



## Registers of Scotland Overseas Company Report Information Sheet

### Background

- Registers of Scotland (RoS) is the non-ministerial government department responsible for 18 public registers in Scotland, including the Land Register and the Sasines Register (a deeds-based register which is being replaced by the Land Register). There are 2.5 million land parcels in Scotland, over 1.6 million of which are in the Land Register. The majority of the remaining parcels are recorded in the Sasines Register.
- Registers of Scotland records the legal owner of land and property in Scotland, both residential and commercial, whether held by an individual or a company, and regardless of whether that company has been registered in the UK or not.
- Since December 2014, where the legal owner is an overseas company, the register records the country or territory where the company was incorporated. This information may also have been recorded prior to that date if it was included in the application for registration, but this was on a voluntary basis.
- Information about individual registered titles can already be accessed by the public for a small fee.

### What is in the Overseas Company Report?

- The report provides details of any identifiable Land Register<sup>1</sup> title where the registered legal owner (or tenant under a commercial lease) is a company<sup>2</sup> for which a non-UK address has been provided<sup>3</sup>.
- The report will not include titles where there is a mixture of ownership, for example where the title is jointly owned by a company and an individual.
- The report currently contains approximately 2,000 titles (0.1% of the Land Register).
- The report includes:
  - Title number
  - Company name and address
  - Country or territory of incorporation (from December 2014, or prior to that date where available)
  - Postal Address / description of the property
  - Property type – Residential, Commercial, Agriculture, Forestry, Land, Other (property type will only be available for applications received after 30 November 1999)
  - Date the owner was registered in the Land Register
  - Date of entry
  - Interest – ownership or tenancy

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<sup>1</sup> The report does not include titles in the Sasines Register.

<sup>2</sup> Other legal entities such as partnerships and trusts are not included.

<sup>3</sup> Prior to December 2014, there may be other registered owners or tenants that are incorporated overseas but the country of incorporation has not been provided at the time of registration.

- Price paid or purchase information (the “consideration”)
- Further information about the data sources, definitions and quality assurance of this report is contained in the attached annexes.

### How will the report will be made available?

- The initial report, in Excel spreadsheet format, includes all identifiable overseas companies that were registered as proprietors or tenants in the Land Register as of 31 December 2017<sup>4</sup>. The report can be accessed via our Data Team at [data@ros.gov.uk](mailto:data@ros.gov.uk). The use of the report will be subject to Terms and Conditions.
- Further Overseas Company Update Reports will be available on a six-monthly basis. These update reports will contain all identifiable overseas companies that were registered as proprietors or tenants in the Land Register as of 31 December and 30 June each year. These update reports can be accessed via our Data Team at [data@ros.gov.uk](mailto:data@ros.gov.uk) and are available under contract on either a single, annual or bi-annual basis.

### What does the Overseas Company Report cost?

- Registers of Scotland is making the reports available on a cost recovery basis.
- Customers will be able to choose between the following options:
  - Single update – a one-off purchase of the Overseas Company Report as at an agreed date of purchase.
  - Bi-annual update – a regular ongoing six-monthly update of the Overseas Company Report available in January (containing registered proprietors on 31 December) **and** July (containing registered proprietors on 30 June).
  - Annual update – a regular ongoing annual update of the Overseas Company Report available in January (containing registered proprietors on 31 December) **or** July (containing registered proprietors on 30 June).
- The cost for each of these options is as follows:

Option	Cost
Single update	£1,300 + VAT per report
Bi-annual update	£2,500 + VAT for 2 reports per year
Annual update	£1,300 + VAT per report

- Pricing will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure cost recovery pricing is maintained.

### Other Bulk Data Services

Registers of Scotland also has a range of other bulk data services and ad hoc reports available. Further information about these services is available at <https://www.ros.gov.uk/property-data>

<sup>4</sup> Applications for which the registration process had not been completed at that date are not included.



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## Annexes

### Annex 1 - Data sources & definitions

#### Data Collection and Extraction

1. Registers of Scotland (RoS) is the non-ministerial government department responsible for compiling and maintaining 18 public registers. These relate to land, property, and other legal documents. RoS' main registers are the General Register of Sasines and the Land Register of Scotland, which both record ownership and other interests related to land and property in Scotland. The Sasines Register, which comprises a chronological list of deeds, is gradually being replaced by the land register, which was introduced in 1981 and currently holds over 64.4% of titles in Scotland<sup>5</sup>. The land register is based on the Ordnance Survey map, and contains plans of registered properties.
2. RoS collects administrative data in the process of fulfilling the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland's (the Keeper) statutory duties to manage, control and maintain the various public registers under RoS' remit. A key purpose of this data collection is to populate the Land Register, documenting and protecting the legal rights of the owner/tenant/third parties. The data is submitted to RoS via standard land register application forms, deeds and accompanying plans (if required). It is used to maintain an open and public property register clearly showing the details for each title registered within and its corresponding spatial extent on the cadastral map. The information registered in the Land Register is, in most cases, covered by the Keeper's warranty, which means that the Keeper may be liable to pay compensation for any inaccuracies in the register that are subsequently rectified.
3. The data for the Overseas Company Report dataset and the RoS [Land and Property Titles in Scotland by Country of Origin Report](#) is extracted from registered titles in the Land Register. It does not include titles that were pending registration on the date of extraction<sup>6</sup> or titles from the Sasines Register (Scottish ministers asked RoS to complete the Land Register by 2024). These Land Register titles include owners and tenants under long-term commercial leases.
4. The data then underwent a quality assurance process which is covered in more detail in [Annex 2](#).

