
Director General, Monitoring and Assessment

Norman Caven
Chief Statistician
Department of Finance and Personnel
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
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3 June 2013

Dear Norman

ASSESSMENT OF STATISTICS ON TRADE AND BUSINESS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Thank you for the correspondence outlining the actions that have been taken to address the requirements for the remaining five of the six outputs in Assessment Report number 227 Statistics on Trade and Business in Northern Ireland.

On behalf of the Board of the Statistics Authority, the Assessment Committee has reviewed this on the advice of the Assessment team and I am pleased to confirm the designation of the outputs as National Statistics. This designation is confirmed on the basis that the commentary in the Northern Ireland Ports Traffic statistical report will be improved to a level of quality at least matching that of the draft commentary that the statistics team has provided to the Assessment team to date.

We also understand that the intended December 2012 publication of the Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry was postponed until 12 April 2013, but that no advance notification of this was given as required by Protocol 2 practice 5 of the *Code of Practice*. The Authority would welcome your commitment to review the particular circumstances and provide us with an assurance that, in future, any changes to pre-announced release dates will be publicised in line with the Code.

It is a requirement of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 that the Code of Practice must continue to be complied with in relation to the statistics. We would invite you to incorporate the attached text in publications containing the statistics. This text may only be used where National Statistics designation has been awarded following an Assessment Report. It is intended to convey a strong and independent endorsement for the statistical publication.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of this with us at any time. I am copying this letter to Jil Matheson, the National Statistician, and to Deborah Lyness, Ruth Fulton and Gerard Colgan.

Yours sincerely



Richard Alldritt
Director General, Monitoring and Assessment

Text that may only be used in publications that carry the National Statistics logo following assessment and designation:

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.