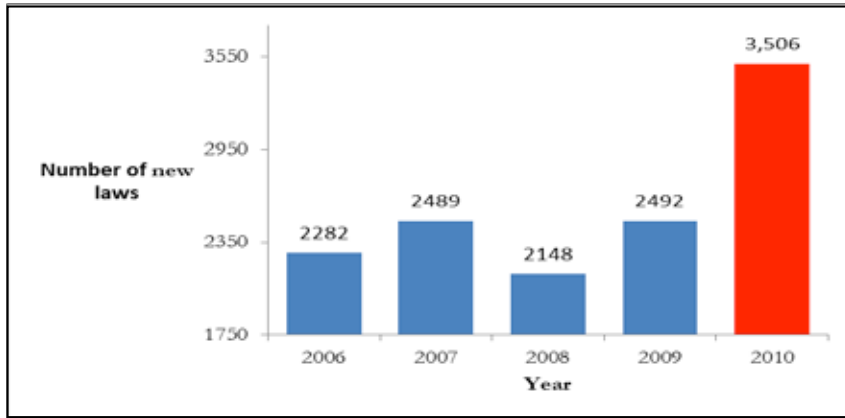
According to Sweet & Maxwell, one of the ways that a new law can be introduced without being subject to full Parliamentary debate is to pass legislation as a "statutory instrument". Analysis from Westlaw UK shows that in 2010, 98% of new laws were introduced as statutory instruments.

YEAR	NUMBER OF NEW LAWS INTRODUCED
2010	3506
2009	2492
2008	2148
2007	2489
2006	2282
2005	2392
2004	2277
2003	2319
2002	2418
2001	2725
2000	2210

*Statutes and statutory instruments



Number of new laws introduced 2006 – 2010



PRESS ENQUIRIES:

Nick Mattison or **Nick Croysdill**

Mattison Public Relations

Tel: **020 7645 3636**