

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes
Thursday 28 July 2022
Remote Teams Meeting

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Robert Chote (Chair)
Professor Sir John Aston
Helen Boaden
Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Richard Dobbs
Professor Jonathan Haskel
Ed Humpherson
Nora Nanayakkara
Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter
Professor Anne Trefethen

Also in attendance

Nick Bateson
Owen Brace
Robert Bumpstead
Fiona James (for item 11)
Sally-Ann Jones (Secretariat)
Dr Alex Lambert (for item 10)
Alison Pritchard
Emma Rourke (for items 8 and 9)
Tina Thomas (for item 10)
Becky Tinsley (for item 8)

Apologies

Sam Beckett
Sian Jones (Deputy Chair)

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Sam Beckett and Sian Jones.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 June 2022 were agreed.

4. Report from the Authority Chair

4.1 Non-Executives had met prior to the Board meeting. They had discussed topics including the Non-executive Director recruitment process, the post Census recommendation paper scheduled for discussion at this meeting, and the Chair's meeting on 26 July with Alex Chisolm, Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary for the Cabinet Office.

4.2 The Chair reported on his recent activities since the Board last met:

- i. Sir Robert had attended Regulation Committee on 7 July;
- ii. on 15 July Sir Robert had met Sir Bernard Silverman to discuss the Methodological Assurance Review Panel;
- iii. Sir Robert had spoken at the launch of the Office for Statistics Regulation third annual review of the State of the Statistics System on 18 July alongside Ed Humpherson;
- iv. to mark the second anniversary of the launch of the strategy, Statistics for the Public Good, Sir Robert alongside Professor Sir Ian Diamond, Sam Beckett and Ed Humpherson had joined a remote all staff 'Your Call' session; and
- v. Sir Robert had visited Ofsted and met Amanda Spielman (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Alex Jones (Director, Insights and Research) and Jason Bradbury (Chief Statistician).

4.3 Sir Robert, Sir Ian and all members of the Authority Board noted thanks to Nick Bateson for all of his work as Director of Finance, Planning and Performance and wished him well in his new role as Chief Operating Office at The Health Foundation.

5. Report from the Chief Executive [SA(22)38]

5.1 Sir Ian provided the Board with an overview of activity and issues since the last meeting, highlighting the following:

- i. the launch of the Integrated Data Service Initial Public Beta on 15 July;
- ii. Civil Service 2025;
- iii. the first release of the Census 2021 statistical outputs on 28 June had generated positive engagement with Local Authorities and users;
- iv. the continued support by ONS and the International Steering Group, formed in May 2022 with Sir Ian as a member, for colleagues at National Records of Scotland on the Scotland Census 2022; and
- v. the Civil Service Commission had named the ONS as 'highly commended' for the inclusion initiatives built into ONS recruitment process on improving accessibility to the Civil Service for underrepresented communities as part of the Mark of Excellence Award.

6. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(22)39]

6.1 Ed Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity highlighting the publication and launch event of OSR's third annual State of Statistics System report. The report commended the strong performance by the statistical system over the last year: continuing to delivery more timely and real time data; innovation and collaboration to

share and link data; and greater use of automation. The report also highlighted areas for improvement.

- 6.2 The Board heard that Mary Gregory had left the OSR team, having been appointed as Deputy Director of the ONS Data Science Campus following a secondment.
- 6.3 Board members discussed the temporary suspension of the National Statistics status for the crime estimates produced from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, as requested by ONS and supported by OSR. It was noted that ONS had plans in place for the National Statistics badge to be reinstated for the year ending March 2023 release, following 12 months of consistent data collection. The temporary suspension of National Statistics status was a result of the suspension of in person interviews during the pandemic.

7. Report from the Chair of the Regulation Committee

- 7.1 Professor Anne Trefethen provided an update on the Regulation Committee held on 7 July.
- 7.2 The Committee had considered:
 - i. the near final draft State of the Statistics System 2021/22 report;
 - ii. progress of the ongoing project to refresh National Statistics Designation;
 - iii. the progress by ONS on the transformation of population and migration statistics;
 - iv. OSR's updated guidance for models, setting out how applying the principles of the Code of Practice for Statistics could support good practice in designing statistical models;
 - v. the annual review of casework; and
 - vi. the annual review of effectiveness of the Committee.
- 7.3 The Committee had also received a presentation from Ed Humpherson on a number of OSR scenarios for growth.

8. Post Census Recommendation [SA(22)40]

- 8.1 Becky Tinsley and Emma Rourke introduced a paper which provided an update on progress towards the 2023 Recommendation on the future of the Census and population statistics in England and Wales.
- 8.2 The Board heard that the transformation of population statistics would produce more frequent, timely and inclusive statistics on the population. The approach to the post Census recommendation on the future of the census and population statistics was underpinned by three core principles: methods should meet user needs; a robust data infrastructure; and the proposal should be acceptable to users.
- 8.3 Board members discussed progress and highlighted the importance of the evidence base and the need to keep users updated as the work progressed.
- 8.4 The Board would remain engaged as the work progressed with regular updates on the evidence gathered.

9. Digital COVID-19 Infection Survey and Surveillance Studies [SA(22)41]

- 9.1 Emma Rourke introduced a paper which provided an update on the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) Programme.
- 9.2 The Board heard that the transition to CIS-Digital was progressing as planned with the launch of the Public Beta on 7 July. A range of options for the future of CIS and longer term national health surveillance were being explored with stakeholders including the UK Health Security Agency.

10. Field Data Collection [SA(22)42]

- 10.1 Dr Alex Lambert introduced a paper which summarised the impact of rising fuel costs on ONS's data collection operation. The need to reduce the environmental impact of data collection operations, as defined within the ONS Survey Strategy, was also highlighted.
- 10.2 The Board heard about the comprehensive set of actions being collaboratively taken forward at pace to address the current issues and mitigate the risks to operational data collection and survey transformation. It was noted that the strategic re-design of the field force would provide a more sustainable solution in the near future.

11. Data Assets [SA(22)43]

- 11.1 Alison Pritchard and Fiona James introduced a paper which provided an update on priority data assets including those needed for ONS Programmes. It was noted that Mission three of the Digital and Data Strategy, sponsored by Sir Ian, promotes Better Data to Power Decision Making. This would promote work to make all 'critical' data assets available and in use across government through trusted platforms, such as the Integrated Data Service.
- 11.2 The Board heard about engagement with departments including the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue and Customs regarding the delivery of key datasets. The data acquisition team had worked with the business areas to agree a prioritised list of datasets that support the key deliverables across the office for the major transformation programmes. Improvements had been made to the data acquisition process through automation and improved management information.
- 11.3 The Board welcomed the update noting that a time series for data acquisition metrics would be helpful for Board members.

12. Integrated Data Service [SA(22)44]

- 12.1 Alison Pritchard introduced a paper which provided an update on key elements of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP).
- 12.2 Duncan Elliott gave a demonstration of the IDS Initial Public Beta, which had been launched as planned on 15 July.
- 12.3 The Board noted thanks for an excellent presentation.

13. Board Effectiveness Review [SA(22)45]

- 13.1 Sally Jones introduced a paper which covered the results of the Authority Board's self-review of effectiveness highlighting the key issues raised and proposed improvements.
- 13.2 The Board is invited to review its effectiveness on an annual basis to identify where it is performing well and where improvement might be made. The analysis highlighted improvements over the last year. The Board had considered strategic issues with papers focussing on different aspects of the delivery of the strategy, Statistics for the Public Good. The Chair continued to provide an open and supportive culture to allow an inclusive environment for discussion. With regard to the format of meetings the current approach of alternating between remote and in person meetings was working well.

