

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Committee for Official Statistics

Draft Minutes

**Meeting of Wednesday 17 July 2013
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London**

Present

Members

Professor David Rhind (Chair)
Mr Richard Alldritt
Dr Colette Bowe
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Sir Andrew Dilnot
Professor David Hand

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Other Attendees

Mr Pete Benton (for items 2 and 3)
Mr Alexander Chislett (for items 2 to 4)
Ms Pam Davies
Ms Tricia Dodd (for items 8 and 9)
Ms Jane Naylor (for items 2 and 3)
Professor Sir Adrian Smith (for item 2)
Mr Sandy Stewart
Mr Sean Whellams (for items 2 to 4)

Apologies

Dr Norman Caven
Ms Jil Matheson

Declarations of Interest

None

1. Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting of 16 May 2013 were agreed as a correct record. Progress with actions was reviewed, with the following points noted:
- i. the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had not published the responses to its consultation about the discontinuation of regional statistics. It was agreed that a statement of principle covering the publication of consultation responses could be developed by the Head of Assessment;
 - ii. a paper on developments with the Publication Hub would be considered at the September COS meeting; and
 - iii. a paper on compliance with EU statistical regulations would be considered at the Authority Board on 30 July.

Action: Head of Assessment to develop a set of principles covering the publication of consultation responses.

Action: Paper on developments with the Publication Hub to be provided to the September meeting of COS.

2. Beyond 2011 [SA(COS)(13)25]

- 2.1 Mr Benton introduced a paper about the assurance mechanisms for the Beyond 2011 programme and the potential implications for the wider statistical system of a move to a new system for population statistics. A further paper would be presented to the next meeting of the Authority Board on 30 July.
- 2.2 ONS intended to hold a consultation from September to November 2013. The Committee agreed that ONS should publish all responses to the consultation.
- 2.3 The meeting considered the three streams of assurance for the Beyond 2011 programme: delivery assurance, methodological assurance and business case assurance. The Committee welcomed the range of assurance mechanisms and discussed how they could be strengthened and augmented.
- 2.4 The Committee heard that legislation would be required if ONS were to move to a new system using administrative data. The Committee considered the prospects for such legislation.
- 2.5 The meeting discussed the potential implications – both opportunities and risks - for the wider statistical system of a move to a new system based on existing administrative data and new surveys. There was potential for a new survey to be integrated with other government surveys, which could potentially increase the statistical power of other surveys and reduce costs. There would be clear advantages to users of more frequent, accurate and coherent population-related estimates, and it was likely that such statistics would be in high demand, including across the private sector. All this would however involve radical change and have financial consequences for ONS and the rest of the GSS given present governance arrangements.

Action: ONS to further develop proposals in light of discussion.

3. GSS Data Strategy [SA(COS)(13)26]

- 3.1 Mr Whellams introduced a paper which set out the emerging findings from work to define a data strategy for the Government Statistical Service (GSS). The strategy was represented by a graphic which depicted infrastructure as the foundation layer, and four 'pillars' for maximising the use of data, shared methods, maximising impact, and data assurance. The strategy did not call for a single platform, rather it encouraged strengthened use of data through shared methods and collaboration.

3.2 The following comments were made in discussion:

- i. the GSS was not a single organisation, rather it was a community of practice across a range of organisations, each of which had strategies and implementation plans of their own;
- ii. buy-in to the data strategy would be sought through explaining the mutual benefits;
- iii. there were currently no specific additional resources allocated to delivering the data strategy, but there were potential opportunities to collaborate with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC);
- iv. the strategy would include worked examples of practice from across the GSS within the descriptions of each of the pillars; and
- v. the strategy should consider the relationship with the commercial sector, for example by establishing common protocols for how data can be sold.

3.3 The Committee requested sight of the 'map' of the various data initiatives in play.

Action: Mr Whellams to provide the map of data initiatives.

3.4 The Committee heard that it was intended that the strategy would be signed off by October and that a high level implementation plans would be produced soon thereafter. The Committee thanked Mr Whellams for his update and asked to be kept informed of progress.

