UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

National Statistician's Expert User Advisory Group

Draft Minutes
Monday 3 June 2024
Via Videoconference

Members Present
Professor David Hand (Chair)
Eva Aizpurua
Professor Paul Allin
Dame Kate Barker
Helen Boaden
Professor Paul Boyle
James Brooks
Dr Sarah Cumbers
Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Edward Humpherson
Phyllis MacFarlane
Guy Nason

Additional Attendees
Melanie Crew (for item 2)
Nicola Fulton (for item 3)
Emily Holzhausen OBE (for item 2)
Neil Townsend (for Sarah Moore)

Secretariat
Kerri Gourley
Tom Marsh

Apologies
Sarah Moore

1. Minutes and matters arising

1.1 Members were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies were received from Sarah Moore. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and all actions were reviewed.

2. Discussion with User (Emily Holzhausen OBE) [NSEUAC(24)05]

2.1 Emily Holzhausen OBE, Director of Policy and Public Affairs at Carers UK joined the meeting to reflect on her perspective as a user of statistics. The following key points were made:

   i. official statistics were extremely important to Carers UK to support improvements in visibility, rights, and entitlements for carers;
   ii. official statistics had helped improve public understanding of the proportion of male carers, which had previously been seen as a woman's role;
   iii. the 2011 Census had been transformational for Carers UK as it enabled local understanding of carers' requirements and experience, which informed local strategies;
   iv. given the importance of census data to Carers UK, the organisation would campaign to maintain the Census, or the equivalent insights from other sources;
   v. ONS was committed to producing reliable and accurate data and if an alternative to a Census was proposed it would provide at least equivalent data and insights;
   vi. members discussed the various types of caring, including those who do not have traditional networks or are unpaid, and ONS agreed to consider whether the cost of unpaid care could be included in the National Accounts;
   vii. having harmonised data would be useful as there has been analysis on England and Wales data however UK wide analysis had been more difficult; and
   viii. ONS was committed to a UK wide consistent definition of data.

Action 03/24: Grant Fitzner to consider whether the cost of unpaid care could be included in the National Accounts.

Action 04/24: Ruth Studley to consult with Carers UK to ensure FPMS will sufficiently meet Carers UK's needs.

3. Outcome of the Independent Review of the UKSA [NSEUAC(24)06]

3.1 Neil Townsend and Nicola Fulton introduced a paper on the Outcome of the Independent Review of the UKSA, which proposed the design of the UK Statistics Authority Statistical Assembly later in the year. The Assembly would have representatives from all sectors, with a focus on the Government Statistical System as a whole.

3.2 Members discussed the timing of the event for later in the year and it was noted that this would be difficult to organise due to short notice. However, there was an expectation to respond quickly to the Review. Members also discussed appointing a representative from the National Statistician's Expert User Advisor Committee (NSEUAC) to be part of the Assembly Delivery Group.

3.3 Members welcomed the update and noted that NSEUAC would play a significant role after the assembly, to triage issues to the UK Statistics Authority Board. It was also agreed that members would email the Chair if they wanted to be a representative at the Assembly Delivery Group.

4. Code of Practice Refresh [NSEUAC(24)07]

4.1 Ed Humpherson introduced a paper on the Code of Practice Refresh highlighting the spirit of continuous improvement when refreshing the code. Three conclusions were made, firstly that a refresh of the code was needed and that National Statistics should be renamed as Accredited Official Statistics. Secondly, the programme of voluntary adoption would be extended and thirdly there was a need for the code to align more closely with guidance documents produced by the Office for Statistics Regulation or the Government Statistical Service.

4.2 Members discussed the importance of the code and making it more visible to increase the reach.

4.3 Members welcomed the paper and noted that they would like to see more outreach to commercial organisations.

5. Any other business

5.1 The next meeting was due to take place via MS Teams in September 2024.

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NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S EXPERT USER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Agenda
Monday 3 June 2024, 15:00-16.40
Microsoft Teams

Chair: Prof. David Hand
Apologies: Sarah Moore

Timing	Agenda item	
1 15:00-15:10 (10 mins)	Welcome, previous minutes and actions	Meeting of 07.03.2024 Prof. David Hand
2 15:10-15:45 (35 mins)	Discussion with User - Carers UK	NSEUAC(24)05 Emily Holzhausen
3 15:45-16:20 (35 mins)	Independent Review of the UKSA – Proposal for the UK Statistics Authority Statistical Assembly	NSEUAC(24)06 Nicola Fulton Neil Townsend
4 16:20-16:35 (15 mins)	Revised Code of Practice	NSEUAC(24)07 Ed Humpherson
5 16:35-16.40 (5 mins)	Any Other Business	Prof. David Hand

