

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

**Thursday, 5 June 2014
Boardroom, London**

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Andrew Dilnot (Chair)
Professor David Rhind
Professor Sir Adrian Smith
Dame Colette Bowe
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Ms Carolyn Fairbairn
Dame Moira Gibb
Professor David Hand
Mr Ed Humpherson
Dr David Levy
Mr Glen Watson

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Apologies

Ms Jil Matheson

Other Attendees

Mr Ian Cope (for item 9)
Mr Simon Crine (for item 6)
Mr Eric Crane (for item 7)
Ms Laura Dewis (for item 9)
Mr Guy Goodwin (for item 9)
Mr Paul Johnson (for item 7)
Mrs Caron Walker (for item 6)

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Ms Matheson. The Chair noted that Ms Matheson would be retiring in June. The Board expressed its sincere gratitude for the contribution that Ms Matheson had made over the course of her career in official statistics. The Chair also noted that this would be Mr Dasgupta's last Authority Board meeting before his term came to an end and the Board recorded its gratitude to him for his contribution to the work of the Statistics Authority, including his chairmanship of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings

- 3.1 The Chair reported on the topics discussed at the Non-Executive session that had taken place prior to the start of the meeting. The Non-Executive Directors had discussed recruitment of a new non-executive member of the Board, the future of the ONS Website and issues arising from Mr Johnson's review of prices statistics.
- 3.2 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 May 2014 were agreed.

4. Authority Chair's Report

- 4.1 The Chair reported on his recent activities, which included:
- i. attending and speaking to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Statistics at the House of Lords;
 - ii. introductory meetings with the incoming Chief Executive and National Statistician, Mr John Pullinger; and
 - iii. other meetings including with the Director of Full Fact, Will Moy, and the independent co-Chair's of the National Statistics Quality Review of the National Accounts, Ms Kate Barker and Mr Art Ridgeway.

5. Reports from Authority Committee Chairs

Office for National Statistics (ONS) Board

- 5.1 Professor Smith reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held on 20 May. The ONS Board had considered:
- i. issues related to the delivery of changes to National Accounts methodology including those related to the new European System of Accounts 2010 (ESA10) and Balance of Payments Manual 6 (BPM6);
 - ii. progress with the Electronic Data Collection programme and the potential transformational impact of this work on the organisation;
 - iii. work to assess the capability and capacity of ONS to deliver future work programmes; and
 - iv. a revised draft ONS business plan for 2014 to 2017.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

- 5.2 Mr Dasgupta reported on the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 28 May. The Committee had considered:
- i. the ONS response to cyber security and risks and the response ONS was taking to potential threats;
 - ii. the need for workforce planning to be part of an integrated planning process;

- iii. a draft annual report from the Head of Internal Audit for 2013/14;
- iv. a draft of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's annual report for 2013/14; and
- v. a draft Governance Statement.

Committee for Official Statistics

5.3 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) held on 29 May. The Committee had considered:

- i. plans for a major stakeholder event to be held in October as part of the Statistics Futures project. It had been agreed at COS that this project should report to the Authority Board;
- ii. emerging findings from the Monitoring and Assessment team's Administrative Data Work Programme; and
- iii. the Authority's policy on experimental statistics and the seemingly counterintuitive situation where statistics could be both National Statistics and experimental statistics at the same time.

5.4 The Committee had also considered the development of a replacement for the National Statistics Publication Hub. Members of COS received a demonstration of the new capabilities and had commended it to the Authority Board. The Authority Board confirmed that it was content for the replacement system to be implemented, leading to the eventual decommissioning of the old Publication Hub. The Board requested updates on progress.

Assessment Committee

5.5 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Assessment Committee held on 29 May. The Committee had considered:

- i. an updated Assessment Work Programme for 2014/15, which would be the subject of further discussion later in the meeting;
- ii. emerging findings from the ongoing Assessment of Recorded Crime in Scotland statistics produced by the Scottish Government, and the current position with Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland produced by the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and
- iii. six draft Assessment Reports.

Remuneration Committee

5.6 The Chair reported on the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held earlier that day. The meeting had considered outcomes of the Director and Deputy Director pay moderation meetings and Director General performance.

ADRN Board

5.7 Professor Hand reported on the meeting of the Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) Board, held on 3 June. The meeting had heard that the overall delivery confidence for the project was amber, due to uncertainties about securing data from data providers and on-going activities to establish an Approvals Panel. The meeting had also considered legislative issues, the communications and impact strategy for the Network, and the policy with regards to the destruction/retention policy for data at the end of a project.

6. National Accounts Changes in Blue Book and Pink Book 2014 – an update [SA(14)18]

6.1 Ms Walker introduced a paper which provided the Authority Board with an update on progress in the delivery and communication of National Accounts changes, including those related to the new European System of Accounts 2010 (ESA10) and Balance of Payments Manual 6 (BPM6), to be published in this year's Blue and Pink Books.

6.2 The Board agreed that it was of critical importance that there was sufficient internal and external quality assurance of the new methods and figures. It was also crucial that the changes were well communicated to users so that their effects on the time series could be understood.