4. Statistical work in HM Revenue and Customs [SA(COS)(13)27]

4.1 Mr Whellams provided a summary of statistical work in HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

4.2 The meeting heard that the main purpose of the data produced in HMRC was for operational and policy purposes, and the additional resource needed to produce official statistics and National Statistics was marginal.

4.3 The level of staff turnover at HMRC was relatively high and there were some concerns about difficulties with recruiting graduates with the right statistical skills. The meeting also considered challenges with Assistant Statistician recruitment across departments.

4.4 The meeting discussed some of the trends displayed in recent HMRC statistical tables and agreed that it was important that such tables were accompanied by good commentary to explain the effect of policy changes on the statistics. It was noted that the statistical pages of the HMRC website had significantly improved, and the HMRC 'Datalab', which allowed access to anonymised HMRC data for approved academic researchers in a secure environment, had been praised by users.

5. Draft Monitoring Review: School-level examination results [SA(COS)(13)30]

5.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a draft Monitoring Review about school-level examination statistics. The review had found that school-level examination statistics could be obtained for all four countries of the UK, but they were released in very different ways that caused substantial effort for users and which could encourage misunderstanding or misuse.

5.2 The meeting discussed the principle that statistical policy should not be subordinate to educational policy. It was agreed that the report should be submitted for final approval and publication.

Action: Mr Alldritt to arrange for final approval and publication of the Monitoring Review about school-level examination statistics.

6. Issues raised with Authority [SA(COS)(13)31]

- 6.1 The Chair introduced a paper which provided an overview of issues raised with the Authority. The meeting discussed the media reporting and understanding of statistics and it was suggested that the Authority could take forward an event with news journalists and special correspondents.
- 6.2 The meeting discussed some of the key issues facing the Authority. The following points were made in the discussion:
- i. ONS was currently undertaking a review to minimise the extent of pre-release access to ONS statistics. Once this exercise was complete in September, the Authority would take stock of the position on pre-release access;
 - ii. there was a need to define and promote good practice in communicating the uncertainty associated with official statistics;
 - iii. inflation and its measurement was a key issue for the Authority;
 - iv. the Authority should keep abreast of developments and discussions in the EU regarding data protection and privacy; and
 - v. providing better statistical infrastructure – including staff capacity – and planning should be given a high priority.

7. Review of Arrangements for Engaging with Arm's Length Bodies [SA(COS)(13)32]

- 7.1 Ms Davies introduced a paper which set out the rationale for the recent review of arrangements for engaging with arm's length bodies (ALBs) and the outcomes of that review.
- 7.2 The meeting noted that the review had recommended a statement of good practice be created, setting out standards for contact and support for ALBs. The recommendations had been accepted by Heads of Profession.

8. ONS work to provide comparable statistics across the UK [SA(COS)(13)28]

- 8.1 Ms Dodd provided an update on ONS proposals to produce a compendium of comparable statistics across the UK. The proposed compendium would include statistics on topics where comparable data existed or could easily be derived.
- 8.2 The meeting welcomed the plans. It was noted that the work would complement the work being undertaken by Theme Leaders to assess comparability, and by the Monitoring and Assessment team. The Committee asked to be kept informed of progress.

9. Emerging Findings from Monitoring Review: Official Statistics in the Context of the Referendum on Scottish Independence in 2014 [SA(COS)(13)29]

- 9.1 Mr Alldritt introduced the emerging findings from the Monitoring Review: Official Statistics in the Context of the Referendum on Scottish Independence in 2014.
- 9.2 The Committee agreed that the concept behind the Monitoring Review was strong, but the report should avoid becoming too much like a compendium of statistics. The Review should focus on providing cautionary advice for users who wished to compare statistics across geographic areas, but it should not attempt to directly answer the substantive questions of the debate by interpreting the meaning of the statistics. The advice could cover which sources of information to use and where there were gaps in coverage. Statements within the report should be checked carefully, attributed and cited.
- 9.3 It was agreed that the report would not be considered at the next Authority Board, to give sufficient time for drafting, but would be circulated via correspondence when ready.