14. Any other business

- 14.1 Due to a fire alarm and evacuation in Drummond Gate during the course of the meeting Nora Nanayakkara chaired part of the meeting, with Sir Robert's agreement.
- 14.2 The next meeting would take place on 29 September in Belfast.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

**28 July 2022, 11.00-14.00,
Remote Teams Meeting**

Chair: Sir Robert Chote

Apologies: Sam Beckett

Attendees: Fiona James (for item 9), Alex Lambert (for item 8), Emma Rourke (for items 6 and 7), Becky Tinsley (for item 6)

NED Session: 10.30-11.00

1 11.00-11.05 5 mins	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings Declarations of interest	Meeting of 30 June 2022
2 11.05-11.15 10 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	Oral report Sir Robert Chote
3 11.15-11.40 25 mins	Report from the Chief Executive	SA(22)38 Prof. Sir Ian Diamond
4 11.40-11.50 10 mins	Report from the Director-General for Regulation	SA(22)39 Ed Humpherson
5 11.50-11.55 5 mins	Report from Committee Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">Regulation Committee	Oral report Prof. Anne Trefethen
6 11.55-12.20 25 mins	Post Census Recommendation	SA(22)40 Becky Tinsley Emma Rourke
12.20-12.25 5 mins	Break	
7 12.25-12.45 20 mins	Digital COVID-19 Infection Survey and Population Health Surveillance	SA(22)41 Emma Rourke
8 12.45-13.00 15 mins	Field Data Collection	SA(22)42 Alex Lambert
9 13.00-13.20 20 mins	Data Assets	SA(22)43 Fiona James Alison Pritchard
10 13.20-13.40 20 mins	Integrated Data Service	SA(22)44 Alison Pritchard
11 13.40 to 13.55 15 mins	Board Effectiveness Review	SA(22)45 Sally Jones
12 13.55-14.00 5 mins	Any Other Business	

Next meeting: Thursday 29 September 2022, NISRA, Belfast

Chief Executive's Report, July 2022

Purpose

1. This provides the Authority Board with an overview of activity and issues for July 2022.

Summary

2. July has seen the launch of the Integrated Data Service (IDS) Public Beta release on the 15 July. The first release of the **census** has gone well with great engagement from users. We also continue to provide analytical insights to central government on the **Russian invasion of Ukraine**, publishing the second wave of responses on 15 July and will also be running a second wave of the **Over 50s survey**. I was delighted to learn that the Coronavirus Infection Survey was the winner for the **Campion Award for Excellence in Official Statistics**.

Review of recent activities

3. On **census**, the first release on 28 June received substantial media and public interest. On **automation and efficiency**, our interactive digital scrolly-telling product generated semi-automated narratives for all 331 local authorities in England and Wales, providing ready access to tens of thousands of local insights for citizen users and offering tailored robo-journalism content that was re-used extensively in local media.
4. On the **Integrated Data Service**, the IDS Public Beta release was successfully delivered as planned on the 15 July.
5. Our second wave of the **UK Humanitarian Insight Survey** was published on 15 July with almost 10,000 responses. The results showed a largely positive picture in terms of access to services, finances and finding work. We have also launched a survey of sponsors to help the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) plan for the future through understanding the intentions of sponsors to extend or otherwise their support and housing.
6. The Cabinet Office, HM Treasury and Other Government Departments have approved ONS running a second wave of the **Over 50s survey** to explore the reasons why people have moved out of work, and the future plans of those still in work, with particular focus on health, finances and flexible work arrangements.
7. We now have an **operational Application Programming Interface (API) for the COVID-19 Infection Survey Management Information (CIS MI)**. This is currently being used by colleagues in the Cabinet Office to streamline and automate dashboards and briefing products using CIS data. The API will be made available to other users of CIS MI and is the first example of ONS sharing MI in this way.
8. This month the ONS was heavily represented at **Civil Service Live**, delivering sessions live across the country with speakers including myself, Sam Beckett, Alison Pritchard, Liz McKeown and Darren Morgan. They emphasised the importance of analysis in government, the impact it has on improving outcomes for citizens, and how civil servants - whatever their background or profession - can boost their analytical skills and impact through the Learning and Development offer of the Function. We also had a presence through an IDS stand and as part of the Darlington Economic Campus presence.
9. This month we hosted an **Advancing International Collaboration in Data Science and Big Data for Official Statistics** in Newport with over 50 delegates from all over the world to discuss the future of, and challenges for, data science for official statistics – ONS speakers included Rob Bumpstead and Arthur Turrell

10. The **CIS Public Beta has begun**. Deployment took place on the 5 July and Questionnaire Go-live was implemented successfully on the 10 July. We are now in the stepped wedge transition period, whereby 50 per cent of our participants have been moved into 'digital mode' - providing their swabs through Royal Mail and their questionnaires via our online portal. Analysis is being conducted to determine if there is a mode effect associated with the different survey methods
11. On **population statistics transformation**, we have published radical and ambitious plans for a Dynamic Population Model (DPM) that will allow us to observe and reflect changes in demographic behaviour, during a time when we know that society is rapidly changing. We have also published related details of our international migration transformation to provide the timely, frequent, and granular estimates of population flow necessary for the DPM. Further details are provided in the Board paper scheduled for this meeting.
12. This month we produced and published estimates for **Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault** for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. This is the first in a series of step changes to our estimates of Crime in England and Wales following the return to in home face to face interviewing in October 2021. For the first time we have been able to produce prevalence estimates of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault for the whole of the adult population, with the results published in the latest Crime in England and Wales release on 21 July 2022.
13. The **Integrated Data Service programme completed an Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) Gateway 0 'Annual' Review** between 20-23 June 2022 to assess the overall health and progress of the programme. The assurance review awarded a Delivery Confidence Assessment of AMBER. A series of recommendations were made and all have been accepted by the Programme and an action plan for implementation is in development. The majority of actions are due by September 2022, with work already commenced on the two critical items, and a draft plan with the support of Deloitte has already been developed for Digital Economy Act (DEA) accreditation. The objective is to demonstrate completion or significant progress in time for the IPA Gateway 4 review later in the year. Gateway 4 'Readiness for Service' Assurance Review will take place just prior to the Full Public Beta release towards the end of the year and this will assess full-service readiness.
14. The competitive process for the **Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence re-procurement** will result in bids being submitted on the 15 July. A panel of internal and external experts will assess the bids to develop a recommendation by the end of the month.
15. Within ARIES, the **Prices Alternative Data Sources Project**, which aims to improve and modernise our headline measures of consumer price inflation by using new data sources, has reached a key milestone of delivering an end-to-end system on a new cloud-based platform. The new system is capable of processing billions of price points as part of the monthly publication round. The team are working on the second phase of development which focuses on research functionality to allow continuous improvement of these statistics.
16. On **Prices**, in July we published research detailing, for the first time, the impact of using new data from Autotrader on second-hand cars and Rail Delivery Group on rail fares indices. These new data sources will be incorporated in Consumer Prices Index (CPI) and Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) in March 2023 followed by electronic point of sale data for groceries in March 2024.
17. Following consultation with the Devolved Administrations and DLUHC, five early exemplar projects to produce **UK comparable data** in key policy areas have been identified and are underway. These are expected to produce results over coming

months, with a further twelve medium-term projects identified for consideration in terms of feasibility.

