

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

**Friday 29 January 2016
Boardroom, London**

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Andrew Dilnot (Chair)
Professor Sir Adrian Smith
Dame Colette Bowe
Dame Moira Gibb
Professor David Hand (from item 9)
Mr Ed Humpherson
Dr David Levy (to item 11)
Mr John Pullinger
Mr Glen Watson

Also in attendance

Mr Jonathan Athrow
Professor Sir Charles Bean (from item 9)
Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford
Ms Heather Savory

Apologies

None

1. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 December 2015 were agreed.

3.2 The Chair reported on the topics discussed at the meeting of the non-executive directors that had taken place prior to the Board meeting. The non-executives had discussed the Independent Review of Economic Statistics, non-executive appointments to the UK Statistics Authority Board, and pre-release access.

3.3 The meeting reviewed progress with actions. Mr Watson reported that a project had been initiated to prepare a compendium of statistics relevant to the debate on the EU referendum. He was also actively considering the suggestion made at the last Board meeting that this should be part of introducing a more regular compendium series.

4. Report from the Authority Chair

4.1 The Chair reported on his recent activities, which included attending a 'thank you' event with stakeholders who had been involved in the development of the new ONS website, which was expected to be launched soon.

4.2 The Chair reiterated that more effective communication and engagement was a priority for 2016.

5. Reports from Committee Chairs*Audit and Risk Assurance Committee*

Dame Colette Bowe reported on the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 13 January. Dame Colette noted that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was operating as an effective forum in which people could bring risks for consideration and where, on behalf of the board, the Committee could try to get to the bottom of them and understand what needed to be done to support executives.

6. Report from the Chief Executive [SA(16)01]

6.1 Mr Pullinger provided an overview of activity and issues for January. Updates included the following.

- i. Negotiations with the trades unions were underway with the aim of resolving the ONS pay issue within the current financial year. The Board discussed the timeline leading up to payments to staff and requested to be kept closely informed of progress.
- ii. A voluntary exit scheme has been launched in Office for National Statistics (ONS). The Board advised that it would be important to monitor the effect of this scheme on diversity; for example some schemes in other organisations had led to more take-up among female staff.
- iii. Following a review, the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Theme Groups were being discontinued and replaced with a more a targeted system led by the Deputy National Statisticians. The Board requested further information on this.
- iv. ONS was considering a new approach to publication of outputs, where data would be released when available, and separate topic based articles would also be published which would aim to integrate a range of knowledge on a subject. The Board discussed

the editorial decision making process that would need to be in place under such a publication model.

7. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(16)02]

- 7.1 Mr Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity since the last meeting. An assessment report covering the Consumer Price Index including housing costs (CPIH) was being prepared for discussion at the February meeting of the Regulation Committee. Following discussion at the last Board meeting about homelessness statistics, Mr Humpherson and the Chair would be meeting with the Secretary of State to discuss the case for improved statistics.
- 7.2 The Board considered the recent breach of pre-release access rules that had occurred at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and would further discuss pre-release access policy later in the meeting.
- 7.3 Mr Humpherson reported that to date over 400 responses had been received to the Code of Practice Stock Take. A group chaired by Dr David Levy had been convened to steer this work. A report would be provided to the Board later in the year.

8. Business plan for Authority regulatory activities [SA(16)03]

- 8.1 Mr Humpherson provided a summary of a draft business plan for the Authority's regulatory activities. The plan would clarify the purpose of the regulatory function as a proactive, strategic regulator aiming to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. The regulation function would respond in an agile way to emerging issues, improve its engagement and raise its public profile.
- 8.2 The following comments were made in the discussion.
 - i. The draft plan fitted well with the Authority's overall strategy, Better Statistics, Better Decisions, and was in line with recent discussions at the Regulation Committee and elsewhere.
 - ii. Promoting and safeguarding the comprehensiveness of official statistics was one of the Board's statutory objectives, and the National Statistician was the Board's principal adviser on this. The regulator played a useful role in identifying where comprehensiveness was lacking and raising concerns. In this context there was a creative interplay between regulator and producer under the overall steerage of the Board.
 - iii. The business plan could be an opportunity to reiterate to stakeholders the independent identity of the regulation function.
 - iv. The regulator had a number of tools and powers available to enforce standards, including the statutory power to remove or award the National Statistics label. Other powers, such as being able to make judgements about what numerical information should be classed as 'official statistics' could help strengthen the function further.
 - v. The UK system of statistical regulation was thought to be unique in that it had a strong statutory foundation.
 - vi. The regulatory function should draw as much as possible from outside expertise. A sufficient budget for consultancy should be considered.
- 8.3 A draft of the business plan would be considered at the next meeting of the Regulation Committee.

9. Independent Review of Economic Statistics

- 9.1 The Chair welcomed Professor Sir Charles Bean to the meeting.