Action: Mr Alldritt to take forward work on the Monitoring Review about Scottish independence in light of comments.

10. Activities of the Government Statistical Service [SA(COS)(13)33]

10.1 Ms Davies provided an update of GSS activities since the last meeting. The meeting noted that the National Statistician's Office was modernising the GSS intranet site (StatNet), with the launch of a new public facing website for the GSS. The meeting welcomed the aggregate thematic summary of Annual Assurance Reports.

11. Cuts to official statistics [SA(COS)(13)34]

11.1 Ms Davies introduced an update on plans by producers of official statistics for ceasing the production of statistics, and on consultations relating to statistics.

11.2 The meeting sought clarification on the outcome of the Welsh Short Term Output Indices which had been reported to a previous meeting as a candidate for discontinuation.

Action: Mr Alldritt to confirm the status of Welsh Short Term Output Indices.

12. Any other business

12.1 There was no other business. The Committee would meet next on Wednesday 18 September 2013 at 13:00 hours.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
Committee for Official Statistics

Agenda

Wednesday 17 July 2013
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London, 10:00 to 13:00

Chair: Professor David Rhind
Apologies: Ms Jil Matheson

1	Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising	Meeting of 160513
2	Beyond 2011	SA(COS)(13)25 Mr Pete Benton and Ms Jane Naylor
3	GSS Data Strategy	SA(COS)(13)26 Mr Sean Whellams
4	Statistical work in HM Revenue and Customs	SA(COS)(13)27 Mr Sean Whellams
5	ONS work to provide comparable statistics across the UK	SA(COS)(13)28 Ms Tricia Dodd
6	Emerging Findings from Monitoring Review: Official Statistics in the Context of the Referendum on Scottish Independence in 2014	SA(COS)(13)29 Mr Richard Alldritt
7	Draft Monitoring Review: School-level examination results	SA(COS)(13)30 Mr Richard Alldritt
8	Issues raised with Authority	SA(COS)(13)31 Secretariat
9	Review of Arrangements for Engaging with Arm's Length Bodies	SA(COS)(13)32 Ms Pam Davies
10	Activities of the Government Statistical Service	SA(COS)(13)33 Ms Pam Davies
11	Cuts to official statistics	SA(COS)(13)34 Ms Pam Davies
12	Any other business	

Next Meeting: Wednesday 18 September 2013, London, 13:00 to 15:30

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)25

Beyond 2011 Programme assurance and implications

Purpose

1. This paper is brought to the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) to enable discussion of the potential implications of the Beyond 2011 programme for the wider statistical system, the opportunities and risks it presents, and the actions that might be required as a result.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to:
 - i. consider the existing assurance mechanisms for the Beyond 2011 programme, and whether they are sufficient to enable the UK Statistics Authority and wider statistical community to have confidence in the programme's recommendations;
 - ii. note the political framework for decision making; and
 - iii. discuss the potential implications for the wider statistical system, identifying potential opportunities and risks, and how these might be managed.

Discussion

3. The Beyond 2011 Programme is progressing well, as discussed at the UK Statistics Authority Board in June, and has identified two front running options to meet future needs for population and small area socio-demographic statistics:
 - i. A modernised, online census once a decade for production of both population estimates and population attribute statistics, with annual population estimates produced using administrative data (similar to the current system); or
 - ii. Production of annual population estimates using existing government data combined with an annual 1 per cent coverage survey; and production of statistics about the socio-demographic attributes of the population using an ongoing survey covering 4 per cent of the population per year;
4. The paper to the Authority Board [SA(13)32] asked whether the Authority was content with the programme's assurance mechanisms, and this question was remitted to COS for further discussion. After discussion with the Chair of COS, this paper discusses both the programme's assurance mechanisms, and the potential wider implications of the programme for the rest of the statistical system.