18. Following a commission from DLUHC Minister the **ONS Geospatial** team delivered at pace eight UK maps to analyse personal wellbeing data from a Levelling Up perspective.
19. Sam Beckett led an ONS organised round table hosted by Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) on 14 July to enable key stakeholders to help shape the **ONS Local service** offer for the North West, as well as other regions more generally. The event gave local leaders the opportunity to be part of the design process and the chance to provide feedback on plans to date – the valuable insight and suggestions from the workshop and meeting with Eamonn Boylan (GMCA Chief Executive) have been incorporated into the iterative design of the service.
20. Our engagement with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** and its new commissioner continues to bear fruit. We have undergone several reviews of the Statistics and Research strands of the DEA and are continuing to work through the ICO's findings, while making good progress on suggested actions. We have established positive quarterly meetings with the ICO and continue to build our relationship with them. In July, I met the new commissioner of the ICO to gather his reflections after listening and talking to stakeholders over his first few months in post.
21. On **Inclusive Data**, as part of the ONS programme of qualitative research to understand the lived experiences of currently under represented population groups we have published a Report and Easy Read version on disabled people's experiences of accessing and engaging with private sector goods and services. We have also linked this to the ONS Life Opportunities Survey publication on the same theme.
22. The **Civil Service Commission** has named the ONS as Highly Commended for the Inclusion initiatives we have built into our recruitment process on improving accessibility to the Civil service for under-represented communities as part of the **Mark of Excellence Award**.
23. And finally, our Coronavirus Infection Survey has been selected as the winner for the **2022 Champion Award for Excellence in Official Statistics** while our work on Long Covid was highly commended. The award, run by the Royal Statistical Society, recognises outstanding innovations or developments in the production of UK statistics that improve the service to users.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond, National Statistician, July 2022

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(22)39

Update from the Director General for Regulation

Purpose

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board with an overview of Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) activities.

Discussion

2. Our main areas of focus since the last Board meeting have been:
 - i. **Regulation Committee:** We had a productive committee meeting on July 7 Professor Anne Trefethen as Chair will provide a more detailed update as part of this Board meeting.
 - ii. **State of the statistical system:** We recently published our third annual [State of the Statistics System report](#). As well as highlighting this report with a [news article](#), and [a blog from Sir Robert Chote](#), we also held a launch event for the report where I presented with OSR colleagues with a short Question and Answer session and Sir Robert opened and closed the event. It was our best launch so far in that it was well attended and very well received with over 100 people signed up and around 90 attendees.
 - iii. **Census:** I wrote to Professor Sir Ian Diamond confirming [National Statistics designation for 2021 Census in England and Wales](#). We will continue to review the Scotland census as National Records Scotland move from the collection phase to the next phase of the process.
 - iv. **Wider reach:**
 - OSR was asked to present at a Public Health Wales Board Committee about why Trust, Quality and Value (TQV) matters and how it is relevant to public health, and why user engagement matters. The feedback received was very positive with particular interest around intelligent transparency. The Chair advised us that the presentation will be a key input into the development of their research and evaluation strategy.
 - We have run two seminars for all types of analysts across government: one on intelligent transparency and another on the Code in practice. These seminars included speakers from UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA) and Full Fact (intelligent transparency), and Department for Work and Pensions and Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. We were able to share insight into our regulatory work and promote the Code of Practice. The seminars have been very well attended, with more than 270 at the second. We have received positive feedback on the structure and the content of the events. The third seminar in the series is due to be held in September.
 - I was asked to attend the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) COVID-19 evidence session which looked at evaluation. I spoke about the use of data to evaluate policy during the pandemic. This was an interesting discussion that highlighted weaknesses in Government approaches to evaluation. My ask of the RSS was to encourage Government to embed and improve evaluation.
 - We also co-hosted a round table with the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation on algorithmic governance in the public sector; and I spoke at an event for Home Office data scientists.
 - We will soon be publishing a second iteration of our models guidance, which provides guidance on how the principles in the Code of Practice can help in designing, developing and using models to improve their Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. We are currently seeking feedback on this guidance. We

would be very happy to share the guidance with any Board members prior to publication if you would like the opportunity to view it.

- We are also pleased to announce that the COVID-19 Dashboard Team from the UKHSA won the award for Statistical Excellence in TQV, recognising excellence in the voluntary application of the pillars of TQV for our Code of Practice.
- v. **OSR outputs:** This month I wrote to Alastair McAlpine about [our review of gender identity question and the Scottish Household Survey](#) and [2020 Scottish Household Survey](#). OSR published a blog about [how the use of official statistics can improve the already essential tool of evaluation to ensure the effective functioning of government](#). We completed a rapid review of [Scottish Ambulance Statistics](#) (which we got a formal response). We wrote to the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy about our compliance check of [Fuel Poverty statistics for England](#). And we published our [assessment of KS4 Statistics for England, I wrote to Department for Education](#) highlighting the assessment findings and identifying the four areas that could be developed to strengthen the statistics further.
- vi. **Casework:**
- We had some positive impact following casework about a [Home Office blog on resettlement statistics](#). As a result of our interactions the Home Office added a paragraph at the end of the blog to provide greater clarity on the source of the statistics in the blog and to signpost to guidance explaining the difference between resettlement and asylum cases. The individual who raised the case with us emailed us to thank us for our work and saying that they felt the addition of the paragraph improved things.
 - I also wrote to Chris Roebuck and Mark Svenson about [statistics on patients waiting more than 12 hours](#)
- vii. **Impact:** Following interest from board members about the impact that OSR have on a day to basis we have provided some examples below. Whilst on their own they may seem small, collectively these daily impacts add up and enable OSR to have the overall impact we strive for.
- The Department of Health and Social Care for England published a policy paper called [Data Saves Lives](#). OSR have fed into this paper and two of our systemic reviews have been mentioned.
 - The Analysis Function published its [Reproducible Analytical Pipelines \(RAP\) strategy](#) which aims to embed RAP as the default approach to analysis in government. It is great to see how heavily the strategy leans on our [2021 RAP report](#) – and it addresses our recommendation for a system-wide strategic direction for RAP.
 - The Department of Health and Social Care domain launched a short [Twitter user Survey](#) for the COVID-19 Infection Survey review that is currently underway. We have had an amazing response so far, highlighting the continued support for the survey.
 - We received positive feedback regarding our website information on the casework process and FAQs as well as positive feedback from Natural England on a Code training session we ran.
 - I received a request for a background interview with a Financial Times journalist, which resulted in an article highlighting the growth in our casework function.

Conclusion

3. On my mind at the moment are:

- i. **OSR leadership and development:** OSR's Deputy Director, Mary Gregory, is moving to the Data Science Campus. This is a significant loss for us, but we wish

Mary well in what is a great role for her. In the short term, we have this gap covered with a rolling new Grade 6 Casework Manager (as highlighted last month). We are now thinking about how far to redesign the Deputy Director role to ensure we can get the best out of our future recruitment campaign.

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, OSR, 20 July 2022

Regulatory Activities Dashboard

July 2022

Authority Board

Children, Education and Skills

Assessment: Key Stage 4 statistics in England Report published in July, opinion editorial published Schools Week an article in Times Educational Supplement.

Casework: Health and Wellbeing Census in Scotland responding to concerns around the confidentiality and ethics of the census of school age children. **DfE Music blog** self-generated, relating to concerns around replicability of stats used in DfE blog on music GCSE. **Childcare ratio savings** presentation of data in a proposal to relax staff-to-child ratios in early years settings for two-year-olds in England. **Future Curriculum Body** concerns raised about DfE evidence for new arm's length curriculum body.