- 9.2 Sir Charles provided the Board with a summary of progress with his review. Areas under consideration during the second phase of the review included ONS capability, data access legislation, whether the National Statistics label could be enhanced or supplemented, quality assurance procedures, mechanisms that encourage future proofing of statistics, how relationships with stakeholders are managed, and how priorities are established.
- 9.3 The Chair reiterated that the Board had welcomed Sir Charles's interim recommendations, which would help ensure economic statistics continued to provide a firm evidence base for future decision making.
- 9.4 The meeting discussed potential ways of enhancing arrangements to ensure that a broad range of user voices were heard and that the diverse needs of users were able to be prioritised more effectively.

10. Improving capability in economic statistics [SA(16)04]

- 10.1 Mr Athow outlined ONS's plans for increasing its economic capability, in particular the actions outlined in two documents published in December which set out the strategic direction for economic statistics and the first steps for how this would be delivered. The documents set out a twin track approach to increasing economic capability, focussed on both raising internal capacity and increasing access to external expertise.
- 10.2 Considering plans to create a 'centre of excellence' for economic statistics based around the Newport area, the Board agreed that a centre did not need to be based exclusively in any one physical location. The Chair reiterated the point made at the last Board meeting, that the planned London presence should not just be about economic statistics but should provide a bridge to Titchfield, Newport and the wider GSS across all areas of statistical work. The London presence should provide a place for interaction and help ensure expertise in Newport and Titchfield are able to connect with users effectively.
- 10.3 It was agreed that timelines would be provided to the Board on the establishment of the London presence.

11. Pre-release Access [SA(16)05]

- 11.1 Mr Watson introduced a paper which detailed the number of instances of people receiving Pre-Release Access (PRA) to statistics produced by ONS. In 2013 ONS had conducted a minimisation exercise which had reduced instances of PRA by 21 per cent. Since then, instances of PRA had increased.
- 11.2 The Board considered the proliferation of PRA in the context of the recent breach of PRA at Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the knowledge that each instance of PRA represented a risk of further unauthorised use, and the consequential risks to ONS, PRA recipients and the integrity of financial markets. The National Statistician would consider a proportionate reduction of PRA. It was confirmed that the final decision on whether to grant PRA rested with the National Statistician, who would be guided by the Board.

12. Stakeholder engagement

- 12.1 The Chair led a discussion on stakeholder engagement. Improvement was needed in this area, with better engagement at all levels. The Board heard that this would involve transforming the way we engage with users, developing a deeper and richer understanding of the breadth of data use in today's world.
- 12.2 It was agreed that a broad definition of stakeholder should be used. Some prioritisation would be necessary to focus engagement efforts. There was a recognition that the user landscape had changed beyond recognition over the past decades from a situation of a

monopoly of producers and a small number of users, to multiple producers and users. This required new ways of working. A laborious approach to mapping each stakeholder would be unworkable. It was suggested that the approach to engagement should include stakeholder events which develop a sense of community beyond the community of statisticians.

13. Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) Mid Term Review [SA(16)06]

- 13.1 Professor Hand introduced a paper which presented the proposed Terms of Reference for the Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) mid-term review.
- 13.2 The Board confirmed that the review should report to the ADRN Board, which would then remit its conclusions to the Authority Board. The Authority Board would take a view and would then report to Parliament, as per the formal governance arrangements of the ADRN.

14. Any other business

- 14.1 Mr Bumpstead reported that that National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee had met on 27 January. Among other business the Committee had considered the legislative environment for data access.
- 14.2 The Chair mentioned that the Authority Board would conduct its annual review of effectiveness in February and as part of this all Board members would be invited to complete a questionnaire.
- 14.3 Ms Savory provided an update on the ONS website. Subject to some final checks, the website was expected to go live shortly. Mr Humpherson reported that the Authority website had recently been upgraded to a new platform and a number of improvements had been made with more improvements planned.
- 14.4 There was no other business. The Authority Board would meet next on Thursday 25 February 2016 at 10:30 in Newport.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

Friday 29 January 2016
Boardroom, London, 10:00 – 15:30

Chair: Sir Andrew Dilnot

Apologies: None

10:00 to 10:30 – Non-executive session

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declarations of interest 	Meeting of 181215
2	Report from the Authority Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic statistics • Recruitment of non-executive directors 	Sir Andrew Dilnot
3	Reports from Committee Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit and Risk Assurance Committee 	Dame Colette Bowe
4	Report from the Chief Executive	SA(16)01 Mr John Pullinger
5	Report from the Director General for Regulation	SA(16)02 Mr Ed Humpherson
6	Business plan for Authority regulatory activities	SA(16)03 Mr Ed Humpherson

12:30 to 13:00 – Lunch with Professor Sir Charles Bean

7	Independent Review of Economic Statistics	Discussion Sir Andrew Dilnot and Professor Sir Charles Bean
8	Improving capability in economic statistics	SA(16)04 Mr Jonathan Athow
9	Pre-release access	SA(16)05 Mr Glen Watson
10	Stakeholder engagement	Discussion Sir Andrew Dilnot
11	Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) Mid Term Review	SA(16)06 Professor David Hand
12	Any other business	

Next meeting: 25 February 2016, 10:30 to 16:00, Newport

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(16)01

Chief Executive's Report, January 2016

Purpose

1. This report provides the Board with an overview of activity and issues for January

Summary

2. We have had a brisk start to the year on several fronts and are now firmly in delivery mode for the radical changes called for in our strategy. Within ONS the outcome of the Spending Review gives us the certainty to plan. We are also now in the final stages of resolving the pay issue and are ready to receive the final report from Charlie Bean's review of economic statistics in the coming weeks.
3. A big emphasis this year will be on technology delivery starting with the new website and moving quickly into electronic data collection and other areas. A key element of risk we need to manage is security - the Executive has been looking hard at this issue taking advice as necessary and acting to ensure we have effective mitigations in place.
4. At the government wide level, we have agreed a new way of delivering important goals for the GSS with a stronger leading role for the Deputy National Statisticians and are finalising a proposition on data science capability for consideration by the Data Leaders Group next month.