#### Data Definitions

5. The following definitions clarify the content of the data:

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<sup>5</sup> Land Register coverage as of December 2017 – over 64.4% of titles and over 30.9% of land mass.

<sup>6</sup> In this case 31 December 2017.



- Overseas: any country not within the UK, as well as UK overseas territories and the Crown dependencies of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands;
- Company: a limited company / incorporated legal body;
- Other legal entities: includes trusts and trustees, limited partnerships, miscellaneous bodies, corporations and mixed ownership/tenancy between companies, individuals and/or partnerships/trusts;
- Trustees, limited partnerships, etc.: includes trusts and trustees, limited partnerships, miscellaneous bodies and corporations;
- Individuals: a natural person / individual human being.

## Annex 2 - Quality assurance

1. The data used to produce this report is extracted from the Land Register, which is created from the information provided within applications for registration. The risk of inaccurate data being submitted, and of inaccuracies being created by errors in the land registration process, is inherent but is mitigated by the following: checks done by solicitors; pre-application checks and reports provided by RoS prior to solicitors submitting applications; RoS registration officers conducting registration checks; the RoS Quality Team undertaking quality checks; and the RoS Land & Property Data Team undertaking quality assurance on the data.
2. Both the Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012– which superseded the Land Registration Act (Scotland) 1979 on 8 December 2014 - and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 impose statutory duties on the Keeper which govern the role RoS holds within the Scottish legal and economic framework. One of the most significant changes in approach to land registration made following the implementation of the Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012 was to put the main responsibility of the accuracy of data submitted to RoS within the remit of the submitting agent (usually the solicitor acting on behalf of the purchaser) rather than the Keeper. This provides increased reliability on the quality of data we can extract from the documents submitted for registration in the Land Register since these agents have a greater responsibility to ensure the integrity of the register.
3. A full current ownership extraction of data was taken from the Land Register based on the “country” field in the purchasers’/tenants’ address. A substantial quality assurance exercise allowed all titles registered in the Land Register as of 31st December 2017 to be allocated to one of five location categories<sup>7</sup> (Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland, overseas) based on the address held for the grantee (owner or tenant at the time of purchase). This quality

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<sup>7</sup> Due to the existence of town names in more than one UK country, e.g. the name Bangor appears in both Wales and Northern Ireland, there may be a small number of wrongly classified towns where additional information has not been provided in the application.



assurance exercise allowed for the identification of over 15,000 unique titles<sup>8</sup> in which the grantee had an overseas address at the time of purchase.

The Scotland category (which comprises over 1.6 million titles, around 94% of the Land Register) is in essence what was left over from this quality assurance exercise. The titles within this category were not quality assured to the same extent as for the other categories due to the volumes of titles involved. Due to technical and legal issues, some titles within the Scotland category may have a grantee whose address at the time of registration was outwith the UK, but these have not been identified as such. For example, titles registered in favour of companies before December 2014 when the country of incorporation was only provided on a voluntary basis.

4. Rules were also applied to standardise the naming conventions within the overseas data. This was required primarily because of the different versions of country names provided by submitting agents within their applications for registration and because of spelling errors. In order to rectify this, country names were standardised to UN naming conventions, and rules were created around other common variations. For example, references to Dubai or Abu Dhabi in the country field were changed to United Arab Emirates, and references to the “Channel Islands” were changed to the individual island name.
5. Further quality assurance has also been conducted on the overseas data to classify each type of owner into the following six categories:
  - Limited companies,
  - Trustees / other unincorporated bodies,
  - Individuals,
  - Individuals & trustees,
  - Individuals and limited companies, and
  - Unknowns (i.e. where it is not clear whether an organisation is a limited company from the information provided).
6. A set of rules has been developed to ensure that future quality assurance will be less onerous. In addition, parallel developments within RoS registration systems, such as country-name drop-down lists, will support data quality going forward.
7. There can be more than one purchaser/tenant registered to a title, and so it is possible that, for the overseas location category, there could be more than one unique country identified per title. As a result, the sum of individual countries listed may exceed the number of titles.
8. Further information on the quality assurance processes in place for RoS data is available in the [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data document](#), as

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<sup>8</sup> Each unique title is allocated to one location category only. Where title is shared by more than one owner/tenant, those with an overseas element are allocated to the overseas category; and where there is no overseas element, the title is allocated to Scotland, England, Wales or Northern Ireland in that order according to which countries are represented in the owners'/tenants' addresses, e.g. if Scotland is not represented, but England and Wales are then it will be allocated to England, etc.



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published for the UK House Price Index. The Scotland data for the UK HPI is also extracted from the Land Register.

9. Statisticians in the Scottish Government have provided advice in relation to the content of this report and in relation to the processes to be followed in producing statistics from house price registration data.