Compliance Check: Welsh Government School Workforce Annual Census feeding into a wider review of this data collection.

Systemic Review: Children and Young People planning follow up engagement.

Labour Market and Welfare

Assessments: Reviewing evidence for requirements for the **Living Costs and Food Survey**.

Casework: Use of **Employment statistics** preparing background briefing. The transparent publication of statistics and data ongoing with DWP. **Rail workers pay** ongoing with DfT.

Cost of living blog. Draft finalised internally with plans to publish in July.

Compliance checks: Analysed DWP **Pensioners' Income series** statistics, shared findings with team and plan to publish letter late July.

ONS transformation of the Labour Force Survey (Phase 1). Engaging with ONS regularly with plans to share user views and broader findings in July. Considering impact on quality of current LFS outputs following data error.

Crime and Security

Assessments: Home Office Police Officer Uplift statistics Report published 20 July.

Scottish Government Scottish Prison population statistics – Started gathering evidence.

Casework: MOD defence spending Meeting with MoD to discuss continued use of misleading £24 billion funding figure.

MoJ barrister pay figure Meeting with MoJ to discuss transparency.

Compliance checks: MoJ Women and the Criminal Justice system Currently gathering evidence.

ONS modern slavery statistics extending CC to include Home Office National Referral Mechanism statistics. Currently gathering evidence.

Health and Social Care

Assessments: ONS statistics on **Deaths in the Care Sector** underway.

Casework: Published letter to NHS England and NHS Digital about A&E waiting times statistics.

Compliance Checks: ONS Health Index underway.

Systemic Reviews: Further rounds of user engagement, following up on Adult Social Care and Mental Health reviews.

Other Reviews: Continuing follow-up of 2021 covid lessons learned review and evidence gathering phase for review of ONS Covid Infection Survey.

Population and Society

Assessments: Census Conversations continue with NRS with preparations being made to make public OSR's expectations for Scotland's Census.

Measuring the population, estimates, migration, census and LFS progressing with ONS and others. User engagement on migration statistics planned for summer. Review of **population estimates, and projections** included in State of the Statistical System report to highlight the importance of identifying new and innovative data sources to improve the quality of statistics.

Data on deaths in desk research phase.

ONS transformation of Migration Statistics Phase two of the review is ongoing.

Housing, Planning and Local Services

Assessment: Statutory Homelessness in England statistics: Continuing engagement in line with DLUHC action plan, addressing requirements.

Compliance Checks: Registers of Scotland **Land and property titles in Scotland by country of origin** letter published. Follow up held for **Fire statistics** produced by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Rapid reviews: Letters published for DLUHC's **MI on Support for people sleeping rough in England**. Arranging follow up for review of WG's **MI on Homelessness accommodation provision and rough sleeping**.

Engagement: with ONS and DLUHC on **sub-national data** developments

Transport, Environment and Climate Change

Assessment: People and Nature Survey (PaNS). Renewed interest from Natural England in PaNS. Letter from the DEFRA HoP requesting an assessment received.

Compliance Checks: Desk research continues for Food Security report. Letter for BEIS Fuel Poverty statistics planned for July.

Systemic Review: Accessibility of Transport Networks – follow up with producers ongoing.

Climate Change - information paper to update on progress and plans for future work going to Regulation Committee in July

Economy

Assessments: ONS Regional GDP – Holding quality assurance of initial assessment findings week commencing 25th July.

Systemic Review: Post-Brexit ONS Economic Classifications OSR's external scrutiny proposal discussed at Regulation Committee. The committee agreed that OSR should continue its discussions with ONS on the nature of scrutiny support OSR can offer to NSCASE and ONS.

Compliance Checks: Letter with findings of HMRC Benefit in Kind statistics drafted.

Business, Trade and International Development

Assessments: Funded Occupational Pension Schemes UK statistics published.

Compliance Checks: Letter with findings of **BEIS Business Population Estimates** drafted. **ONS International Trade in the Countries, Regions and Cities of the UK** has started.

Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy statistics, notified ONS to discuss findings

Rapid Review: The Department for International Trade's Trade in Numbers and Trade and Investment Core Book has started.

Regulatory Activities Dashboard

July 2022

Authority Board

Data and Methods

Internal work: All our data science projects have been 'wrapped' efficiently and code stored on GitHub by our current Data Scientist. We will be left un-resourced in this area as our current Data Scientist is leaving, work on progressing these projects will be put on hold until a new Data Scientist is in post. Discussions are ongoing regarding procurement of a FullFact tool, to support case work and horizon scanning.

Data in government: Work on data sharing/linkage was endorsed by Regulation Committee and work is now being done to identify contacts and put a team together to progress this work.

Wider reach: The second version of the Models Guidance was well received by Regulation Committee and is now going through final comments from our external stakeholders. We are on track to publish in early August.

Insight

Insight Committee: The Committee is being restructured to ensure clear governance and separation of Insight and Evaluation. Next meeting planned for early September.

The State of the Statistical System Report (SOSS): The [report](#) was discussed at Reg Comm in early July and comments were taken onboard before publication on 18th July. We held a launch event to share the findings which was attended by 100 people and introduced by Sir Robert.

Communicating Uncertainty in Statistics: Due for publication in summer 2022. This review was highlighted in the SOSS report and launch event as an area of interest by producers. The Role of Official Statistics in Policy Evaluation: [Blog](#) published in early July – this phase of the project is now closed.

Other: Insight webpage launch planned after website update in August.

Policy & Standards

Alternative release times: We have approved six ARTs since the Code change in May. This [table](#) lists applications.

Designation refresh: We published a [final update on the designation review](#) and outlined plans for implementation of changes. Working with communications experts in ONS and other departments on user testing of messages associated with the designation. Prepared material for supporting producers in enhancing their Code culture (including the code maturity model) and testing begins shortly. We have run 6 webinars with departments about this work which elicited a good number of volunteers to participate in user testing.

Voluntary application and wider reach: Two of our voluntary adopters took part in the latest OSR seminar for government analysts, over 250 attended and gave very clear support to using the Code. We continue to work with the ONS Integrated Data Service and Transport for London on adopting and embedding the Code pillars. The award for Statistical Excellence in applying TQV was awarded this month to the Covid dashboard.

Research

Public Perceptions of the Public Good, Collaboration with ADR UK: Five workshops with members of the public are now completed. We have presented the initial findings to our Project Advisory Group. There is one more roundtable with participants on 25 July to validate the findings. The first draft of the report is due to be sent to OSR on 15 August.

Public Confidence in Official Statistics Survey: We are analysing the PCOS data to explore whether there are any further insights, beyond those published in our [blog](#), of relevance to our work.

Other: We are recruiting for a Grade 7 Head of Research: applications closed in June

Cross Cutting Issues

Analytical leadership: We have launched a 6-month seminar series for the Analysis Function. The first, very well-attended session was on Intelligent Transparency. The second session on practical applications of the Code, on 19 July, was also very well attended.

Annual casework report 2021/22: Plans for the report and its publication were discussed at July Regulation Committee. Intending to publish in September 2022 following sign-off via correspondence by Regulation Committee.