Review of recent activities

5. Now we have had time to digest the outcome of the Spending Review, Charlie Bean's interim report and the pay remit we have received from the Treasury we have focused this month on putting together a decision making process and a plan that will enable us to deliver our Better Statistics Better Decisions strategy by 2020. The forthcoming release of the new website will be followed by many more specific improvements that will progressively improve service and build confidence in our delivery capability.
6. At the same time we are working internally on workforce transformation, including undertaking a detailed analysis of the People Survey results to identify and take actions on those areas which will help us drive up engagement across the office and build a world-leading dynamic workforce that is inspired to deliver on our goals and confident about our leadership.
7. A specific area for consideration this month has been security, looking both at technology and human elements. This work has included following up recent audits and discussion at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
8. Other important developments in recent weeks include the following.
 - i. The financial position of ONS for the current year is on track following agreement to our Supplementary Estimate.
 - ii. Negotiations with the trades unions are underway with the aim of resolving the ONS pay issue within the current financial year.
 - iii. A voluntary exit scheme has been launched in ONS.
 - iv. I have launched a GSS-wide initiative on diversity which will support the excellent work being done in ONS. We have once again received praise in the annual Stonewall Index for being an inclusive workplace.

- v. Following a thoughtful review and discussion by Heads of Profession and the National Statistics Executive Group, I have disbanded the theme groups and replaced them with a more targeted system led by the Deputy National Statisticians - the first topic to be treated through the new system is likely to be income and earnings.
- vi. The ONS consultation on outputs has received useful inputs. We will be considering how to proceed given the imperative to deliver savings in order to reinvest in transformation.
- vii. The census transformation programme received an Amber rating in its Gateway review. The recommendations are helpful and provide good reinforcement of the need to ensure that our strategy to get wider value from the programme is realised.
- viii. ONS continuous improvement projects have delivered £750,000 benefits this year building further the value of an approach that ONS has built over many years

Future look

9. In the next few weeks, starting with the launch of the new website, we will be getting firmly into delivery mode for our strategy.

John Pullinger, 22 January 2016

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(16)02

Report from the Director General for Regulation

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on regulation activity since the last meeting.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note the activities and proposed actions.

Discussion

3. Our regulatory activities since the last Board meeting on 18 December include the following.
 - i. Code stock take: we launched our stock take of the Code of Practice on 4 January. The aim is to identify the ways in which the Code is used across Government to drive and support good statistical practice, as opposed to looking just at the wording of the Code itself. By focussing on the lived experience of the Code, we will be able to identify the value the Code provides, where that value can be enhanced, and what we can do to address any misinterpretations and myths that may have sprung up around it. The stock take has already excited interest across the GSS and beyond, and within a week of launch we have already received more than 200 responses.
 - ii. Health statistics: we have now set a date for the round table of senior decision makers in the health sector: 22 February. Invitees include the Chairs of NHS England, Monitor and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) and senior executives from the Department of Health and health think tanks. At the event, we will set out the range of concerns about English health statistics, and map out principles and pathways for systemic improvements.
 - iii. Welfare statistics: we are in discussion with the Work and Pensions Select Committee about a seminar on how to get more value from data on the welfare system held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and other producers. The seminar will be held in April in Oxford. While this is positive, the production and release of welfare statistics remains a cause of public intervention by the Authority: last week [I wrote to the Permanent Secretary](#) about a major breach of the pre release access arrangements to the ONS Labour Market release. (I have also asked the National Statistician for assurances around release practices in the light of this and other concerns about market sensitive statistics).
 - iv. Progress report on Incoming and Earnings: as noted in previous update to the Board we have been disappointed by slow progress by ONS, DWP and HMRC in improving income and earnings statistics. I wrote publicly to John Pullinger on [12 January](#) to convey this concern and emphasise the importance of improvement in this area.
 - v. Homelessness: following my update at the last Board meeting, I asked the Head of Profession at the Communities and Local Government (CLG) to write to me setting out his commitment to continued improvement in the statistics. He has

now done so and his [letter](#) is on our website. We are also meeting the Secretary of State in February to explain the case for improved statistics.

