

REPORT OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS



1. Core Information

Title and link to statistical output	BEIS Public Attitudes Tracker Wave 29
Name of producer organisation	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
Name and contact details of person dealing with report	Jessie Evans jessie.evans@beis.gov.uk 020 7215 2650
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	N/A
Date of breach report	9 May 2019

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)	Trustworthiness pillar T3: orderly release T3.4: The circulation of statistics in their final form ahead of their publication should be restricted to eligible recipients, in line with the rules and principles on pre-release access set out in legislation for the UK and devolved administrations. The details of those granted access should be recorded, together with clear justifications for access. No indication of the statistics should be made public and the statistics should not be given to any other party without prior permission for access. The list of recipients should be reviewed regularly and kept to a minimum.
Date of occurrence of breach	8 May 2019
<p>A breach occurred on Wednesday 8 May, the day before publication of the Public Attitudes Tracker, which was due to be published on Thursday 9 May 2019 at 09:30am.</p> <p>A media officer with pre-release access sent two emails (at 10:48 and 17:26) during the PRA window to a distribution list that included colleagues not on the PRA list. The emails contained five findings from the release as background, in order to agree reactive press lines to take. Four comms colleagues and five policy colleagues without pre-release access received the emails.</p> <p>The production team discovered the breaches after publication, when they were sent the emails containing the reactive press lines to take. They contacted the media officer to discuss the breach, asked to see the whole email chains, and emailed the group to confirm whether anyone else had received the statistics.</p>	

3. Impact of the breach

Very minimal. Nine additional BEIS colleagues received five findings from the release the day before publication. The survey report itself was not circulated and no findings were released externally.

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

- Phone call and follow up email to reiterate PRA rules to involved colleagues. (Done)
- Update BEIS PRA protocol to include a requirement for the lead statistician to be copied into all emails about the statistics during pre-release access window. (Done)
- Formally inform comms of the breach and published breach report. (Once published)
- Publicise new BEIS PRA protocol with comms. (Once published)
- Meet with Director of comms to raise awareness and agree changes and training. (Once published)
- Deliver further training to educate comms about official statistics and their obligations under the Code of Practice for Statistics. (During recess)
- Publicise the breach to BEIS analysts, reminding them about the new BEIS PRA protocol. (Done)