Post Census Recommendation

Purpose

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board (the Board) with an update on our progress towards the 2023 Recommendation on the future of the Census and population statistics in England and Wales.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Board are invited to:
 - i. note the progress that is being made towards providing the evidence that will underpin the 2023 Recommendation; and
 - ii. provide feedback on this progress and what information they would like to see from us in future

Background

3. Our population statistics transformation seeks to produce more frequent, timely and inclusive statistics on the population. The need for more timely population statistics has never been greater: local populations are changing more rapidly than ever as we move beyond the pandemic. For some local authorities there is an urgent need for timely insights into how their populations have changed since the 2021 Census was conducted.
4. Three core principles are shaping our approach to the 2023 Recommendation on the future of the census and population statistics:
 - i. our methods should meet essential user needs for frequent and timely information about the population and its characteristics;
 - ii. our data supply, and the digital infrastructure underpinning the production of statistical outputs, should be robust; and
 - iii. our proposals should be acceptable among our user base, the Government, Parliament, and the general public, as demonstrated through engagement and consultation.
5. This paper follows the update discussed by the Board in July 2021 and presents progress made towards our ambition.

Discussion

Summary of 2023 Recommendation evidence to be delivered

6. This paper presents progress against the four ambitious components of evidence which have been subject to intensive research and development over the past year. These will feed into the 2023 Recommendation:
 - i. a comparison of our Statistical Population Datasets (SPDs)¹ with the 2021 Census;
 - ii. proofs of concept demonstrating our ability to produce more timely (2022-based) and more frequent (monthly) population estimates;
 - iii. proofs of concept demonstrating our ability to produce small-area multivariate statistics for a selection of topics; and
 - iv. a proof of concept demonstrating our ability to produce the Census 2021 Data Asset with a rolled forward population at the core.

¹ Formerly presented as Admin Based Population Estimates (ABPEs) the Statistical Population Dataset (SPD) is the set of linked administrative records and the application of rules to include records of people that we believe form the usually resident population. The SPD will form a key input to the overall system.

7. The user feedback on our work has been very broad and positive. Leading up to and following the release of the census 2021 data, detailed conversations with several local authorities continue to add insight into research and development. We will work with a number of local authorities to build on their local insight as we develop our Autumn publication.

Update on progress with development of the evidence

Comparison of SPDs with 2021 Census

8. In November 2021 we published our best estimates of the population for mid-2016 to mid-2020 for two different versions of our SPDs. These use linked administrative data and the application of rules to derive an approximation of the usually resident population. This highlighted the strengths and limitations of the SPDs, and some differences when compared with the Mid Year Estimates.
9. Subsequently, the mid-2020 SPD v3 estimates that we published in November 2021 compared very favorably to the 2021 Census estimates. These were an important part of the evidence packs provided to local authorities during the Census quality assurance process, and helped provided confidence when there was a discrepancy between the Mid Year Estimate and the 2021 Census estimates. This has increased confidence in our ability to approximate the usually resident population, although still highlights the need to be able to assess their quality on an on-going basis, and a mechanism to provide coherence with flows of the population.
10. Applying our learning, the next iteration of these SPDs will incorporate adjustments to the operating rules and bring in new data sources to produce a 2021-based SPD.
11. Full use is being made of the administrative data available in the Office. A priority has been to fully explore additional health and education data sources and bring these into the estimates. Now that Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data are becoming available, our focus will be on producing a time series from 2016 to 2021.
12. A major focus for the coming months will be to link and compare our 2021-based SPD with 2021 Census data. This comparison will show strengths of the SPD and highlight areas where coverage patterns for areas or particular age groups could be improved. This will conclude with a publication of our findings in February 2023.

More timely and frequent population estimates

13. A key aspect of our research has been the development of a method which provides coherence between the stocks and flows of the population. Since last year, we have been developing the Dynamic Population Model, which uses a statistical modelling approach to address this gap. This provides a mechanism to draw strength from a mix of data sources and data insights, while reflecting their limitations.
14. On 14 July, we published our first of three proofs of concept. This describes the work we have done to ensure the methods work and can produce local authority estimates within an acceptable timeframe (previously, the computational intensity created implausible model run times).
15. The publication includes 2011-2021 estimates of population and population change (births, deaths and migration) for a *synthetic* university local authority, to show users how the model works and its flexibility.
16. Alongside this, we have developed a real-time data dashboard that allows us to visualise and analyse a wide range of data sources and demographic rates. This allows us to observe historic and emergent behavioural patterns and trends to inform the modelling.
17. We have been working closely with academic experts such as John Bryant (of Bayesian Demography Ltd), and experts including Jon Forster via our Longitudinal Scientific Advisory Panel) as we develop this work, and through the summer we will be using local

authority engagement to fine tune our model, drawing on local administrative data and insights.

18. Looking beyond 2023, we will refine and improve the dynamic population model, including incorporating expert advice and system developments to support use of the model in a production environment.
19. We are also exploring (in collaboration with Southampton University) early work to understand how we might show seasonality and different population bases (such as daytime populations) as we know that there is a high user need to understand service provision for population groups who are not usually resident.

Small-area multivariate statistics

20. Since last July, we have made much progress on some of the key topics under development. These include:
 - i. our first feasibility research into producing admin-based ethnicity estimates to local authority level, followed by a subsequent publication showing improvements made from new data sources, and a time series for 2016-2020; and
 - ii. progress on our housing research, showing how Valuation Office Agency data can be used to produce outputs relating to property type and accommodation type.
21. Our work now focuses on producing proofs of concept to turn these single topics into multivariate outputs. Our two proofs of concept will be published in early 2023, and include an output on income by ethnicity, and one on ethnicity by housing.

Census 2021 Data Asset

22. Since January 2022 we have been developing the design of the Census 2021 Data Asset – essentially the concept of a continuously rolled-forward census dataset which builds on the public good achieved by the Public Health Data Asset. The design considers governance and interdependencies with the ONS Longitudinal Study for England and Wales.
23. As we continue to develop this work we are factoring in feedback from a range of external panels including: the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee, the Methodological Assurance Review Panel, the Longitudinal Scientific Advisory Panel, the Longitudinal Study Steering Group and the UK Population Theme Advisory Board.
24. We plan to publish the emerging design for the Census 2021 Data Asset.

How we will report on progress in future

25. Additionally, we are ambitious in seeking to provide our users with new benefits from our statistics. These include greater inclusivity; greater accessibility; increasing our capability for longitudinal analysis; and providing faster indicators of change within the population.
26. In future Board presentations we plan to provide updates against key metrics across these four themes, demonstrating the progress we have made.

Conclusion

27. ONS is carrying out the research set out in this paper to inform the decision on the future of the Census and population statistics in England and Wales. The Board will receive regular updates on the evidence gathered. In 2023 the National Statistician, as the Board's principal advisor on statistical matters, will present for the Board's approval a recommendation on the future of a transformed system of population estimates. In the past the Authority has proposed the necessary legislation for censuses and their content. The nature of any future recommendation from the Authority to Parliament would depend on the outcome of the decision on the future of the Census.

Becky Tinsley, Deputy Director, Social Statistics Transformation Analysis and Research (SSTAR), 14 July 2022

CIS Digital and population health surveillance

Purpose

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board with an update on the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) programme.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. the continued successful delivery and high impact of the CIS;
 - ii. recent successful milestones, including the launch of CIS Digital public beta; further analysis to support policy decisions; ongoing strategic development; and
 - iii. that the CIS programme is currently at Amber due to ongoing risks associated with participant attrition and supplier confidence, with considerable progress made in addressing key risks on the programme.