Assurance mechanisms

5. The Beyond 2011 Programme has three streams of assurance: delivery assurance, methodological assurance and business case assurance.
6. *Delivery Assurance* refers to the processes that are put in place to ensure that the programme has robust plans and controls, and is effectively managing risks and stakeholders for example.
7. Delivery assurance is provided through Major Projects Authority (MPA) Gateway reviews and internal audit.
8. Methodological assurance refers to the processes that are in place to ensure that the statistical research plans, the findings of the research, the conclusions drawn, and the

final methodological recommendations from the programme are robust and will result in a sound, viable solution for implementation of the later programme phases.

9. *Methodological assurance* is in the form of a set of methodological review processes, including:
 - i. an ONS 'Programme Assurance Working Group' to review research plans and findings;
 - ii. six monthly review by the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Methodology Advisory Committee (GSS MAC) to provide advice on specific issues;
 - iii. an external advisory panel, comprising experts in a range of disciplines, to provide detailed review of specific aspects of statistical methodology;
 - iv. an international review panel to review the high level solution design;
 - v. two day research conference, to provide a forum for engagement with the Programme's academic stakeholders; and
 - vi. independent methodological review of all the research underpinning the programme's recommendations, sponsored by the Royal Statistical Society, by experts who have not been involved in any of the above processes

10. The feedback provided has shaped our thinking, provided direction for further research and helped shape research priorities. The different assurance processes have provided consistent messages that, for the administrative data option, we need to do more to demonstrate:
 - i. the accuracy of population estimates below Local Authority (LA) level (by age and sex, and for smaller geographic areas within LAs); and
 - ii. what population attribute statistics would be available for small geographic areas.

11. This has been included in our plans, and statistical work undertaken within the programme will continue to be scrutinised through such groups. The detail and outcomes of all of the above processes, in particular the ONS response to the independent methodological review, will be collated into a full assurance report to be published in 2014.

12. Together, these provide 'technical' assurance of the research and new methods developed, but they cannot provide assurance that the final recommendation is 'the right thing to do'. This requires a judgement of the balance between user requirements, end benefits, public opinion and costs, and may well eventually be a political decision (see political decision making framework).

13. Business case assurance (see below) provides some element of assurance on these trade offs, and the user consultation planned for this autumn (alongside the programme's other extensive stakeholder engagement activities) will provide a further, structured set of information on which the final judgement can be based.

14. *Business Case assurance* refers to the processes that are in place to ensure that the final business case is robust and that the balance between cost, benefit and risk has been assessed appropriately.

15. A business case assurance group has been established which:
 - i. reviews and advises on the approach to business case development, including the evaluation criteria, costing methodology and benefit quantification methodology;

- ii. reviews each six-monthly business case revision and provides advice on the workplan for the next six-month stage; and
 - iii. reviews the final business case, and the robustness of the final recommendation.
16. More recently, the programme has also established additional advisory groups covering:
- i. privacy;
 - ii. genealogy; and
 - iii. equalities (ethnicity, identity, language and religion).
17. **Annex A** provides further detail on the progress of these assurance and advisory mechanisms.
18. COS is asked to consider whether these assurance mechanisms are likely to be sufficient to enable the UK Statistics Authority to have confidence in the programme's final conclusions.

Political framework for decision making

19. In parallel to the Beyond 2011 programme's research, the Minister for the Cabinet Office (MCO), Francis Maude, is pressing ahead with potential data sharing legislation. ONS has made clear to MCO that new legislation would be required in order for us to move to a new system using administrative data, both to enable data sharing and to enable surveys in the new system to be compulsory.
20. Within the last month, both the Parliamentary Business and Legislation Cabinet Committee and the Home Affairs Cabinet Committee have given approval for this legislation to be added to the shortlist for inclusion in the May 2014 Queen's speech, subject to final confirmation from the full Cabinet later in July 2013.
21. Subject to that approval, the intention is that a draft bill would be published during the third session of Parliament (late 2012/early 2013) and a final decision on the May 2014 Queen's speech would be made around February 2014.
22. Separately (although clearly related) ONS' Beyond 2011 recommendation would be made by the National Statistician to MCO, and he would take that for decision to the Home Affairs Cabinet Committee. The timing of this is not yet clear, but it is likely to be in early-mid 2014. A paper discussing the timing of these decisions is being prepared for the next Authority Board meeting.

