BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

A breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics occurs where one or more provisions of the Code were not followed in situations where an exemption or exception had not been approved by the UK Statistics Authority's Head of Assessment, as required in paragraph (xii) of the Code's preamble. Rules on pre-release access to statistics are covered in the relevant Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics Orders; the Code applies as if it includes these orders.

1   Background Information

Name of Statistical Output (including web link if relevant)

Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics, Q1 2009

Name of Producer Organisation

Ministry of Justice

Name and contact details of person submitting this report, and date of report

Iain Bell,   Chief Statistician,   Ministry of Justice   18 May 2009

2   Circumstances of Breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2, Practice 8 – accidental and wrongful release

Date of occurrence

14th May 2009

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

Three additional officials not named as pre-release access recipients were given access to material contained within the document by e-mail at 16:24 while officials prepared the response to the statistics.

Reasons for breach

3   Reactions and Impact

None - there is no evidence to suggest the information was released in public as a result of the breach

4   Corrective Actions Taken (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

There is no evidence of the statistics having been used outside the Department and all three members of staff understand that they were sent these in error and maintained confidentiality of the material sent to them in error. All relevant officials have been reminded of their responsibilities under Pre-Release Access Arrangements. Further training and awareness work will be undertaken across MoJ

5   Any other relevant supporting material (including link to published statements about this breach)