Discussion

CIS Digital and Survey Performance

3. Following Private Beta, the CIS digital questionnaire and online data collection system received Cabinet Office approval for continuation into Public Beta with a number of conditions, all of which are factored into the IT sprint plan.
4. Public Beta is now live with participants being invited to opt-in to the CIS-Digital sample in nine cohorts. By 18 July, over 210,000 invites had been sent to participants with an opt in rate of 67 per cent. 85 per cent opt-ins are on-line. Nearly 8,000 samples have been returned to the labs from participants.
5. The transition is now progressing as planned although there are some residual risks. The onward success of CIS Digital remains dependent upon participant engagement with the survey and their decision to continue. The team are working within the Research Ethics Committee and protocol guidelines to develop new and additional engagement vehicles to respond both proactively and reactively to response issues.
6. The project has direct support from ONS technical teams which has strengthened the management of the IT contract and is helping to mitigate risk.
7. The team are planning mitigations for a range of scenarios which threaten the stability of the model, for example, possible strike action by Royal Mail.
8. Analytical work is being conducted to understand the mode effect and the stability of the models with reduced sample sizes, realised in the transition period. An analytical plan outlines a number of scenarios – Optimistic, Pessimistic and Realistic. Each of these anticipate analytical risks and mitigating actions. We will be robust and transparent in our findings about both changing infection rate and the impact of changing mode; and our publications will be explicit on our findings.
9. Other analytical risks that we are managing is the impact of relying on participants to return tests in a timely fashion, including reliable postal services. We are reviewing the current weekly rhythm to ensure the lag between test date and publication date is minimised.

Impact

10. An article comparing deaths due to COVID-19 with those from flu and pneumonia was published in May, in collaboration with the Winton Centre. This highlighted that COVID-19 has been the underlying cause in more than four times as many deaths as flu and pneumonia since March 2020 and is far more likely to be listed as the underlying cause

as opposed to a contributory cause. While it was not possible to conclude yet whether COVID-19 is starting to behave like flu, the comparison was well received with extensive media coverage.

11. A synthesis of deaths due to and involving COVID-19 in 2021 was published alongside the annual mortality figures in July. In the second half of 2021, over half of excess mortality was from non-COVID-19 deaths, and the results provided a clear illustration of the greater impact of the virus in more deprived areas of England and Wales.
12. Our regular publications have clearly presented the recent growth in infection rates, mostly due to infections compatible with BA.4 and BA.5. Additionally, we published an article providing insight into characteristics of people who had had their third vaccine (booster). This showed that those in more deprived areas or identifying as non-white ethnic minorities, those working outside of the home for more than five days a week, and those who had been infected with covid-19 previously were less likely to have had their booster jab. Of those aged 18 to 64 and were eligible, those who smoked and males were less likely to have their booster as well as individuals who worked in certain industries, weren't working, or were working from home.
13. A high-profile, cumulative incidence technical article estimating how many people in the UK have ever had COVID-19 has been published. This reported about 70 per cent of the population in England had been infected at some time since April 2020, with estimates between 56 per cent and 72 per cent in the devolved nations.
14. To complement our portfolio, the CIS funded three projects from academics to complete rapid and innovative analysis on key areas. The projects covered: COVID-19 prevalence, deprivation and social inequalities; occupational differences in viral load; and whether CIS can be used for forecasting.
15. The CIS won the prestigious Royal Statistical Society Champion Award for Official Statistics, with the commendation also being won by the Long Covid analysis, also using the CIS data.

Future COVID-19 surveillance and longitudinal study

16. We are currently exploring a range of options for the future CIS (from April 2023). These include Longitudinal COVID Study (LCS) and minimal national surveillance. These elements are being considered as stand-alone activities, enabling us to progress the LCS concept in more detail given the uncertainty around future surveillance needs.
17. The options also seek to establish infrastructure that provides the capability to surge or scale up to carry out health surveillance as and when needed. Detailed work is underway to understand scientific requirements, to develop the options and to define the delivery model needed for the options and to identify the costs.
18. The key risks the team are working to mitigate are largely associated with the timetable to secure funding and any commercial partnerships, particularly to maintain ongoing surveillance. Any delays to funding and approval decisions will compromise our ability to secure sizeable commercial work that is needed to deliver activity beyond the end of March 2023.
19. In addition to the above activities work is starting to develop the 'wind-down' plan for the programme, should it be needed. This will include any associated impacts and costs.
20. We have started a series of roundtables with the Treasury and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to identify the key topics of interest associated with health and the economy.

Next Steps

21. Our two key priorities are to progress the analytical transition following the change in mode for CIS Digital and secure clarity of user need from UKHSA on 2023/24.

22. The latter is requiring significant stakeholder engagement to adapt to a variety of different options and scenarios presented by UKHSA. It is likely that the need for future COVID-19 surveillance will be determined by this coming winter season. In readiness we have proposed a small sample to test for flu starting in the autumn and are waiting for UKHSA authorization. We are also on the front foot in designing the LCS and ensuring we can adapt to meet a wider range of user requirements.

Emma Rourke, Interim Deputy National Statistician, Health, Population and Methods.
18 July 2022

Mitigating the Impact of Rising Fuel Costs on Field Data Collection

Purpose

1. This paper summarises the impact of rising fuel costs on ONS's data collection operation and the work to address this issue.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - i. note the actions being delivered at pace to address the business challenges rising fuel costs present; and
 - ii. note that a strategic re-design of the ONS field force will be delivered by Jan 2023.

Background

3. ONS's Survey Strategy defines a vision for an efficient online first data collection approach, supported by telephone and face-to-face interviewing to optimise inclusivity and improve data quality. At present, ONS is still heavily reliant on a field force of 550 interviewers across the country who persuade the public to take part in our social surveys and then collect the data in face-to-face and telephone interviews.
4. ONS interviewers are required to provide their own car and typically work a flexible 22 hours a week for a ~£12 - 15k salary a year (~£20 - 25k full time equivalent). Pre-pandemic interviewers collectively drove 5.3 million miles a year. This figure is currently projected to be closer to 2 million but is rapidly increasing as normal field practices are resuming. Interviewers are reimbursed at 45p a mile (up to 10k miles) and 25p after, in-line with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) guidelines which covers fuel costs *and* a contribution towards car running costs.
5. In recent months, escalating fuel prices have repeatedly hit the headlines, with the biggest daily jump in 17 years and prices peaking so far at ~£2/litre. This is not a situation that is likely to improve significantly soon given world events. While ONS's travel reimbursement policy is still covering the cost of fuel, spiralling prices mean that interviewers are facing both the same cost of living crisis as all ONS staff *and* a substantially reduced contribution to car maintenance. ONS is now facing a significant retention and recruitment challenge at a time when there is a need to improve survey response rates post-pandemic *and* expand the field force over the next year (by 250 staff) to support the delivery of ONS's new transformed surveys.

Discussion

6. To support some of ONS's lowest paid employees and mitigate the risks to operational data collection and survey transformation, three key principles have been agreed:
 - i. staff should not be out-of-pocket operating a car to deliver their role;
 - ii. staff shouldn't be dependent on travel reimbursement to top-up their salary; and
 - iii. ONS should enable, not simply require, interviewers to have an appropriate means of transport.
7. The ONS Survey Strategy also outlines the need to reduce the environmental impact of data collection operations and encourage more sustainable travel options.
8. The following actions are now being prioritised and taken forward at pace in close collaboration between Social Survey Collection Division, People and Business Services and Finance:
 - i. The in-flight pay review negotiations will prioritise ONS's lowest paid employees.
 - ii. The option for interviewers to use hire cars and reclaim actual fuel expenses through that route should be available if fuel prices exceed HMRC reimbursement rates.