- vi. Business Plan and budget for Regulation: this is covered at item [SA(16)03]. The plan sets out clearly the purpose of the Authority's regulatory function and the priority areas of focus for 2016-17. Under the plan we will continue to advocate and defend the National Statistics brand. We will take the Code of Practice out of the shadows and address the myths that have grown up about it (e.g. it inhibits innovation). In addition, we will improve our communication and stakeholder engagement to enhance our impact, while using our regulatory tools to support a shift from statistics as a 'collect and count' production process to a value-added service
 - vii. Bean Review: my team has been engaging with the Bean Review team about our nature of work, and in particular the nature of statistical quality.
 - viii. Website: we upgraded the Authority's website in early January. The refreshed website is more flexible, more searchable, and provides a much better platform from which to promote the profile and work of the Authority's regulatory function. We are already taking advantage of this opportunity across the range of topics listed above.
4. The main challenges include the below.
- i. Regulatory model and capability: the business plan I am proposing is ambitious. The main challenge I will face in implementing it surrounds adapting the regulatory model to achieve greater profile for the Authority's regulatory work and greater coverage of all official statistics (as opposed to assessing around 20 sets of official statistics a year). Achieving greater impact and coverage will in turn require improvements in leadership and capability.
 - ii. Consumer Price Index (Housing) (CPIH): we are finalising our reassessment of CPIH for the February Regulation Committee. I do not propose discussing the findings in this Board meeting, but I would like to signal that while I am reasonably confident in the judgements we are proposing to the Committee, this assessment poses significant communication challenges given the range of strongly-held stakeholder views.
 - iii. Code stock take: the stock take represents an exciting opportunity to reset expectations about the Code, the regulatory function, and to enhance engagement across the GSS and beyond - in effect to confirm continued relevance and importance. The challenge is to capitalise on this opportunity by having a wide range of conversations while ensuring we produce a concrete output summarising our findings by the end of the summer.
 - iv. Impact: we continue to explore ways of obtaining greater impact for our work, including better use of our website. This remains a work in progress.

Ed Humpherson, DG for Regulation, 21 January 2016

List of Annexes

Annex A Monitoring and Assessment activity since the last meeting

Annex A Key outputs since the last meeting

Assessment

- Confirmation of National Statistics designation of Ofsted's Fostering in England statistics – <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Letter-of-Confirmation-as-National-Statistics-Assessment-Report-285.pdf>
- Confirmation that Freedom of Information statistics maintain their national statistics status upon moving to Cabinet Office - <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Letter-from-Ed-Humpherson-to-Martin-Stopher-161215.pdf>

Casework

- [Coherence and accessibility of official statistics on income and earnings](#) - setting out DG Regulation's concern that progress in implementing the recommendations in the Authority's report has been disappointingly slow.
- [Breach of the pre release access arrangements to the ONS Labour Market release](#) – following the release being shared by DWP with up to 300 people via a social media network ahead of the publication of the report by someone not approved to have pre-release access to the statistics.

Monitoring

- **Income and Earnings:** Our [monitoring update](#) was published on 12th January - recording a verdict that progress against the recommendations in the original [Monitoring Review](#) of February 2015 has been disappointingly slow. We are now committed to publishing a further update in May 2016 and envisage meeting with producers face to face between now and then. ONS have announced some changes that we hope will enable more and rapid progress.
- **Health statistics in England:** Andrew Dilnot will chair a round table event on 22 February involving around 12 senior decision makers in the health sector who will consider the question "Trustworthiness, Quality and Value: how can English health and care statistics be enhanced to better serve the public good?". The objective is to develop a shared awareness, and to start to understand the possible barriers to, and levers for, change with a view to informing a 'Better Statistics, Better Decisions' event in mid 2016.
- **Crime:** We are currently outlining a phase of work to identify how to move our work on crime statistics from improving trustworthiness and quality to improving their public value. We envisage this including a mapping exercise identifying crime statistics available in different parts of the UK, an externally-commissioned review of crime statistics internationally to help us better understand the strengths and limitations of the UK situation and by around September 2016 a framework of crime/criminal justice statistics and understanding of the state of statistics across that framework, which we can then use to determine future interventions.
- **City Regions:** We have been undertaking planning work with regards to holding a 'Better Statistics, Better Decisions' meeting to discuss Statistics and City Regions in early March. This is likely to be co-hosted with the Centre for Cities and held at their

London venue. Users of statistics in a number of city regions have flagged topics of interest including:

- i. wanting to know how best to get data appropriate to their geographies on a consistent basis over time;
- ii. having gaps in data that they wish to fill e.g. data needed to calculate local gross value added (GVA) - where there are felt to be barriers in particular around issues to do with a lack of appropriate data on services; data on wages and on the labour market; and
- iii. interest in getting access to datasets including administrative data at local levels e.g. HM Revenue and Customs PAYE data (anonymised), the Inter-Departmental Business Register.

Producers are also interested to participate and we have begun dialogue with them - including ONS, Business, Innovation and Skills, the Department for Communities and Local Government, HM Revenue and Customs and HM Treasury and consultations to finalise an agenda and date are on-going. We envisage a small event of up to 25 people to enable productive dialogue.