6.3 The Board expressed its appreciation to ONS staff working in this area for their continued efforts.

7. Review of Range of Prices Statistics [SA(14)20]

7.1 Mr Johnson provided a summary of work so far undertaken for his review of the range of prices statistics. Since the launch of the review in May 2013, the team had considered a wide range of issues and had commissioned further work and investigation into issues identified.

7.2 The Chair reiterated that Mr Johnson's review was entirely independent, and that his review reported directly to the Authority Board.

7.3 The review team expected to publish the report in autumn 2014. The Chair and the Board expressed their thanks to Mr Johnson for his work and asked to be kept informed of progress.

8. Governance [SA(14)19]

8.1 The Chair introduced a paper which proposed changes to the Statistics Authority's governance structure.

8.2 Following discussion the governance changes were agreed. The new structure would be communicated to staff and would take effect from 1 September 2014. It was agreed that the Authority Board would review the arrangements in due course to ensure they were meeting their objectives.

9. Web Data Access [SA(14)22]

9.1 Mr Cope, Ms Dewis and Mr Goodwin introduced a paper which provided an update on progress with the main website and further information around the Web Data Access (WDA) project.

9.2 The Board agreed to deploy Web Data Access Releases 5 and 6 on the basis set out in the paper, subject to the normal testing, checks and decision making process. Some uncertainty remained about Release 6 because the testing had not been completed. Mr Cope would provide an update to the Authority Board when that testing was complete, but no further Authority Board approval was needed to deploy Releases 5 and 6.

9.3 The meeting heard that an Outline Business Case was in preparation to realign the Improving Dissemination Programme (IDP) to focus primarily on the creation of a new website. It was agreed that options for the new website would be presented to the July meeting.

10. Assessment Programme 2014/15 [SA(14)23]

10.1 Mr Humpherson introduced a paper which provided an updated Assessment Work Programme (AWP) for 2014/15 following the Monitoring and Assessment team's adoption of the criteria for assessment. It also proposed refinements to the criteria in the light of their use in practice. The paper also discussed emerging thinking on impact.

10.2 The Board welcomed the focus on impact and agreed the AWP and the criteria should be published. It was agreed that these documents should make explicit that there was a need to respond flexibly, address emerging issues, and operate on a risk prioritisation basis, so the programme would be subject to change. It was agreed that spare capacity was necessary within the team in order to respond flexibly to emerging high-risk issues.

10.3 It was also agreed that the next Assessment Committee would consider potential scrutiny issues that might arise in the run up to the General Election in 2015. There was scope for pre-emptive work in this regard, which could be similar to the Monitoring Review about official statistics to support the debate on Scottish independence.

11. Pre-release Access Reduction [SA(14)21]

11.1 The meeting noted a paper which provided the final position, as approved by the National Statistician, following minimisation of pre-release access (PRA) to Office for National Statistics (ONS) statistics. The final result of the exercise had been a reduction of instances of pre-release access by 21 per cent.

12. Data Sharing Legislation [SA(14)24]

12.1 Due to other business this issue was not considered but would be tabled at the next meeting.

13. Any Other business

13.1 There was no other business. The meeting concluded at 4:00pm. The Authority Board would meet next on 31 July 2014 at 12:00 in London.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

Thursday, 5 June 2014
Board Room, London, 12:00 – 16:00

Chair: Sir Andrew Dilnot

Apologies: None

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings Declarations of interest	Meeting of 010514
2	Authority Chair's Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Statistics Website and Communications 	Oral report Sir Andrew Dilnot
3	Reports from Authority Committee Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS Board Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Committee for Official Statistics Assessment Committee Remuneration Committee 	Oral reports Professor Sir Adrian Smith Mr Partha Dasgupta Professor David Rhind Sir Andrew Dilnot
4	Governance	SA(14)19 Sir Andrew Dilnot
5	National Accounts Changes in Blue Book and Pink Book 2014 – an update	SA(14)18 Ms Caron Walker and Mr Glen Watson
6	Review of Range of Prices Statistics	SA(14)20 Mr Paul Johnson
7	Pre-release Access Reduction	SA(14)21 Mr Glen Watson
8	Assessment Programme 2014/15	SA(14)23 Mr Ed Humpherson
9	Web Data Access	SA(14)22 Mr Ian Cope, Ms Laura Dewis, and Mr Guy Goodwin
10	Data Sharing Legislation	SA(14)24 Mr Ian Cope Mr Ben Humberstone
11	Any other business	

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SA (14)19

Governance

Purpose

1. This paper proposes changes to the present Authority governance structure.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to agree the proposals.

Timing

3. Subject to agreement by the Board the revised governance structure can be established by September 2014.
4. Terms of reference, membership, outline agendas and a communications plan can be subsequently provided to Authority Board members via circulation for initial comment, with a view to formal consideration at the July meeting of the Authority Board.