- iii. A small one-off or staggered additional payment to interviewers is being considered.
 - iv. A vehicle lease and fleet vehicle scheme are being investigated which would offer hybrid or electric vehicles (and possibly mopeds/scooters for inner city use). The financial implication for interviewers and ONS is being carefully considered.
 - v. Recruitment efforts have been stepped up – with increased advertising and revised adverts targeting a broader employment market, as well as the use of recruitment agencies.
 - vi. A range of mitigation options are being developed to enable transformation to continue even if field force expansion does not meet planned targets. Options being considered include pausing surveys, reducing sample sizes and using less resource intensive data collection modes. Final decisions will be made by ONS's Core Group.
9. Options to address rising fuel costs that have been dismissed include changes to ONS's travel reimbursement mileage rates and the introduction of a car allowance. Both would require central government approval, would not adhere to HMRC taxation rules, have taxation implications for interviewers and would introduce inconsistency across central Government departments.
10. In addition to the above, the work that provides the greatest opportunity for strategic and lasting change is the fundamental re-design of ONS's field force which has just kicked-off. This work is being accelerated and will look at the functions, roles, grades, contracts, travel requirements, ways of working and technology required to meet ONS's transformed survey requirements. The emerging vision is that of a community, actively recruited from a diverse range of backgrounds, engaging the 'harder to count' parts of the UK less inclined to online data collection. This tougher role, potentially coupled with proactive community engagement to build local support for our surveys, would have career progression through to higher grades and pay. Travel options more focused around enabling electric vehicle usage are being explored. This work will deliver a new field design in January 2023, engaging staff, leading sector experts and the Trades Unions appropriately as it progresses.
11. Thank you to colleagues in Social Survey Collection, People and Business Services and Finance who have conducted significant rapid work on this issue in recent weeks.

Conclusion

12. Rising fuel costs are presenting a challenge to sustaining field data collection and survey transformation. A suite of actions is being collaboratively taken forward at pace and the strategic re-design of the field force aims to provide a more sustainable solution in the near future.

Dr Alex Lambert, Director of Surveys and Tina Thomas, Deputy Director of Social Survey Collection, 15 July 2022

Data Assets Update

Purpose

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board with an update on priority data assets including those needed for ONS Programmes.

Background

2. Mission three of the Digital and Data Strategy, sponsored by Professor Sir Ian Diamond, promotes Better Data to Power Decision Making. This mission will promote work to make all ‘critical’ data assets available and in use across government through trusted Application Programming Interfaces and platforms such as GDX and Integrated Data Service.
3. Over the past year, Data Growth and Operations (DGO) has seen the size of its portfolio increase significantly. In addition to approximately 150 BAU datasets (delivery of data as part of existing agreements), DGO is now delivering a portfolio of c. 411 new data acquisitions (+60 per cent from previous year) alongside three thematic integrated data assets on health, net zero and levelling up. We have worked closely with Deloitte to improve our delivery Management Information for new data acquisitions, including those covered by key ONS Programmes.
4. For new data requests, the metrics below show the growth over the past year, as well as improvements in key metrics of service quality to customers. It is important to note that these have been achieved through efficiency initiatives such as integration of project reporting via Jira, reproducible code to automate engineering checks and looking north culture change project, while the underlying budget of Data Acquisition and Operations has remained unchanged compared to 2021-22.



	Acquire (days, median)	Prepare (days, median)	Service desk (resolution days)
Change	-6%	-34%	-59%
June 2021	51	32	12.3
June 2022	48	21	5.1

5. In March 2022, the data acquisitions team led an exercise to map the existing portfolio and agree on datasets that support the non-negotiable deliverables across the office. Overall, the status of the non-negotiable datasets is Amber. Over the last 3 months we have completed 25 per cent of the agreed datasets including the delivery of HM Revenue and Customer (HMRC) RTI Framework data and Value Office Agency data, which are important for economic analysis.

Discussion

Programme Delivery and overall data RAGs

6. ARIES. Economic, Social and Environmental statistics Group (ESEG) is requesting the acquisition of 142 new datasets – it represents 34 per cent of ask across our data

portfolio (411 datasets). Of these, 103 are complete and 20 datasets are part of the non-negotiable priorities that feed into ARIES.

7. Progress has also been made in the delivery of the 179 new datasets needed for Census Programme (43 per cent of the total portfolio), with 97 (54 per cent) datasets completed and 17 green. 60 datasets in this portfolio support the non-negotiable priorities for ONS as part of the Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP).
8. The Integrated Data Service is servicing both ONS and cross-government demand, and there are many different drivers for data as the draft roadmap, for example ensuring that we anticipate and acquire data alongside making more ONS data available and responding to project demand. Anticipating data is part of developing out the three integrated data assets on Health, Net Zero and Levelling Up, which are thematic data groupings, also shown with data indexed to the Reference Data Management Framework; DGO is supporting the delivery of two datasets as part of the Levelling Up data asset in July 2022 to support the launch of public beta. We are also working through emerging processes for making data available in Google Cloud Platform, and the capability needed to support the four new services by the end of the year.

Future areas for improvement

9. In order to further improve the way in which we handle new data requests from across ONS and departments, we are implementing a new Gate 0 and Data Oversight Group. All data requests will be logged and automated through a new tool, with the Data Oversight Group chaired by the Director to support prioritisation, delivery and coordination. The automated approach will standardise requests and ensure that any new data request can be fast-tracked to the appropriate stage of the end-to-end data pipeline alongside managing stakeholder expectations better.
10. We are also automating the workflow processes for the Acquisition and Ingestion stages, which is due to go live between September and November 2022 and will be scaled for the Integrated Data Service. This will provide more permanent Management Information than the interactive JIRA dashboard recently created and drive efficiencies in the way in which we currently handle data through the different stages of the data pipeline.
11. Alongside this, we are reviewing the ambition for further Management Information and automation to analyse and action through all the stages of the end-to-end data pipeline, i.e., from stages 5 through to 10 which covers engineering, indexing and matching (currently not covered by the Management Information).
12. Furthermore, we are automating the address index matching service by November which will enable faster matching against the address index, and which we expect to scale to include the output areas and businesses by next summer, speeding up our ability to match and integrate data.

Conclusion

13. The scope and scale of the data requests from across ONS and to support cross-government priorities is ground-breaking and extensive (nearing 600 datasets – excluding Administrative Data Research requests which are handled separately), probably one of the highest across government. There is substantial administrative effort required upfront to scope out requirements, negotiate with suppliers, put in place legal confirmations and agree export methods, which is often under appreciated.
14. In summary, we are making enough progress with regards to the key programmes and moving from responsive to proactive data acquisition. We are managing expectations better than before and have clearer Management Information, with a stronger focus on unblocking delivery challenges. The new data strategy provides an opportunity for renewed focus on anticipating and acquiring data alongside developing more strategic partnerships with departments and other suppliers and looking across the full end to end

pipeline, including engineering and indexation of data. Our focus on the automation of workflow and matching will bring efficiency, consistency and standardisation by the end of the year.

15. We will also continue to push the need for greater transparency between data requests and analytical usage, and the need for key Programmes to take decisions based on their end-to-end portfolios, rather than the next, most exciting, new piece of data.