Potential implications for the wider statistical system

23. A move to a new system based on existing data and new surveys would have significant implications for the wider statistical system, presenting both opportunities and risks.
24. Some potential opportunities and risks for each option are identified in the table in **Annex B**, with a discussion of potential next steps, either to maximise the likelihood of the opportunities being realised, or to mitigate the risks.
25. This is a 'starter for ten', to prompt a discussion, rather than a completed analysis. Note that this table does not attempt to evaluate the pros and cons of the options in their own right – that is the task of the current stage of the Beyond 2011 programme. Although there is of course some overlap with opportunities and risks that are being considered as part of the decision making process, this table seeks to focus in particular on the

consequential opportunities and risks that may arise once (if) a decision to implement the administrative-based option has been made.

26. Note that many of the potential actions have funding implications, which could be considered for explicit inclusion in ONS or UK Statistics Authority spending review bids – either as part of the Beyond 2011 business case or separately.
27. The Committee is invited to discuss these opportunities and risks, and identify others.

Pete Benton, ONS, Beyond 2011 Programme Director
Jane Naylor, ONS, Strategy & Standards Directorate
July 2013

List of Annexes

- Annex A Summary of Beyond 2011 Assurance and Advisory Group activities**
- Annex B Potential opportunities and risks of a new system based on existing data and surveys**

Annex A Summary of Beyond 2011 Assurance and Advisory Group activities

Delivery assurance

MPA Gateway reviews

1. The most recent MPA review was a Gateway zero review, which took place in June 2012. The next review is planned for October 2013.
2. The Executive Summary from the June 2012 review is below:

"The Review Team found the programme has progressed remarkably well since the Starting Gate Review of November 2011. Recommendations have all been addressed and we are confident that the programme retains the potential to deliver against its ambitious and complex aims and objectives as planned. We were particularly impressed by the drive and motivation evident throughout the programme team and the universal support being realised across ONS, UK Statistics Authority and external stakeholder groups.

The programme does, however, face huge challenges, risks and issues within a demanding schedule to identify and validate an appropriate approach to the long term generation of statistics vital to a broad range of public sector, commercial, academic and private users. *Furthermore, this work both drives and utilises a vast range of emerging international best practice, all of which will result in a need to fundamentally transform the ONS business in the years ahead* (added emphasis for COS). Work in this area is hugely impressive and progressing at pace. We have some concerns that the need to identify and balance qualitative and quantitative benefits alongside a complex "fit for purpose" assessment of options compounds to create a complex task that could snowball in scale and create time pressures. Early and comprehensive engagement with key decision makers (complex in itself) and users to manage expectations and focus this effort will be crucial for success.

Programme controls have been positively expanded and focused within an improved and highly engaged governance model. It is important that these are continued and drive good stakeholder management. It was very evident that senior leadership in ONS are grappling personally with the challenges faced and are determined to ensure successful outcomes on all fronts. Stakeholders interviewed speak very positively of their engagements with the programme and are keen to ensure ongoing inputs to and visibility of the crucial options evaluation stage that is now in progress.

The Review Team find the challenge daunting, but the approach to delivery is in many ways exemplary for a programme of this type. We could find no new issues threatening success, and hence support the programme's own view that delivery confidence is rated Amber-Green."

3. There were five recommendations, which have all been completed.

Internal Audit

4. In October 2012 the Internal Audit team reviewed progress against the five recommendations from the June 2012 gateway review, and concludes that satisfactory progress was being made. It made three recommendations, which have all been completed.

Methodological Assurance

Programme Assurance Working Group

5. This group has been established since 2012 and meets every couple of months. Membership is drawn from ONS experts in Methodology, Census, Social Surveys and

Demography. The devolved administrations also attend and this is helping to ensure harmonisation across the UK and provide opportunities to learn from one another. The Group has considered the full range of statistical methodology being used by the Programme in considerable detail. The group is proving to be a very effective and useful mechanism for methodological assurance and helpful feedback has been provided.