Background

5. The Authority's governance structure has evolved over time in order to best address the Authority's priorities and to discharge its responsibilities as effectively as possible, consistent with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2008.
6. At its inception in April 2008 the statutory Authority Board was formally established together with five non-statutory sub-committees in respect of Audit, Risk, Remuneration, Official Statistics and the ONS. An Assessment Committee was formed in 2009 to oversee the new function and in the same year the responsibilities of the Risk Committee were distributed among the other existing committees. Agendas, meeting frequency, membership and *modus operandi* of all boards and committees have been subject to regular review and modification over time to reflect changing circumstances and priorities.
7. The Authority Board last reviewed governance at its meeting of March 2013 when it was agreed that subject would be revisited in more than a year's time.
8. In 2013 the principal reforms included a further strengthening of the role of the Assessment Committee to best support the function and visibly demonstrate its continued independence. The Audit Committee formally adopted the name Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to reflect the growing emphasis on risk in its business. All boards and committee Terms of Reference were reviewed to ensure continuing alignment, and, to include mention of the then newly published Authority Statement of Strategy as an overarching reference point to guide business in addition to the Statistics Act.
9. The changes set out in this paper build on those developments in respect of the Audit and Assessment Committees and take a fresh look at the work of the Committee for Official Statistics, the ONS Board and the Authority Board as a collective whole.

Discussion

Overview

10. In the first part of 2014 Board thinking has continued to evolve on how governance structures could be further developed. A non executive sub group comprising Mr Partha Dasgupta and Dame Colette Bowe further considered the issues and distilled emerging conclusions. The group reviewed aims and scope, issues identified, legal or other constraints, executive roles and structures, and, boards and committees.
11. Discussions have been taken forward with the Chair, Deputy Chairs and all Board members in one form or another. The incoming Chief Executive-designate has been fully consulted on the development of the proposals too.
12. The aims of the work can summarised as follows, to:
 - i. enhance clarity on organisational relationships and responsibilities;
 - ii. best support the lead executives doing the job;
 - iii. focus on those things that really matter;
 - iv. provide a clear line of sight from the Authority Board;
 - v. equip the Authority Board to best achieve its objectives;
 - vi. protect the independence of regulation; and
 - vii. make best use of all Board members time, both executive and non-executive.
13. These aims reflect a range of issues where opportunities to enhance the present arrangements have been identified. These include: the distance of ONS from the main Authority Board; the challenge of managing and focussing ONS; a need for greater foresight on emerging problems; and, a reduction in the time taken for issues to surface through organisational structures. Boosting strategic capability and economic statistical capability have also been identified as desired outcomes.
14. The main conclusions of this work are to propose a significant 'de-layering' and simplification of the present governance structures. These represent a continuation of the development of the Authority over the past seven years and a reflection of the Authority's growing organisational maturity. In summary the following is proposed.
 - i. The main **Authority Board's** board role will be enhanced, meeting more frequently and subsuming some of the key business from the existing ONS Board and Committee for Official Statistics.
 - ii. An **ONS Management Committee** chaired by the Authority Chief Executive will be created, will be executive led and will include one or more new Director General level post holders. Its role will be developed by the Chief Executive-designate.
 - iii. The present **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee** and **Assessment Committee** will continue on their current development trajectories and provide the Authority Board with two arms of independent assurance.
 - iv. The **Remuneration Committee** will continue with an enhanced remit including succession planning and talent management.
 - v. The **Committee for Official Statistics** (COS) and the **ONS Board** will cease and hold their final meetings in July.
 - vi. **Official statistics seminars** successfully pioneered under COS will continue and be enhanced.
 - vii. With a reduced amount of non-executive time spent in committee meetings more time can be targeted at specific **Authority 'task and finish' groups** and other activities.

15. These changes are represented in 'as is' and 'to be' diagrams at **Annex A** and **Annex B** respectively.

16. Further detail is provided in the following section.

Supporting detail

17. More time will be made for the *Authority Board* with meetings lasting a full day and taking place 10 times a year. The Board's agenda will incorporate key issues previously considered by the ONS Board and COS. The Board will be supplied with the information necessary to enable members to provide help and expertise to maximum effect.

18. A typical agenda for an Authority Board meeting might include the following items:

- i. Chair's report;
- ii. Chief Executive's report focussing on those critical issues that 'keep them awake at night';
- iii. monthly oversight of key programmes and projects and monthly financial oversight;
- iv. 'deep dive' into one major issue of current concern;
- v. 'deep dive' into one major issue of future concern;
- vi. Head of Assessment's report and principal scrutiny issues; and
- vii. reports from committees and task and finish groups.

19. The Authority Board would continue to receive assurance from a strengthened *Audit Committee* with a wider remit to focus explicitly on risk across the Authority as well as on audit and finance. The Audit Committee will meet six times a year, one meeting every two months. Non-executive membership will be increased to three Authority Board members, in addition to the external non-executive membership.

20. The Authority Board will also continue to receive reports from the *Assessment Committee* with a reshaped and refocused programme as currently being devised and implemented. The Assessment Committee will continue to meet six times a year, one meeting every two months. Non-executive membership will continue to comprise four Authority Board members. Non-executive membership of the Audit and Assessment Committees will be mutually exclusive.

21. A senior executive leadership committee known as the *ONS Management Committee* and will be formed and chaired by the Chief Executive. It will replace both the ONS Board and the present Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Committee. It will meet monthly. During a transition period two non-executive members will be retained but in the longer term the committee membership will be expected to be exclusively executive. It will be for the Chief Executive to consider further issues of membership, agendas and format of the ONS Management Committee, and of course whatever other meetings they will wish to hold with colleagues.