Fiona James and Roberto Pitea, Data Growth and Operations, 20 July 2022

Integrated Data Service – Public Beta Release and Programme update

Purpose

1. To provide the UK Statistics Authority Board (the Board) with an update on key elements of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Board are invited to note the initial Public Beta Release and Full Public Beta Release of IDS.

Background

3. Cabinet Committee papers and recently launched *Government's Digital and Data Strategy* both identify IDS as a core component of data sharing for better decision making and evaluation under Mission 3 sponsored by the National Statistician:

“Will work to make all ‘critical’ data assets available and in use across government through trusted APIs and platforms such as GDX and IDS.”

Discussion

Initial Public Beta Release and Full Public Beta Release of IDS

4. The Initial Public Beta (IPB) phase of the Integrated Service launched successfully, as scheduled on 15 July 2022, to be followed by the Full Public Beta release in Autumn 2022.
5. The IPB phase is formed of three waves, to align with business priorities, as follows:
 - i. Wave 1: successfully launched as planned on 15 July;
 - ii. Wave 2: scheduled for 30 September; and
 - iii. Wave 3: provisionally scheduled for end November.
6. Wave 1 introduces the following elements:
 - i. the IDS website (www.integrateddataservice.gov.uk) is live and serves as an online public-facing point of entry to the Integrated Data Service;
 - ii. additional data to include Energy Performance Certificates, Job vacancy data and Annual Business Survey data;
 - iii. enhanced user control, including a Starters, Leavers, and Movers process;
 - iv. researcher accreditation process;
 - v. a metadata management process; and
 - vi. IDS Branding.
7. Waves 2 and 3 will see the further development of business processes, technical capabilities, data sources, and management information including the implementation of:
 - i. integration between IDS (analytical platform) and IDP-D (dissemination platform);
 - ii. integration of the Researcher Accreditation System with the Metadata Solution, so that users can browse and select data products available in IDS;
 - iii. enhanced Data controls, including Statistical Disclosure Control and Output Checking processes so that all data is managed in line with IDS security standards and data protection legislation;
 - iv. provision of a data processing environment and data profiling tool(s) to support the data product preparation process;
 - v. reporting on Key Performance Indicators which are mapped to the IDS business objectives and critical success factors;
 - vi. data access and usage reports;
 - vii. remediation of the ‘Data Egress’ issue; and

viii. remediation of any outstanding or newly identified security risks.

Full Public Beta Release:

8. Plans for the FPB release remain on track, with detailed scoping of the Full Public Beta release to take place in mid-July, with planning going on alongside to address the Data Egress issue. The challenge continues, to develop an open and collaborative platform whilst also maintaining an appropriate level of security.

Programme Update

9. At the June Programme Board delivery confidence remained at AMBER. This is in acknowledgement of recent successes such as the positive Central Digital and Data Office assessment for the Dissemination service; the Amber rating at the IPA Gateway review; seeing first outputs from the analytical platform and the robust release process in progress for Initial Public Beta, alongside acknowledgement of the key risks and challenges associated with the ambitious delivery timeline.
10. The programme team have undertaken a number of drafting days and received input from ONS subject Matter Experts to shape and inform the Full Business Case Refresh, which is on track for submission to Treasury in September 2022

Alison Pritchard, Deputy National Statistician for Data Capability, July 2022

Authority Board Self Review of Effectiveness

Purpose

1. This paper covers the results of the Authority Board's self-review of effectiveness highlighting the key issues raised and proposed improvements.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note the results of the questionnaire and consider proposals for action.

Background

3. The Board is invited to review its effectiveness on an annual basis to identify where it is performing well and where improvements could potentially be made.
4. The results of the last year's self effectiveness review had indicated improvements on the previous year. The Chair had continued to provide an open and supportive culture for discussions and the Board had focussed its attention on the delivery of the strategy, Statistics for the Public Good.
5. Areas of focus for the Board highlighted in 2021 included monitoring delivery of the strategy, the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS), the Integrated Data Service (IDS) and data sharing and the Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP), all areas the Board has engaged with over the last 12 months.

Discussion

Summary of findings

6. The results of last year's self-effectiveness review indicated improvements on the previous year. This year's review has indicated sustained performance by the Board with the Chair continuing to provide an open and supportive culture. The Board has considered the important strategic issues with papers focussing on the delivery of the strategy.
7. Members commented that overall papers were very good but on occasion they could highlight the issues more clearly as well as the successes. In the coming year the Secretariat will ensure papers are well balanced with clear recommendations to inform the discussion.
8. The business planning process worked well with input by the Board ahead of publication.

Forward agenda

9. Members agree that the Board spends sufficient time on the issues that matter. The annual review of effectiveness provides an opportunity to consider the Board's forward agenda.
10. The forward agenda includes regular discussion on the areas of focus highlighted by members for the coming year including:
 - i. quarterly progress update on the delivery of the strategy, Statistics for the Public Good, with the next update scheduled for September; and
 - ii. updates at every meeting for the Integrated Data Service Programme; and quarterly updates on the Ambitious Radical Inclusive Economic Statistics programme and Digital CIS.

Programme of Activities

11. The Programme of Activities (PoA) provides Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) with the opportunity to engage with colleagues below Board level across a range of divisions.

This has proven to be successful with teams across the organisation who benefit from NEDs expertise in an informal setting outside of Board meetings. This year the remote PoA has included meetings with teams in the following areas:

- i. Integrated Data Service;
- ii. Government Analysis Function;
- iii. Data Science Campus;
- iv. Work on Violence against Women and Girls;
- v. Digital Services and Technology;
- vi. Economic Statistics;
- vii. Administrative data methodology; and
- viii. Statistical Quality.

12. The PoA will continue with a combination of remote meetings and in person visits. The Secretariat will liaise with Board members on areas of interest for the next 12 months.

Risk

13. Members agree that they are kept abreast of risks through updates from the Chief Executive and Director General for Regulation. Strategic risks are scheduled for the board six monthly. The Integrated Performance Report, a standing item for the Board, includes Management Information on the strategic risk profile. At the June Board meeting members welcomed the deep dive on the overarching strategic risk on 'Independence and Trustworthiness'.

14. The Risk and Assurance Team are planning work on the next update to the Board in November on the Strategic Risk Profile and risk appetite ranges.

15. The [Authority Annual Report 2021/22](#) reflected the progress made in our approach to risk and governance this year with a moderate Head of Internal Audit opinion for a second year in a row. Professor Sir Ian Diamond and the Senior Leadership Team are committed to continued improvement in this area.

Diversity

16. As highlighted by feedback from members while the Board is diverse in experience and skills, it is not diverse in ethnicity. The diversity of the Board will continue as part of the recruitment process for new members.

Meeting format

17. There were a number of views on the format of meetings following a period of remote, in-person and hybrid meetings. The Secretariat continue to work with IT colleagues to improve the hybrid meeting experience. Currently our approach is to alternate between remote and in person meetings is working well.

Conclusion

18. The Authority's annual self-review affords members the opportunity to reflect on what is working well and where we may need to improve our ways of working. This year Board members have requested we focus in the following areas in the coming year:

- i. the delivery of the strategy including the Integrated Data Service; Economic Statistics transformation and Digital CIS;
- ii. post Census recommendation and transformation of population and migration statistics;
- iii. dissemination of Census outputs;
- iv. statistical quality;
- v. change, risk and horizon-scanning; and
- vi. people issues.

19. The Board forward agenda will include the areas of focus noted by members. Secretariat will resolve to seek improvements for the issues highlighted in the paper.

Sally Jones, Head of Secretariat, Central Policy Secretariat, 20 July 2022