- **Quality Assurance for Administration Data – adaptation to cover Management Information:** Under consideration for our 2016/17 work plan
- In addition, we are in the process of finalising updates for a few prior Monitoring Reviews and envisage publishing several in early February followed by more in March. The first ones will relate to the following publications:
 - i. Statistics Relating to Transfers from the Asset Purchase Facility Fund;
 - ii. Real Terms Estimates for Health Expenditure in England over the Spending Review Period, 2010-11 to 2014-15; and
 - iii. Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies.

SA(16)03 – Business Plan for Authority regulatory activities

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UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(16)03

Business plan for Authority regulatory activities

This document will be published on the UK Statistics Authority website in due course.

The document will be available at:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/strategy-and-business-plan/>

SA(16)04 – Improving capability in economic statistics

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(16)04

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Improving capability in economic statistics

This document has been published on the Office for National Statistics website.

To view the document go to:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/media-centre/statements/economics-at-ons--increasing-openness--improving-capability/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(16)05

Update on Pre-Release Access**5****Purpose**

1. This paper provides Authority Board members with an updated position on the numbers receiving Pre-Release Access (PRA) to statistics produced by ONS.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. The current position on the numbers receiving PRA to statistics produced by ONS; and
 - ii. Consider the assessment made by the Executive that the current level of risk arising from PRA is higher than the risk appetite set by the Board (minimal).

Discussion

3. The UK Statistics Authority's [Monitoring Report 6](#) reviewed PRA arrangements. The report supported significant reductions in PRA.
4. A new central model for assessing the suitability for PRA to ONS statistics was developed. It was aligned with the PRA Order and was approved by the Authority Board in October 2013. The model was implemented in the PRA minimisation exercise and successfully reduced the number of PRA instances to the regular ONS releases by 21 per cent from 1,827 to 1,442 (-385) in April 2014.
5. ONS has continued to use the model to assess all new requests following the PRA minimisation exercise. Over that period, and under this model, the number of PRA instances for those releases included in the PRA minimisation exercise has risen from 1,442 to 1,703 (+261).
6. Table 1 shows the total number of PRA instances to ONS releases. This table includes the totals for ad-hoc articles and other statistical releases not included in the original PRA minimisation exercise.

Table 1 PRA totals

	Total PRA instances before PRA minimisation exercise	Total PRA instances April 2014 (after minimisation)	Total PRA instances as of 1 December 2014	Total PRA instance as of 1 December 2015
Total	1827	1442	1,899	2,161
PRA for releases included in PRA minimisation exercise		1442	1,508	1,703
PRA for releases not included in PRA minimisation exercise*			195	379 (184 this year plus the additional 195 from last year)
Ad-hoc releases and one off PRA approvals published this year			196	79

*These include new releases produced and published after the PRA minimisation exercise and releases omitted from the PRA minimisation exercise which are listed in Annex A.

7. Although the PRA total is now higher than before the PRA minimisation exercise, it includes all instances of PRA. This is information that was not available previously.

Releases in the PRA minimisation exercise

8. For the releases included in the minimisation exercise, the total increase since April 2014 is 261. Six of these additions have been reinstatements following the PRA minimisation exercise. These include:
- two roles from Association Chief Police Officers (ACPO) which were added back onto Crime Statistics (Chief Police Constable Jeff Farrah, who is the national lead for Crime Statistics and a press officer); and
 - two statisticians from the Welsh and Scottish Governments were added back onto Business Demography.
9. The remaining requests have been new requests from departments for releases they did not have previously or new/additional roles that were approved as they are in line with the ONS PRA model.
10. The full list of additions can be found in **Annex B**. The largest requests approved are below.
- A sixth Minister receiving PRA in HM Treasury. This additional Minister was added to 22 releases.
 - The Prime Minister increased his briefing team to include a special advisor and communications officer on all releases. This increased the total by 48.
 - An overall increase in requests for special advisors. Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Department for Communities and Local Government, and Department for Work and Pensions are some of the departments who submitted requests for large numbers of special advisors. In total 64 of the 261 roles added since the PRA minimisation exercise have been special advisors.

- iv. The National Populations Projections release increased its total number of recipients by 49. Office for Budget Responsibility, Scottish Government, Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs were added to the PRA lists this year as their requests were in line with the model.
- v. In 2014, Scottish Government submitted the highest number of requests to receive PRA, 15 in total. Scottish Government argued that the First Minister and all Cabinet Ministers should have PRA to all regional economic statistics produced by ONS. In 2015, the Scottish Government submitted ten requests, the second highest number of PRA requests from a department (Department for Business Innovation and Skills submitted the highest number, 13). This year the Scottish Government requested additional roles for Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Work and Worklessness, Public Sector Employment and 23 roles on to the National Population Projections release. They also challenged a decision from the PRA minimisation exercise and requested ten roles to be added to the Migration Statistics Quarterly Report. This was not approved as it failed to meet the PRA model criteria (**Annex D**).
- vi. The Welsh Government has started to submit requests stating PRA is required to help prepare for the Welsh National Assembly elections in 2016. It is expected with all devolved administrations holding elections in 2016 we may see a rise in the number of PRA requests from them.