22. The wide-ranging, outward facing and strategic *Official Statistics seminars* could in future be a full day event two or three times a year and/or could be a shorter event incorporated into an Authority Board meeting day. All Authority Board members will be invited to attend.

23. A reformed *Remuneration Committee* would also be formed with an agenda including succession planning, recruitment and talent management. This committee might meet three or four times a year with relatively short meetings scheduled to coincide with days with existing business, as is currently the case. Non-executive membership might continue to comprise three or four Authority non-executive members.

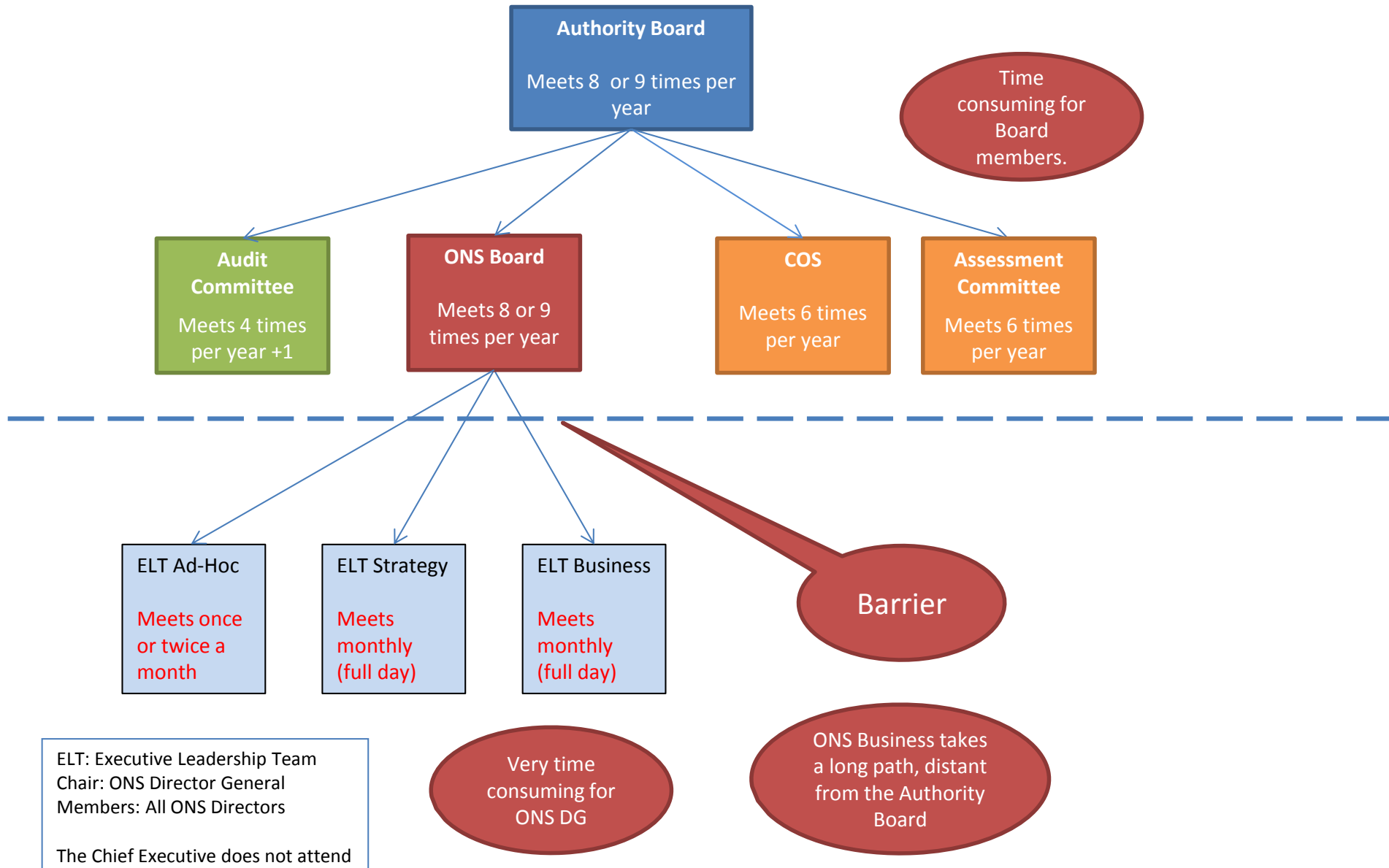
Robert Bumpstead, Board Secretary, 30 May 2014

