

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')

NHS Wales diagnostic and therapy services waiting times: at end May 2014
www.wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/nhs-diagnostic-therapy-service-waiting-times
and
NHS Wales referral to treatment times – May 2014
www.wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/referral-to-treatment-times

Name of Producer Organisation

Welsh Government (WG)

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

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2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2, Release practice 4.

Issue statistical releases at the standard time of 09:30 on a weekday, to maintain consistency and to permit time for users to understand and respond to the information during normal work hours.

Date of occurrence

10 July 2014

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

On 10 July 2014, the “NHS Wales diagnostic and therapy services waiting times: at end May 2014” and “NHS Wales referral to treatment times – May 2014” first releases were published 20 minutes late at 09:50.
This was due to problems with the publishing software.

Reasons for breach

Our web publishing software became unresponsive due to system resources being taken up by additional activity being run on the database which provides content to the www.wales.gov.uk website.

Our Central Web Team stopped this additional activity when they became aware that there was not enough system resource available for our statistics web publisher to make changes to the content of our web pages. However, by that stage the publication of our two statistical releases had been delayed by 20 minutes.

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

The responsible statisticians were notified immediately of the delay to publication, in order to prevent any data being supplied to users ahead of the releases' publication.

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

In order to avoid the reoccurrence of similar issues, the Welsh Government Central Web Team have agreed not to run new query scripts of any kind before 11:00 each day. This will ensure enough system resource (memory) is available for the publishing software to be able process the publication of official statistics outputs at 09:30.

5. Links to published statements about this breach

A note explaining that the releases were late being published was put on the relevant pages of the Welsh Government website (see links in Section 1).

Once published, a link to the breach report will also be put on the website.