

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.

All breach reports are published on the UK Statistics Authority's website and need to explain (clearly and concisely) what happened to cause the breach and what is being/has been done by the statistical Head of Profession (HoP) to ensure the risk of recurrence is minimised.

1. Background information

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

Quarterly NHS Commissioning Population Statistics 1 July 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/defence-personnel-nhs-commissioning-quarterly-statistics-financial-year-201415>

Name of Producer Organisation

Ministry of Defence

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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Breach report completed on 01 September 2014.

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2: Release Practices; Practice 8:

"Ensure that no indication of the substance of a statistical report is made public, or given to the media or any other party not recorded as eligible for access before publication. Report to the National Statistician immediately any accidental or

wrongful release, and investigate the circumstances.”

Date of occurrence

27 August 2014

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

On 27 August a named individual in NHS England who is authorised to receive the publication on pre-release forwarded the publication to three individuals in the NHS who did not have authorised pre-release access.

The breach was discovered on 01 September by Head Defence Statistics (Health) who had received a response from one of the unauthorised email recipients.

Reasons for breach

The report was emailed to the individuals on the pre-release list. The report was forwarded to three individuals in the NHS who are not authorised to access the data on pre-release. The breach was a mistake on the part of the individual at NHS England as the release was forwarded in error to three individuals who do not have authorised pre-release access

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

- The recipient at NHS England has apologised for the breach
- Head Defence Statistics (Health) has spoken with the three individuals who received the release and they have confirmed that they do not require access prior to the day of release
- The release was not distributed beyond the three individuals identified, thus there was no coverage of information related to the breach in either the media or on social media.

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

- As soon as the breach was discovered the Head of Profession was informed (01 September 2014).
- The point of contact at NHS has confirmed that this was a lone incident and that their PA who forwarded the email and attachment now fully understands that this was not appropriate. The point of contact has apologised for the mistake and provided assurance that this will not be repeated.
- Head of Defence Statistics Health had a discussion with members of NHS England at the quarterly Joint Commissioning Group, reminding all stakeholders about the code of practice and their responsibility to adhere to the process.
- The Head of Defence Statistics (Health) also emailed all pre-release recipients on the Joint Commissioning Group to clarify their responsibilities.

- Responsible statisticians will ensure that future briefings to recipients of pre-release access include a reminder that they should explain the requirements of pre-release access to their administrative support team.
- The Head of Profession at NHS England was informed of the breach on 18 September.