List of Annexes

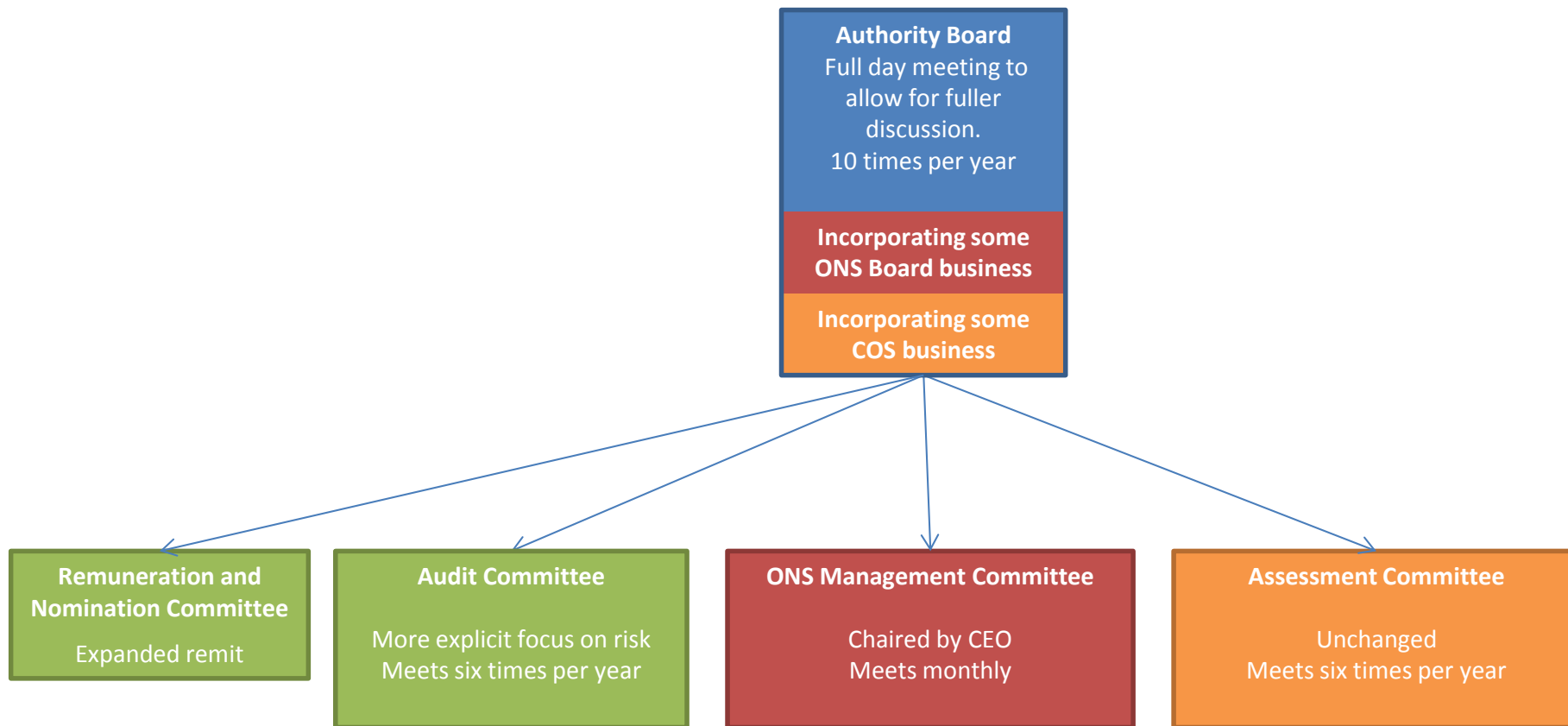
Annex A 'as is' governance diagram

Annex B 'to be' governance diagram

Existing Authority Governance Structure



Proposed New Authority Governance Structure



SA(14)18 – National Account changes in Blue Book and Pink Book 2014

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(14)18

National Account changes in Blue Book and Pink Book 2014

These documents have been published on the Office for National Statistics website.

To see these documents go to:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/naa1-rd/national-accounts-articles/changes-to-the-presentation-of-the-tables-within-blue-book-2014-as-a-result-of-implementing-esa2010-and-bpm6/pra---changes-to-the-presentation-of-the-tables.html>

and

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/naa1-rd/national-accounts-articles/changes-to-the-presentation-of-the-tables-within-the-pink-book-2014-as-a-result-of-implementing-the-balance-of-payments-manual-6/pra.html>

SA(14)20 – Review of Range of Prices Statistics

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(14)20

Review of Range of Prices Statistics

This document will be published on the UK Statistics Authority website in due course.

The document will be available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(14)21

Results of the Pre-Release Access Minimisation Exercise

Purpose

1. This paper provides Authority Board members with the final position, as approved by the National Statistician, following minimisation of pre-release access (PRA) to Office for National Statistics (ONS) statistics.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. the final reduction in PRA and the additional benefits gained from the exercise;
 - ii. the impact across departments and their reactions;
 - iii. the next steps planned to ensure the consistent and robust maintenance of good practice for PRA; and
 - iv. the annual analysis of PRA to official statistics across the Government Statistical Service and produced by the National Statistician's Office also included at agenda item 20 for information.