Other PRA instances

- 11. Since the PRA minimisation exercise, ONS has produced more outputs which have increased the demand for PRA. Releases such as Zero Hours contracts, UK Environment Accounts and Same Sex Marriages have increased the PRA totals. The full list of new releases, and those omitted from the minimisation exercise, can be found in **Annex A**.
- 12. In 2014, ONS published more ad-hoc and short releases than in 2015. The implementation of Blue and Pink Book in 2014 and short stories containing 2011 Census data saw PRA requests from Bank of England, HM Treasury and Home Office. As these articles are no longer published, the number of PRA approvals for ad-hoc articles has reduced from 196 to 79 between those two years.

Factors contributing to the current level of increase in PRA

- 13. Before the General Election, departments would often request additional roles stating they were required to support the coalition government. Following the return to one party government, it was expected we would see some reduction in numbers, at least for a period of time. Initially, with the Chancellor taking over the responsibilities of the Deputy Prime Minister we did see a reduction. However, since then, Departments have maintained that the numbers of roles are still required. Feedback from Statistical Heads of Profession has been that it reflects the way the portfolios are cut between ministers, the number of ministers and the number of support staff. Ministers are particularly engaged on the statistics so there is also more of an appetite.
- 14. We have seen a rise in the number of special advisors requested to receive PRA. Ministers are now more frequently working in teams and with groups of policy and special advisors. These advisors are specialists in different areas, share all information, use group mail boxes and attend all meetings together so it is not as practical to only approve one and not all advisors.

Transparency

- 15. As stated in the Code of Practice to Official Statistics, ONS must publish a record of all those who have been approved to receive access prior to the release. This list is

published with each release but there is no central area where all PRA lists can be obtained and the overall picture seen.

16. With the launch of the new website, ONS intends to publish the total list of PRA recipients in one open data format file on the website. This will improve the public transparency and accountability of the process. The spreadsheet will publish the release and roles approved in each department, highlighting the total for each release and provide a breakdown to show the total for each department.

Risk assessment

17. Four system investigations have been conducted with regard to social media accusations of ONS outputs. These have confirmed that the systems are operating as appropriate and publishing correctly. In addition an internal audit of PRA processes was commissioned in December and is currently underway. The Executive has been monitoring the situation and has assessed the risk introduced by current PRA practice as above the appetite of minimal set by the Board. The Board is invited to consider their assessment. The Executive's concerns have been further raised by the leak of labour market statistics prior to release on 20 January.

Guy Goodwin, Director, Social and Analysis, ONS, 15 January 2016

List of Annexes

Annex A	New releases and the release omitted from the PRA minimisation exercise
Annex B	Additional roles added onto the PRA lists for releases included in the PRA minimisation exercise
Annex C	PRA totals by release and department
Annex D	PRA model criteria

Annex A New Releases and those omitted from the PRA minimisation exercise

- i. Zero Hours
- ii. Sustainable Development Indicators
- iii. Same Sex Marriages
- iv. Foreign Direct Investment
- v. Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)
- vi. Avoidable Mortality in England and Wales
- vii. Inequality in Healthy Life Expectancy at birth by National deciles of Area Deprivation
- viii. Opinions and Lifestyle Survey: Drinking habits amongst adults
- ix. Quarterly National Accounts
- x. Unpaid care expectancies, England 2010 – 12 – What is the variation across NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups
- xi. Same Sex Marriages
- xii. Index of Private Housing Rental Prices
- xiii. Measuring National Well-being - Personal Well-being Across the UK
- xiv. Trends in life expectancy by National Statistics Social and Economic Classification (NSSEC)
- xv. Gross Value Added (GVA) for Local Enterprises Partnerships (LEP)
- xvi. Economic Well-being
- xvii. Economic Importance of Tourism: UK Tourism Satellite Account 2013
- xviii. Labour Disputes
- xix. Regional Gross Value Added (Production Approach)
- xx. Public and Private Sector Earnings
- xxi. UK Environmental Accounts - Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy Survey

Annex B Additional roles added onto the PRA lists for releases included in the PRA minimisation exercise

April 2014 – 1442

December 2015 – 1703 (261 increase)

5.2

Department	Number of roles	Roles requested	Releases	Total
Bank of England	1	New Deputy Governor introduced in the Bank of England	Ten releases Retail Sales Index, UK Trade, Index of Service, GDP Preliminary, GDP, Index of Production, Labour Market Statistics, Business Investment, Consumer Price Index, Producer Price Index.	10
	3	Three roles from the Monetary Analysis Division who support MPC	GDP Preliminary	3
Cabinet Office	7	Minister for the Cabinet Office Special Advisor Cabinet Secretary Chief Executive of the Civil Service Three Private Secretaries	Public Service Productivity Estimates: Total Public Services	7
	1	Minister for Cabinet Office	Labour Market, Consumer Price Index and Gross Domestic Product releases	5
	1	Cabinet Secretary	Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR)	1
Department for Business Innovation and Skills	2	Media Special Advisor for the Secretary of State	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Balance of Payments Business Enterprise Research and Development Business Investment Construction GDP GDP Preliminary Gross Expenditure on Research and Development Index of Production International Comparisons of Productivity Labour Market Statistics Labour Productivity MSQR Producer Prices Index Regional Gross Domestic	18