Next Meeting: Thursday 5 September 2024, Remote Meeting

**Unpaid Caring:
Statistics and Stories**

**Emily Holzhausen OBE
Director of Policy and Public Affairs**

**Melanie Crew
Senior Research and Policy Officer**

**Carers UK
National Statistician's Expert User Advisory Committee
3 June 2024**

Who we are and what we do:
- Set up in 1965
- Organisation of unpaid carers, run by carers
- Over 50,000 individual members
- Affiliate organisations - mostly local organisations across the UK

We:
- Campaign
- Help others shape policy and practice
- Provide support to carers
- Provide information and advice
- Connect carers with each other
- Run the Employers for Carers forum (230 employers covering around 2.8 million employees)

![Carers UK logo - making life better for carers]

Our members

We advocate very strongly for better:
- awareness of unpaid caring
- visibility
- understanding
- support

We have achieved better visibility, rights and entitlements.
This is down to:
- Statistics
- Stories

"no research without a story"
"no story without research"

CarersUK
making life better for carers

Our history with statistics:

- General Household Survey 1990 – 855k carers providing over 50 hours of care per week:
  - In depth
  - National
  - Some regional data
  - But low on ethnicity, not possible to look at local
- 2001 Census – transformational first question on unpaid carers
- 2011 Census – nearly didn't include the question – Carers Count Campaign
- 2021 Census – a shift again

Our own research and data gathering:

State of Caring
- Annual survey with carers (11,667 responses in 2023)
- Mix of quant and qual questions
- Tested with carers
- Mix of repeated Qs and new questions on topical issues
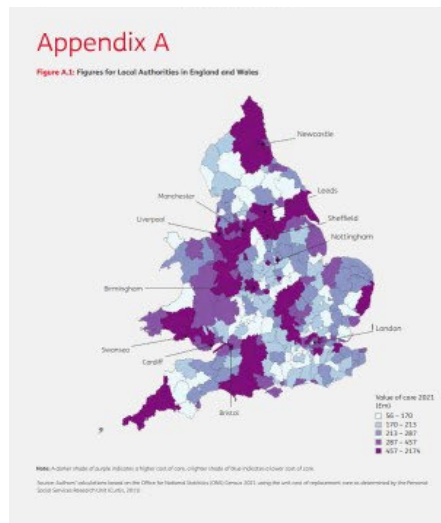
Public polling
- Polling with YouGov in 2023 – estimated 10.6m carers

Qualitative research
- Eg research exploring experiences of former carers; research with carers from diverse groups

Partnership work with Centre for Care
(Professor Matt Bennett, Professor Sue Yeandle, Dr Maria Petrillo)

How we have used the stats:

- To help local authorities, planners, and local organisations to understand local populations
- To share with carers
- To increase visibility of carers amongst the general public (e.g. through media coverage)
- To understand populations
- Different data sets have different uses and limitations
  - E.g.
    - DWP StatXplore
    - ASCOF and SALT (social care stats)
    - NHS Staff Survey
    - GP Patient Survey

carersUK
making life better for carers

A global perspective

- Definitions and language– cross cultural challenges.

- The "haves" and the "haves not"– UK is envied for the Census and other data.

- Conflation of childcare and caring for disabled or older people is problematic when looking at solutions or services planning.

- Conflation of paid and unpaid care workers (e.g. WHO global observatory on dementia) does not allow for the right recommendations to be developed.

- Recommendation for harmonisation, shared definitions.

- Global ageing challenges necessitate better knowledge.

Presentation of official stats – some feedback

- Interactive tools where you can search for multiple variables are really useful .

- However, statistical commentary highlighting key points is also invaluable.

- Age standardising data (e.g. in Census releases) is also helpful in allowing us to understand changes over time.

- Local organisations sometimes need additional support in using official statistics – presentations from ONS at our webinars last year were very helpful.