Discussion

3. The UK Statistics Authority's [Monitoring Report 6](#) reviewed PRA arrangements. This report supported significant reductions in PRA. It included the statement that the Authority would like to see a set of criteria developed and used to identify statistical reports that should not have any pre-release access.
4. A model for assessing the suitability for PRA to ONS statistics was developed and applied to all current instances for PRA in ONS. The model, which was aligned with the PRA Order, was presented to the Authority Board in October 2013 and, following some revisions, was approved. The model established a proposed cut of 27 per cent. This reduction was based on information held by ONS at the time and this, as expected, was updated through the process. A summary of the model and how the results were moderated can be found in **Annex A**.
5. The proposals were shared with all departments who receive PRA from ONS in November 2013. We requested that if they wished to challenge any of the proposals they provide us with additional information by December 2013.
6. The first review of departmental challenges by the National Statistician resulted in further challenge to departments where necessary to provide further assurance of the consistency of the model. Discussions with departments and further consistency checks were concluded and the final recommendations agreed by the National Statistician in March 2014.

Final Results

7. Table 1 shows the number of instances of PRA which have been cut and challenged:

Table 1: Reductions in Pre-Release Access

Proposed reduction of PRA instances	464
of which:	
• not challenged	146
• challenged	318
of which:	
• granted access	187
• not granted access	131

8. There were also a number of increases through the challenge process from a small number of departments (Home Office, HM Treasury and Department for Culture, Media and Sport). Through further discussion with these departments it became apparent that, unless we challenge how Ministers in departments are briefed, we would be unable to reduce numbers further. Further, some of the increases were caused by needing multiple Ministers under a coalition government. The extent and acceptance of these increases can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Increased PRA Lists through Challenges

Increases through the challenge process	61
of which:	
• granted access	57
• not granted access	4

9. A benefit of this exercise has been to cleanse our list, which we will use and update moving forward.
10. The creation of a definitive list also resulted in 104 decreases, where departments informed us that they no longer required access for certain roles despite not being challenged.
11. The result of all these factors has been a reduction of 385 in the number of instances of PRA to ONS statistics. This equates to a 21 per cent decrease, a reduction to 1,442 instances. A full breakdown of the figures can be found in **Annex B**.
12. The biggest reductions for departments that challenged were Police Chief Constables, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). All of them have lost access to Crime statistics, the only release they had PRA to. Wales Office and Welsh Government were the most affected departments to lose access to more than one release. Wales Office reductions are small and their evidence in the challenge stated that they rarely used the data. Welsh Government only challenged some of the proposed reductions and the evidence provided meant that only six of those challenged were finally rejected. Full details of the impact by department are shown in **Annex C**.
13. In addition to the initial moderation during the application of the model we have also continued to check consistency throughout the challenge process and fairness in how the model is applied. We are content that all regions have been treated equally. Further we are content that we have taken a reasonable approach to numbers where multiple Ministers are concerned, for example ensuring there are enough press officers to aid all. We have challenged departments with multiple Ministers and are content that any one of them could be asked to comment on the releases they have access to.

14. The most contentious area of reduction is the Police Chief Constables and as such we have looked into these cases more fully. We have confirmed that each Chief Constable will still have their own regional information and that Home Office will be able to provide them with the management information they require on recorded crime. As such loss of PRA is not felt to prevent them commenting on their regional crime statistics. The final decision therefore is that PRA is removed for Police Chief Constables. It should be noted that while we have only received two letters from Police Chief Constables we know from Home Office that the decision will be unpopular. Home Office is content that there is justification to remove them from PRA and have offered to help manage this fallout.
15. Comparing reductions across releases, there are no surprising reductions. Lower profile releases have taken the largest reductions, with the exception of Crime Statistics. For completeness reductions by release are included in **Annex D**.

Other Benefits Resulting from this Exercise

16. In addition to the reduction in PRA there have been other benefits from the exercise. We now have a comprehensive definitive list of all instances of PRA to ONS statistics which is agreed by ONS and the departments receiving PRA. We have also unearthed areas where potential breaches may have already been occurring. These have been reported where clear evidence has been found to support a breach; in other cases we feel that the proposals will have stopped future breaches.
17. The exercise has also raised awareness of PRA both within ONS and across departments. There has been clarity provided over the differences between PRA, early access for quality assurance and joint publication. Such discrepancies have been amended in the lists.

Stakeholder Reaction

18. Only eight departments challenged the proposals, affecting 19 outputs.
19. Statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs) have raised a number of frustrations during the minimisation exercise. The frustrations have centred around:
 - i. not sharing information on how other departments had been cut and how they had scored against the model; answering these questions would not have provided the information needed to assess across the model. We remained very open to further information and worked with departments during the process to ensure we gathered greater information. This approach has generally meant that HoPs have been content;
 - ii. frustration with discrepancies between our central list, ONS business area lists and departments' lists. We worked with the departments and business areas to agree a single list and are now confident that we have a definitive list of PRA for ONS statistics; and
 - iii. departments have been frustrated with the length of time this exercise has taken. This was largely due to resource issues at the start of the process, the decision to develop a sustainable model rather than simply ask departments to reduce their numbers, and greater work required than was anticipated in ensuring a central list was correct.

20. We have tried to manage departments' expectations and relationships with departments are still good. There was only one reference to some dissatisfaction in a Customer Satisfaction Survey response.
21. During the challenge process, we arranged meetings with a number of departments which provided us with a better understanding about how departments operate in terms of briefing Ministers. While this has not always resulted in radical reductions it has allowed us to make better decisions that are more palatable and workable for departments. This has also bought us some grace with departments who work hard to reduce lists as far as possible for themselves.

