Government
Statistical Service

REPORT OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS

1. **Core Information**

Title and link to statistical output	UK government debt and deficit as reported to the European Commission: March 2018 https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/ukgovernmentdebt anddeficitasreportedtotheeuropeancommissionjanto mar2018
Name of producer organisation	Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Name and contact details of person dealing with report	Debra Prestwood Statistical Head of Profession, Office for National Statistics, Government Buildings, Cardiff Road, Newport, NP10 8XG.
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	
Date of breach report	19/07/2018

2. **Circumstances of breach**

Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)	Trustworthiness pillar: T3: Orderly release T3.6: Statistics should be released to all users at 9.30am on a weekday.
Date of occurrence of breach	17/07/2018

This release was one of three which breached on this date. A large volume of data being published slowed the performance of our website and our ability to publish to the website. We were unable to publish everything scheduled within the acceptable time frame.

A secondary issue occurred which affected the visibility of the release in search results on the ONS website. The name of the publication had changed, leading to its appearance lower down in search results. The publication had previously been called "UK government debt and deficit."

Publication time for this release was 09:31.

3. **Impact of the breach**

No reports received.

4. **Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence**

In recent months we have provided additional capacity on the website infrastructure to improve performance, as much as was possible within the current architecture.

We are in the process of building and testing a new environment which will improve the performance and resilience of the website and publishing system. These changes will allow us to increase capacity further at critical times. These improvements will be available later this year.

We are developing a range of improvements to the on-site search, which will reduce the impact of changes of names of statistical releases, for example by giving greater priority to latest releases.