			Household Income Regional Gross Value Added Retail Sales Index UK Trade	
	1	Political Special Advisor for Secretary of State	International Comparisons of Productivity Labour Productivity	2
	1	Special Advisor Minister for Trade	Balance of Payments UK Trade	2
	3	One Press Officer Two briefing Officials.	Labour Market Release	3
	1	Minister for Life and Science	Business Enterprise Research and Development	1
	1	Minister for Life and Science	Gross Expenditure on Research and Development	1
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	1	One Press Officer	Construction	1
	2	Two Special Advisors for Secretary of State	Construction House Price Index Public Sector Employment	6
Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)	5	Two Press Officers Secretary of State Assistant Private Secretary Statistical Officer	Overseas Travel and Tourism	5
Department for Education	3	Two briefing officials press officer	Public Service Productivity Estimates: Education.	3
Department of Health (DH)	11		Integrated Household Survey (New smoking related questions introduced to the survey)	11
Department for Work and Pensions	3	Three Special Advisors	Labour Market Release	3
	3	Two Briefing Officials One Statisticians	National Population Projections	3
Foreign Commonwealth Office	1	One briefing official	Employment by Country of Birth	1
	1	One briefing official	Migration Statistics Quarterly Report	1
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs	3	One Economist One Statistician One Briefing Official	National Population Projections	3
Her Majesty's Treasury	22	One Minister	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Balance of Payments Business Investment Construction Consumer Prices Index Effect of Taxes and Benefits on Household Income GDP GDP Preliminary	22

			House Prices Index Index of Production Index of Services Labour Market Statistics Labour Productivity Producer Prices Index Profitability Public Sector Employment Public Sector Finances Regional Gross Disposable Household Income Regional Gross Value Added Retail Sales Index UK Trade Wealth in Great Britain	
Her Majesty's Treasury	9	Chancellor of the Exchequer Chief Secretary to the Treasury Financial Secretary to the Treasury Economic Secretary Commercial Secretary Briefing Official Press Official Special Adviser Special Adviser	National Population Projections	9
Home Office	3	Two press officers One briefing official	Drug related deaths	3
	2	Second Permanent Secretary Private Secretary	MSQR	2
No.10	2	One Special Advisor Director of Communications	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Balance of Payments Business Investment Consumer Prices Index Crime Statistics Expenditure on Healthcare House Prices Index International Comparisons of Productivity GDP GDP Preliminary Labour Market Statistics Labour Productivity MSQR Producer Prices Index Profitability Public Sector Employment Public Sector Finances Public Service Productivity Estimates: Total Public Services Regional Work and Workless	48

			Households for regions in the UK Retail Sales Index UK Trade Wealth in GB Work and Workless Households for regions in the UK	
	2	Prime Minister Private Secretary	Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR)	2
	3	Prime Minister Private Secretary Head of Research and Information	Work and Workless Households	3
	3	Prime Minister Private Secretary Head of Research and Information	Regional Work and Workless Households	3
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	5	Minister for Finance and Personnel Minister's Assembly Private Secretary Permanent Secretary Special Advisor Principal Information Officer	National Populations Projections	5
Office for Budget Responsibility	5	Economic Adviser Economic Adviser Head of Staff Senior Analyst Analyst	National Population Projections	5
Public Health England	7	Dept of Health and	Integrated Household Survey	7
	3	Public Health England	Excess Winter Mortality deaths	3
	7	agreed to not share briefings; Public Health England now make their own statements	Opinions and Lifestyle Survey: Smoking Habits.	7
Scottish Government	2	Two Policy Officials	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	2
	7	Three Ministers Special Adviser Briefing Official Economist, Statistician, Communications Officer	Labour Productivity (Approved to receive third quarter which contains regional breakdown)	7
	4	Two Ministers Special Adviser Communications Officer	Work and Workless Households	4
	4	Two Ministers Special Adviser Communications Officer	Regional Work and Workless Households	4
	2	Minister Briefing Official	Public Sector Employment	2
	23	Five Ministers Two Special Advisors	National Population Projections	23

		Five Communication Officers Four Statisticians Four briefing officials Three economists		
Welsh Government	2	Briefing Official Minister	Suicides	2
	1	Statistician	National Population Projections	1
	1	Press Officer	Labour Market Release	1
Reinstatements				
Association Chief Police Officers (ACPO)	Two Roles		Crime	2
Scottish Government	Two Roles	Chief Police Constable Jeff Farrah who is the national lead on Crime statistics and is asked to comment on the statistics shortly after release.	Business Demography	2
Welsh Government	Two Roles	Two statisticians reinstated to Business Demography.	Business Demography	2
Total				261

Annex C **PRA totals by release and department**

[illegible]

This table lists all statistical releases which have ongoing Pre-Release Access. This includes the total included in the PRA minimisation exercise 1,703 plus the new releases and releases omitted from the PRA minimisation exercise 379 in total 2,082.

