
Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir David Norgrove

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
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31 August 2017

Dear Home Secretary

I am concerned about the disclosure of Home Office migration statistics to members of the media ahead of their publication on 24 August 2017.

The main leak was to the Daily Telegraph. Whoever spoke to the journalist seems only to have half understood the data, or inadequately communicated them. The result was seriously misleading, creating confusion where clarity was important. But a more accurate leak would still necessarily have been misleading, because it would have been partial (in all senses), and left the journalist and the public lacking context. The leak was the more damaging in view of the sensitivity of migration data.

Statisticians within the Home Office are now preparing a report on this breach of the statutory *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. I understand some 50 people (excluding the analysts themselves) were given access to the figures ahead of publication.

I am sure you share my concerns. You may be aware that the Office for National Statistics recently ended pre-release access to its own official statistics in order to strengthen public trust. I hope you will agree that it would now be right for you and your officials to review the Home Office's practices on pre-release access to its statistics.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for the Constitution, who is leading a review of pre-release access, and to Sir Jeremy Heywood.

Yours sincerely



Sir David Norgrove