Census means a great deal to us:

- How would a local area describe its carer population? Overall figure would not exist.
- Which administrative sources of data could be used?
  - Carer's Allowance? Limited to 1.3 million claimants.
  - Carer's Council Tax discount? Limited by eligibility, take up, etc.
  - GP records? No routine identification of unpaid carers, no requirement nor incentive.
  - Local authority carer assessments? Highly subjective.
  - Greater risk of inequalities being hidden/masked

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UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S EXPERT USER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

<div align="right">NSEUAC(24)06</div>

Proposal for the UK Statistics authority Statistical Assembly

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update to the National Statistician's Expert User Advisory Committee (NSEUAC) on the proposed design for a UK Statistics Authority Statistical Assembly and invites views and discussion on both the design and the role of NSEUAC.

Timing

2. Timings are subject to discussion with the UK Statistics Authority Board (the Authority), but the first Assembly may take place later in 2024.

3. We are establishing a small Assembly Delivery Group. A decision from NSEUAC to nominate a representative would be welcome by the end of June 2024.

Recommendations

4. Members of NSEUAC are invited to:

   i. consider the UK Statistics Authority Statistical Assembly design proposal; and
   ii. discuss and provide comments on NSEUAC's role in the Assembly as proposed in points 16 and 17.

5. As part of the Government's programme of Public Bodies Reviews, an independent review of the Authority was announced in June 2023, chaired by Professor Denise Lievesley. The Review's terms of reference covered the Authority's:

   i. *efficacy*, and "whether the UK Statistics Authority is producing statistics that respond to genuine user need";
   ii. *accountability* and the Authority's accountability arrangements with the Cabinet Office;
   iii. *governance*, including whether there is "any conflict between the production and regulation functions" of the Authority, and how the Authority supports the provision of UK-wide data; and
   iv. *efficiency*, whether the Authority's plan to deliver its spending reductions is feasible, and any opportunities for longer term efficiencies.

6. A public call for evidence closed in July 2023 and Professor Lievesley carried out engagement with the Authority and its stakeholders. The Review was published on 12 March[1], making 19 direct recommendations to the Government and Authority, plus numerous accompanying suggestions.

7. The Government's initial response to each recommendation was also published on 12 March. Detailed further Government responses to Recommendation 5 (UK-wide coherence) and Recommendation 6 (Data sharing) were due to be

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[1] Independent Review of the UK Statistics Authority 2023 – 2024, gov.uk, 12 March 2024

published later in the year. Engagement with Ministers on these recommendations will resume after the general election.

8. The Review's findings speak highly of the overall quality of the UK's official statistical system and the dedication of those working within it. At the same time, the Review details some of the familiar major challenges to the system, notably around:

   i. engagement and communication with users of statistics (Recommendations 1, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18 and 19);
   ii. sharing data across government (Recommendations 6 and 7);
   iii. keeping technical capabilities up to date in a rapidly changing environment (Recommendations 2, 7, 13 and 14); and
   iv. the coherence of data across the UK (Recommendation 5).

Background: The UK Statistics Authority Statistical Assembly proposal

9. Recommendation 1 from Professor Lievesley's Independent Review of the UK Statistics Authority is for the Authority to lead the establishment and delivery of a Triennial Statistical Assembly. This should determine the UK's needs for statistics through a wide consultative process.

10. Professor Lievesley's recommendation is further supported by an Inquiry from the Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee[2], which recommended that the Authority "use a high-level Assembly (of the kind recently recommended by Professor Denise Lievesley) to draw together information from communities across the UK about their needs for evidence and the benefits new evidence would bring, alongside research on data gaps, and public understanding."

11. An Assembly design proposal has been developed to inform discussions with the Authority Board.

12. The Assembly design proposal has involved input from the Authority Board, Office for National Statistics (ONS), Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), the Government Statistical Society (GSS) and Royal Statistical Society (RSS), and other external stakeholders, including a discussion with the Chair of NSEUAC.

13. The Assembly and its outputs will be advisory, feeding into existing governance structures of the UK statistical system. It will enable contributions from across the UK's statistical community as part of the ongoing wider programme of engagement to understand user needs.

14. It is proposed that the first Assembly meeting takes the form of a large, open invite event held over a day later this year, for users, producers and regulatory representatives.

15. We propose that in advance of the Assembly we publicly ask for inputs such as: agenda items; strategic priorities; public and user needs; and cross-cutting areas for discussion. In these requests, we will be mindful of users' resource constraints and seek to draw on existing evidence of needs and use current engagement structures.

