

BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

This document reports a breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, or the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Orders, to which the Code applies as if it included these orders.

1. Background information

Name of Statistical Output (including weblink to the relevant output or 'landing page')

Forecasts of Farm Business Income by Farm Type in England – 2013/14

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farm-business-income>

Name of Producer Organisation

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Name and contact details of the statistical Head of Profession (Lead Official in an Arm's Length Body) submitting this report, and date of report

Peter Helm, Head of Profession (HoP) for Statistics, Defra, 30 January 2014

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

1. Protocol 2 – Release practices, practices 7 & 8
2. Paragraphs 2 and 6 (1) of the Schedule to the Pre- release Access to Official Statistics Order 2008.

Date of occurrence

30 January 2014

Nature of breach (including links with previous breaches, if any)

24-hour Pre-release Access (PRA) to the statistical release had been granted to a list of ministers and officials at the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. One of the deputy directors on that list forwarded it to his policy team (13 people) at 08:00 on the day of the release, prior to publication at 09:30.

Reasons for breach

Human error. The email was marked restricted but the individual was attending a funeral with no access to email apart from a blackberry. If the attachments weren't opened the statement regarding pre-release access may have been overlooked.

3. Reactions and impact (both within the producer body and outside)

The lead statistician was not aware of the breach until after the statistical notice had been published.

The Head of Profession was advised at the earliest opportunity, and subsequently advised the National Statistician's Office.

A public statement was issued on the Defra website on the same landing page as the statistical notice and on the Publication Hub.

4. Corrective actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of such a breach (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

The breach occurred as a result of human error. The individual responsible will be reminded of the conditions relating to pre-release access. In future, covering emails providing pre-release access will duplicate the statement reminding recipients about the restrictions and their obligations under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics

5. Links to published statements about this breach

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farm-business-income>