Government Statistical Service Methodology Advisory Committee (GSSMAC)

6. The aim of this committee is to provide a forum for advice on methodological issues for official statistics produced across the Government Statistical Service (GSS), from a relatively small group of interested and experienced professional statisticians from outside government. Throughout the research phase of the Beyond 2011 Programme, a number of papers have been presented to the GSSMAC to obtain feedback on research completed and also direction for future work.
7. At the May 2011, November 2011 and May 2012 GSSMAC meetings Beyond 2011 papers were presented on approaches for producing population estimates from administrative data. The sequence of papers and feedback from the Committee show how thinking and research has developed from early models using only administrative data at an aggregate level, to more detailed models using individual data to even more complex approaches combining matched administrative data sources with a coverage survey and different methods for estimation.
8. Two Beyond 2011 papers were presented at the most recent GSSMAC meeting in May 2013; 'Development of an integrated system to produce attribute data' and 'Population estimation from administrative data-based models'. The Committee were supportive of the research and welcomed the direction of the work. Specific challenges were raised around the quality of socio-demographic outputs in the absence of a Census and the use of administrative data including the risk of changes to sources and the implication of localised variation in errors, which are now being addressed.

Beyond 2011 External Advisory Group

9. The aim of the Beyond 2011 External Advisory Group is to provide rigorous quality review of research. The group is a closed circulation, expert panel with members (by invitation from ONS) from academia and other National Statistics Institutes (NSIs). Papers are sent by email to panel members, with each paper having two or more 'lead reviewers' assigned to them (based on subject area expertise). The review panel have access to detailed research papers from the programme.
10. Since December 2012 the group have reviewed nine papers covering a range of different technical topics such as data matching, research into a rolling Census option, use of administrative data to estimate the population, population coverage survey design options and use of administrative data to inform coverage adjustment and socio-demographic data collection. Detailed comments on this work have informed the direction and priorities for further research and generally improved the quality of the papers. Encouragingly the majority of comments have been positive about the statistical work and there have been no comments that have significantly changed the direction or detail of our research.

International Review Panel

11. This group, made up of experts from around twelve different NSIs has met twice in June 2012 and in May 2013. The aim of the group is to provide overall scrutiny of the Programme at a strategic level. The panel meets for three days and considers

methodological aspects of the development work and completed work as well as proposed plans.

12. At the first meeting, the panel felt that the programme was considering the right set of options and they had confidence in our ability to deliver the research required to move forward to a recommendation.
13. At the most recent meeting in May 2013, the panel were encouraged by the results from the work to use an administrative data based solution to estimate the population and the progress that had been made, however they felt that more evidence was needed. At present the results have focused on estimating local authority totals but there is a key requirement to produce estimates by age and sex group and for lower geographies. On the socio-demographic side, the panel provided some steer around the survey design, in particular that it needs to be mandatory (to minimise non-response bias) and that we should not underestimate the task of educating users and providing them with support to understand the outputs from a large socio-demographic survey (potentially rolling together a number of years of data) versus a Census option. They reiterated their view that more emphasis should be placed on investigating using administrative data (including influencing the data collection process) to directly replace survey estimates.
14. The panel felt that a 'direction of travel' towards an option based on administrative data was right but raised questions over the pace of the work. The pace was impressive but they stressed the importance in recognising that it would take some considerable time to design, develop and implement a socio-demographic survey. They also felt the potential need to run a parallel Census or at least some kind of large survey check to benchmark the new method against.
15. Encouragingly the majority of the issues raised by the International Review Panel were on our plans for the next research phase of the Programme; the discussions have helped to prioritise the work going forward, and we are directly addressing the issues raised above about sub-LA estimates in particular.