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[2] Transforming the UK's Evidence Base, PACAC, 24 May 2024

For discussion: the role of NSEUAC in the UK Statistics Authority Assembly

16. It is proposed that NSEUAC, supported by Authority colleagues, is commissioned to distil the outcomes of the Assembly meeting into a short report to the Authority Board. This could take a strategic view of potential priorities and data gaps, and could inform delivery planning. The published report may also identify opportunities for non-official statistics to be used to complement official ones for the public good.

17. To oversee design and implementation of the Assembly, we propose convening a small Assembly Delivery Group with up to ten cross-sector representatives, including representatives from the Authority, GSS, RSS and other stakeholders as appropriate (for example from business, research, and civil society organisations). We would welcome representation from NSEUAC on this group.

Conclusion

18. The paper has set out our proposal for a UK Statistics Authority Statistical Assembly and the important proposed role of NSEUAC. Members are asked to agree or provide feedback on the points in the recommendations section.

Neil Townsend and Nicola Fulton, External Affairs, Communications Division, ONS, 24 May 2024

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S EXPERT USER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Code of Practice for Statistics Refresh

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on recent activities relating to Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)'s review and refresh of the Code of Practice for Statistics (the Code). It includes a summary of our emerging thinking and an outline of our planned next steps for the project.

Recommendations

2. Members of the National Statistician's Expert User Advisory Committee (NSEUAC) are invited:

   i. to consider and comment on our emerging thinking and plans for the Code refresh.

Background

3. OSR previously reported to NSEUAC on our review to futureproof the Code of Practice for Statistics in December 2023. We were grateful to the Committee for sharing their comments. We completed our review of the Code in February 2024. Our report [announced](#) OSR's decision, supported by the UK Statistics Authority's Regulation Committee, to produce a third edition of the Code, and summarised the feedback we received in the call for evidence and across the review engagement events.

4. We are now in the early stages of the process to refresh the Code. We are drawing on the rich and valuable evidence received since the launch of the Code refresh in September 2023.

Findings from the Code Review

We will refresh the Code of Practice, producing a third edition.

5. A strong message received throughout the Code review was that the Code is highly regarded by those producing official statistics, as well as by other stakeholders. The concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV) resonate with our stakeholders, giving OSR a solid framework to operate as a statistics regulator. There was, however, wide acceptance of the continually evolving data landscape and consensus that the Code can be enhanced in its content and presentation. Therefore, in line with our own view that to be effective the Code should remain relevant and reflective of the needs and nature of society, OSR will refresh the current Code. We will consult publicly on our ideas for a refreshed code later in 2024. We outline our plans in the section titled 'Plans for the Code Refresh' below.

OSR will replace the National Statistics badge with one for accredited official statistics. OSR will not introduce badges for official statistics and official statistics in development.
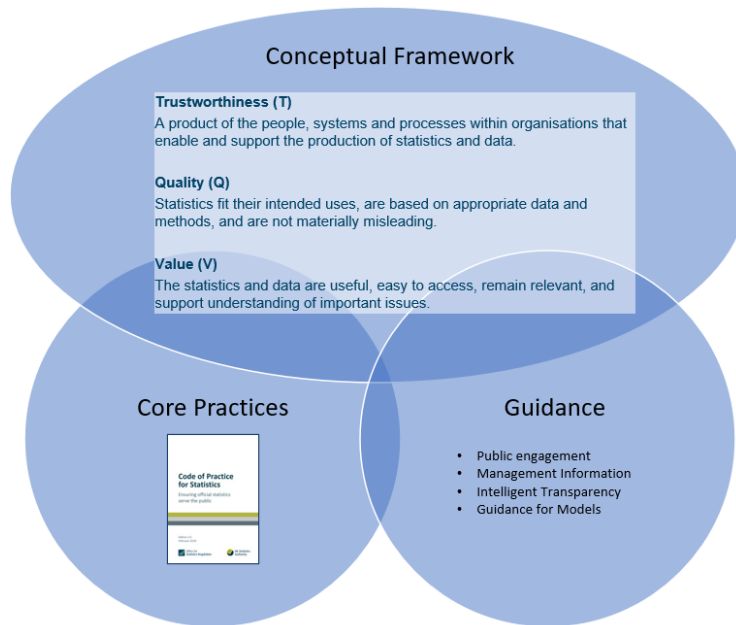
6. The call for evidence sought views on introducing new badges for accredited official statistics (called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007) and other official statistics. The responses received largely supported replacing the current accredited official statistics badge, which include the words 'National Statistics' with a new badge using the words 'accredited official statistics'. This badge is to be introduced on 7 June 2024 by all official statistics producers for statistics that have been independently reviewed by OSR and confirmed to comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code.