Annex D Approach to pre-release access to ONS statistics

The model

The two purposes for which pre-release access may be given, as specified within section 3(1)(a) of the Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics Order 2008, are:

- the provision of responses to questions or the making of statements about an official statistic at or shortly after the time of publication of that statistic; or
- the taking of action before, at the time of or shortly after publication of that statistic.

Pre-release access is awarded to a role, not to an individual. However, each individual who will be receiving the pre-release version of the output must sign a declaration before they can receive pre-release.

No pre-release access will be given unless ONS holds a signed confidentiality declaration from the relevant individual.

To minimise pre-release access ONS developed a model. This model is based on the criteria within the Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics Order 2008. The model takes into account a number of factors relating to the organisation, the release, and the role and individual requesting access. It covers the following criteria:

- the extent to which the department / organisation requesting access is directly responsible for national policy or the delivery of a national service in this area;
- the extent to which the role requesting access is likely to need to comment publicly at or shortly after the time of publication, is personally and directly responsible for briefing the spokesperson, and whether the individual has previously breached pre-release access;
- the extent to which the specific release contains statistics of national importance.

The primary criteria used within the model to guide decisions are described below. For each individual role receiving pre-release access, the extent to which that organisation / role / release met the criteria was considered, and scored as High / Medium / Low or Not Applicable.

The Organisation

- Is the organisation directly responsible for national policy in this area?
- Is the organisation directly responsible for delivery of a national service in this area?

The Role

- Is the role responsible for commenting publicly within one hour of the publication of the statistic? This could include making a public statement about the topic area, or answering questions about the topic area.
- Is the role responsible for briefing the person responsible for commenting publicly within one hour?

The Release

- What is the current "national importance" of the output? Is it considered to be of a high profile at the present time? What is the degree of relevance to a current national issue? ONS will review the status of releases under this criteria annually.

Breaches

Any breach of pre-release access must be reported to ONS as soon as it is discovered. Any breach of pre-release access will mean removal of future pre-release access from the individual concerned. ONS also reserves the right to remove pre-release access from the role and/or the organisation.

Applying the model

Each instance of pre-release access was scored according to each of the above five criteria; ie

- national policy
- delivery of a national service
- public comment
- direct briefing
- national importance

The scores were then moderated across releases and departments. This also included reducing scores where necessary to ensure the following:

- In general a role will be responsible for either commenting publicly or for briefing the spokesperson. The only exception to this is press / media officers, who could legitimately be expected to both comment publicly themselves and brief other spokespeople.
- Within a department, for any one release, generally pre-release access will only be given to one Press Officer role (the "Duty" Officer). A pool of Press Officers should each sign a declaration, but the pre-release version of the output will be sent to one only, ie whoever is the Duty Officer for the day of publication. The pre-release version must not be shared with any other Press Officers, even if they have signed a declaration.
- The same approach is taken to Special Advisors - for a single release, pre-release access will only be granted to one Special Advisor in a department. The pre-release version must not be shared with any other Special Advisors, even if they have signed a declaration.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

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ADRN Mid-term Review

Purpose

1. This paper presents the proposed Terms of Reference for the Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) mid-term review.

Recommendations

2. Members are invited to note the proposed Terms of Reference that are put forward at **Annex A**.

Background

3. The ADRN Board approved the high level plans for the mid-term review at the ADRN Board meeting on 3 November 2015.
4. The Authority and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) will work together on a joint independent mid-term review. This will avoid duplication, reduce time and resource demands on the ADRN, and produce outcomes for the Authority and the ESRC Council that are in synch with each other.
5. The mid-term review will be used to seek assurance for the robust performance and governance of the Network. This will help the Authority to fulfil its role as the reporting body to the UK Parliament for the ADRN.
6. The independent mid-term review will also inform the ESRC Council's decision, in February 2017, of whether and how the ESRC will seek to re-commission the ADRN beyond the initial grant.
7. The review will consider the entire Network. This will include:
 - i. the four Administrative Data Research Centres;
 - ii. the Administrative Data Service;
 - iii. data custodians (government departments and agencies, and national statistical authorities);
 - iv. the ESRC; and
 - v. the Authority.
8. The ADRN Board and the ESRC will jointly appoint an independent reviewer to conduct the mid-term review. The reviewer(s) will have no current involvement with any of the parties involved in the ADRN and will have experience of accessing administrative data for research and statistical purposes.
9. The independent reviewer is yet to be appointed. The Authority has received input from the ADRN Board and the ESRC to identify suitable candidates to fulfil the role.
10. The planned high level timetable for the review is as follows:
 - i. the Terms of Reference for the review will be discussed at the ADRN Board meeting in February 2016;
 - ii. the independent reviewer will be appointed in Spring 2016;
 - iii. the review will take place during the Summer of 2016; and

- iv. the findings of the review will be shared with the ESRC and the UK Statistics Authority in the Winter of 2016.

Simon Whitworth, UK Statistics Authority, 18 January 2016.

Annex A ADRN Mid-term Review Terms of Reference

Annex A ADRN Mid-term Review Terms of Reference

This document will be published on the UK Statistics Authority website in due course.

The document will be available at:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/board-and-committees/>