Next Steps

22. Letters confirming the final outcome of the exercise were sent to HoPs from the National Statistician on 17 April 2014. HoPs were then requested to inform officials within the department of the final result. The new lists will be used with effect from the next release.
23. The information gathered throughout this exercise has provided strong evidence of the need for training on PRA awareness and processes to ensure a robust system is maintained. ONS has plans to conduct training across ONS business areas to address this immediately, prioritising the areas in order of release date and working with them to ensure a central list can be maintained moving forward. This work started in April 2014 and will continue until we have covered all areas.
24. There is also a need to work with departments to ensure robust and consistent processes and practices are maintained for PRA. We have spoken to a number of HoPs about this and they have welcomed the move for greater clarity. This will include work with ONS security experts to ensure methods of releasing the data are robust and consistent.
25. We are also considering at further longer-term avenues for training if felt necessary and will look to deliver this across the Government Statistical Service, working with the National Statistician's Office.

Conclusion

26. The key points from the exercise are:
 - i. the cut equates to a 21 per cent decrease in PRA from the minimisation exercise;
 - ii. there have been numerous benefits from the exercise aside from the reduction including raised awareness of PRA and a centrally agreed list by ONS and other government departments. We have also reduced the chance of breaches and tightened the processes used;
 - iii. stakeholder reaction has been less than anticipated. Those with greatest concern have been the Police Chief Constables but we are satisfied they still have access to what is necessary for them to comment publically on regional figures; and
 - iv. a plan of work to increase awareness and understanding further, together with work to ensure robust and consistent process are in place, will now be taken forward by ONS.

Glen Watson, Director General, ONS, 27 May 2014

List of Annexes

Annex A	Summary of Pre-Release Access Model
Annex B	Breakdown of Pre-Release Access Reduction
Annex C	Reduction by Department
Annex D	Reduction by Release

Annex A Summary of Pre-Release Access Model

1. Each instance of pre-release access was scored according to each of the below five criteria:
 - i. national policy;
 - ii. delivery of a national service;
 - iii. public comment;
 - iv. direct briefing; and
 - v. national importance.
2. The scores were then moderated across releases and departments. This also included reducing scores where necessary to ensure the following:
 - i. in general a role will be responsible for either commenting publicly or for briefing the spokesperson. The only exception to this is press / media officers, who could legitimately be expected to both comment publicly themselves and brief other spokespeople;
 - ii. within a department, for any one release, generally pre-release access will only be given to one Press Officer role (the "Duty" Officer). A pool of Press Officers should each sign a declaration, but the pre-release version of the output will be sent to one only, ie whoever is the Duty Officer for the day of publication. The pre-release version must not be shared with any other Press Officers, even if they have signed a declaration; and
 - iii. the same approach is taken to Special Advisors - for a single release, pre-release access will only be granted to one Special Advisor in a department. The pre-release version must not be shared with any other Special Advisors, even if they have signed a declaration.
3. A stepped approach was then taken to reduce pre-release access. The steps are cumulative, with each building on the previous step.

Step 1 Initially all instances scoring "not applicable" in the first four criteria (ie national policy, national service, public comment, briefing) were removed.

Step 2 All instances scoring "not applicable" for both public comment and briefing were then removed.

Step 3 All instances where all of the first four criteria (ie national policy, national service, public comment, and briefing) scored as low were removed.

Step 4 In step 4 all instances where all of the first four criteria (ie national policy, national service, public comment, and briefing) scored as medium or below were considered. Access was removed where national importance is defined as low or medium.
4. The results from the model were moderated across releases and departments. This also included ensuring that the following principles were met:
 - i. In general a role will be responsible for either commenting publicly or for briefing the spokesperson. The only exception to this is press / media officers, who could legitimately be expected to both comment publicly themselves and brief other spokespeople;
 - ii. within a department, for any one release, generally pre-release access will only be given to one Press Officer role (the "Duty" Officer). A pool of Press Officers should each sign a declaration, but the pre-release version of the output will be sent to one

- only, that is to whoever is the Duty Officer for the day of publication. The pre-release version must not be shared with any other Press Officers, even if they have signed a declaration; and
- iii. the same approach is taken to Special Advisors – for a single release, pre-release access will only be granted to one Special Advisor in a department. The pre-release version must not be shared with any other Special Advisors even if they have signed a declaration.

Annex B Breakdown of Pre-Release Access Reduction

1. Table B1 indicates the total number of instances of Pre Release Access (PRA) and where reductions have come from through the minimisation process.