7. Responses on new proposed badges for official statistics and official statistics in development (previously known as 'experimental statistics') were more mixed. We heard concerns over additional badges causing confusion for users of statistics. As a result, we will not introduce the new badges. Instead, we are asking producers to provide clearer written labelling of official statistics and official statistics in development within statistical releases.

OSR will further review our voluntary application (VA) scheme, considering the detail of the feedback provided in the call for evidence, in partnership with the members of the VA community of practice in 2024.

8. The call for evidence also asked for views about the voluntary application of the Code pillars beyond official statistics. OSR believes that the Code pillars are universal and provide a helpful framework for data, statistics and analysis produced beyond government. This view was endorsed in the responses to the questions about voluntary application. The responses provided many helpful suggestions for areas OSR can focus on to further grow and develop the VA scheme.

9. We are now working on a project with members of the VA community of practice, which includes organisations who currently voluntarily apply the Code or have an interest in doing so. The project focuses on three strands: marketing and branding of the scheme – to better reach out to other analysts and organisations; guidance and training offer – to better support those applying the Code with targeted ways for learning and development; and accountability – to establish the means for ensuring the Code is being applied and the enforcement of standards.

Plans for the Code Refresh

10. Our ambition is to change the presentation of the Code's key concepts and how we communicate the standards expected in the production, dissemination and delivery of data and statistics. In doing this, we want to make the fundamental messages represented by TQV clearer and more relatable to the situations faced by producers and others.

Conceptual Framework

Trustworthiness (T)
A product of the people, systems and processes within organisations that enable and support the production of statistics and data.

Quality (Q)
Statistics fit their intended uses, are based on appropriate data and methods, and are not materially misleading.

Value (V)
The statistics and data are useful, easy to access, remain relevant, and support understanding of important issues.

Core Practices

Code of Practice for Statistics

Guidance

- Public engagement
- Management Information
- Intelligent Transparency
- Guidance for Models

11. Code v3.0 will better communicate the fundamentals of TQV as the core of our expectations for statistics production. Linked to this, it will more clearly present the standards of the Code as setting the ethical behaviours and practices required for data and statistics more broadly.

12. These 'Code fundamentals' should speak to the Code's different audiences – producers of statistics, others inside government such as senior leaders, as well as those outside government including users of statistics – reflecting the universal relevance of the Code for anyone producing or using statistics or other analysis as evidence.

13. The Code should describe what we expect of producers based on these fundamental values. Producers, and other audiences, should be supported in drawing from our existing guidance on topics or contexts, with the tools to help them navigate through and apply the Code.

14. We have prioritised some topics that we are planning to develop under this approach. These topics or contexts include:

    i. public engagement: how we can develop our current user engagement standards and guidance to focus on broader public engagement, introducing the importance of social licence in this engagement;

    ii. communication: how we can consider communication of statistics, but also of associated information and messaging, such as information on quality and organisational practices – drawing together our thinking on misleadingness, communicating uncertainty and Intelligent Transparency; and

    iii. data, methods and quality assurance: how we can consider quality and quality culture in the production of data and statistics within the Code. How we integrate our current quality indicator framework and existing quality frameworks such as European Statistical System (ESS) quality dimensions for outputs and the Data Management Association of the UK (DAMA) dimensions

for input quality. We will also consider including areas such as user participation in quality assurance activities.

15. We are currently exploring how the package of 'Code fundamentals', detailed practices, and topic toolkits, as well as our existing guidance can be best drawn together and presented for the users of the Code.

16. We are currently developing material that we plan to take out for testing with a range of stakeholders through June and July. We are planning a formal consultation beginning in the autumn to receive feedback that can constructively steer and direct our development of a revised Code before it is finalised in early 2025 and published as edition 3.0. Members of the Committee are welcome to participate in both the test phase and consultation.

Conclusion

17. We have begun work to refresh the Code. We welcome further input from NSEUAC members as we develop and test the new edition.

Ed Humpherson, Office for Statistics Regulation, 20 May 2024