Table B1: Breakdown of PRA Reduction

	Instances	Final Reductions
Total number of instances of PRA to ONS statistics	1,827	
of which:		
• were missed from the original central list at the start of the exercise but were true and approved cases of PRA	32	
Proposed reduction of PRA instances	464	
of which:		
• not challenged		146
• challenged	318	
of which:		
• kept access	187	
• lost access		131
Increases through the challenge process	61	
of which:		
• kept access	57	
• lost access		4
Decreases to PRA from departments declaring access no longer required for a role without challenge		104
Total reduction to the number of instances of PRA to ONS statistics		385

Annex C Reduction by Department

Key	
Departments who challenged proposed reduction to PRA	

4.3

Department	Original # Instances of PRA	Final # Instances of PRA	% Reduction
10 Downing Street	77	77	0
Association of Chief Police Officers	3	0	100
Bank of England	156	156	0
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills	142	142	0
Cabinet Office	30	28	7
Department for Communities & Local Government	26	16	38
Department for Culture, Media & Sport	33	33	0
Department for Education	8	3	63
Department for Education Northern Ireland	3	3	0
Department of Health	190	177	7
Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety Northern Ireland	6	6	0
Department for Enterprise, Trade & Industry Northern Ireland	19	19	0
Deputy Prime Ministers Office Cabinet Office	77	77	0
Department for Work & Pensions	87	75	14
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary	2	0	100
HM Revenue & Customs	1	0	100
HM Treasury	282	282	0
Home Office	119	119	0
Low Pay Commission	2	2	0
Ministry of Defence	1	0	100
Ministry of Justice	9	3	67
National Treatment Agency	1	0	100
NHS England	9	9	0
Northern Ireland Department for Finance & Personnel	1	0	100
Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency	14	9	36
National Records Scotland	5	1	80
Public Health England	3	0	100
Regional Chief Constables	88	0	100
Scotland Office	2	2	0
Scottish Government	119	90	24
The Pensions Regulator	1	0	100
UK Border Agency	3	0	100
Visit Britain	4	4	0
Visit Scot	4	0	100
Visit Wales	3	0	100
Wales Office	14	8	43
Welsh Government	160	101	37

Annex D Reduction by Release

Release	Original # Instances of PRA	Final # Instances of PRA	% Reduction
Cancer Incidence and Survival	13	13	0
Employment by COB and Nationality	22	19	14
Labour Productivity	31	18	42
International Comparisons of Productivity	21	5	76
Crime Statistics	157	48	69
Construction	23	22	4
Retail Sales Index	42	40	5
UK Trade	59	43	27
Public Sector Employment	44	43	2
International Passenger Survey	16	9	44
Index of Services	29	29	0
GDP Preliminary	55	53	4
MSQR	70	51	27
Population estimates	37	34	8
Electoral stats	7	0	100
Life Opportunities	20	15	25
Regional Gross Value Added	40	38	5
Regional Gross Disposable Household Income	43	40	7
VOICES	14	14	0
National Population Projections	41	28	32
Sub-National Population Projections	17	0	100
Interim Life Table	9	0	100
Public Sector Finances	33	25	24
Balance of Payments	52	36	31
GDP	49	48	2
Index of Production	38	38	0
Labour Market Statistics	103	102	1
Business Investment	39	36	8
Gross Expenditure on Research and Development	9	9	0
Business Enterprise Research and Development	11	11	0
Occupational Pension Schemes Survey	6	5	17
House Prices Index	23	23	0
Profitability	16	15	6
Drug related deaths	10	9	10
Unexplained deaths in infancy	14	14	0
Sub-national life expectancy	12	12	0
Excess winter mortality	17	17	0
MRSA and Cdiff	15	15	0
Suicides	12	12	0
Alcohol related deaths	13	13	0
Civil Partnerships	14	10	29
Deaths by area	10	10	0
Child mortality statistics	11	11	0
Weekly deaths	6	3	50
Deaths first release	15	10	33
Population and Health Reference Tables	4	0	100
Conceptions	11	9	18
Births First Release	11	8	27
Births by area, CB2, CM1, CM2, Further parental characteristics	2	0	100
Characteristics of Birth 1	10	10	0
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	37	37	0
Period & Cohort life expectancy tables	14	0	100
Annual Civil Service Employment Survey	13	11	15
Business Demography	6	2	67
Effect of Taxes and Benefits on Household Income	19	19	0
Business Register and Employment Survey	3	3	0
Work and Worklessness	14	14	0
Regional Work and Worklessness	12	12	0
Public Service Productivity Estimates: Total Public Services	35	5	86
Public Service Productivity Estimates: Education	16	16	0
Public Service Productivity Estimates: Healthcare	19	19	0
Expenditure on Healthcare	26	26	0
Wealth in Great Britain	23	18	22
Integrated Household Survey	33	29	12
Opinions and Lifestyle Survey: Smoking Habits Among Adults	11	11	0
Consumer Prices Index	75	68	9
Overseas Travel & Tourism Stats Bulletin	8	5	38
Travel Trends	12	12	0
Producer Prices Index	75	62	17

SA(14)23 – Assessment Programme 2014/15

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(14)23

Assessment Programme 2014/15

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/programme-of-assessment/assessment-work-programme-2014-15---july-2014-version.pdf>

SA(14)22 – Web Data Access

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(14)22

Web Data Access

The fifth release of the ONS Web Data Access platform was rolled out on 27 July.

The ONS Data Explorer is available at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/data/web/explorer>

SA(14)24 – Data Sharing Legislation

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(14)24

Data Sharing legislation

This agenda item is to be considered at the UK Statistics Authority Committee meeting on 31 July 2014.