Two Day Research Conference

16. A two day research conference (supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) UK Data Service and the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS)) was held on 30 April and 1 May at Southampton University. Its objective was to provide a forum for engagement with the Programme's academic stakeholders, with the dual aim of informing them about the Beyond 2011 research whilst gaining their expert input and feedback.
17. The majority of the 100 or so delegates were drawn from academia and representatives from local and central government. The focus of the conference was the statistical research that has been undertaken by the programme to date, with inputs on related research from National Records of Scotland (NRS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Each session had a presentation on an aspect of the Beyond 2011 research, followed by an expert discussant responding to the material presented and finally, an open discussion with the audience.
18. The main issues raised by the discussants and delegates during the conference (in addition to specific technical details/comments on certain papers) can be summarised as follow.
 - i. There is growing confidence in our ability to produce population estimates from administrative data but for socio-demographic data we need to do more to articulate what the outputs will look like and the quality levels for these outputs.

- ii. Further work is required to demonstrate how detailed population estimates (broken down by age and sex or by geographies lower than local authority) could be produced using administrative data.
- iii. We were challenged around definitions and whether we are considering the issues around producing estimates for households and families for example as well as individuals and the issues with trying to estimate these groups using administrative data.
- iv. For socio-demographic outputs we need to do more to understand the limitations of a survey and how additional approaches such as small area estimation, an integrated (targeted) survey design and potentially development of synthetic data may help to meet user requirements.
- v. Concerns were raised over the implications for microdata, longitudinal data and transactional data if we moved away from a Census model.
- vi. We challenged the audience to help us to articulate the need for small area data, recognising that whatever option we recommend for the future production of population and socio-demographic statistics will involve some kind of trade off between frequency and the geographic/population subgroup detail of outputs.
- vii. Related to the point above it was recognised that in order to aid users to clarify their requirements there is a need for us to provide specific examples of what outputs might look like under an administrative and survey data option (particularly for socio-demographic data), what users will have at a point in time and what they will be able to tell about change over time and, importantly, what 2011 census outputs they would not get in future.

19. Again, these issues have all fed into the prioritisation of further research.

Independent Methodological Review

20. The final process for quality assurance of the methodological work within the Beyond 2011 Programme is an independent and overarching review that will bring together all the processes described above. The review is supported by the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) and the President of the RSS has appointed Professor Chris Skinner, London School of Economics (LSE) as the independent academic to lead the review. Professor Skinner's research and expertise relates primarily to the statistical methodology of sample surveys, including sampling, non-response, measurement error and statistical disclosure control. The other review members are Mike Murphy, Professor of Demography, LSE and John Hollis previously a demographic consultant at the Greater London Authority.

21. The objectives of the review are to:

- i. provide independent assurance and thus confidence to users that the methodology and statistical research behind conclusions drawn is based upon sound research and a strong evidence base;
- ii. identify areas where evidence could be significantly improved; and
- iii. identify the main risks with any emerging views, noting any particular problems/challenges with the methods recommended, and any further work required to mitigate these risks and challenges.

22. The review will be undertaken between July and September with the report being published in autumn/winter 2013.

Business Case Assurance

23. The business case review group meets quarterly to review the cost benefit analysis (both the approach and the results) and advise on potential improvements. The group includes a mix of ONS and external advisors:
- i. Joe Grice (ONS Chief Economic Advisor)
 - ii. David Harris (ONS Portfolio delivery Unit)
 - iii. Pete Benton (ONS Beyond 2011 Programme Director)
 - iv. Amanda Blunden (ONS Beyond 2011 Programme Manager)
 - v. Neil Townsend (ONS Beyond 2011 Business Case manager)
 - vi. Ed Barney (HM Treasury Spending Team)
 - vii. Prof David Martin (Economic and Social research Council).
24. The group has assisted the programme in a positive direction by:
- i. endorsing the draft approach to benefits quantification;
 - ii. giving clear direction where there was concern about the subjectivity of elements of the proposed evaluation framework (now resolved) to assess the options; and
 - iii. giving a clear steer on the way forward for determining the “do minimum option”.
25. Feedback from the most recent meeting is that the approach to both cost and benefit analysis is of high quality, and we should now seek to test the sensitivity of our assumptions through Monte-Carlo simulation and focus groups with key user sectors. Focus groups will take place alongside our autumn consultation.
26. The group recognises that it is challenging to fully quantify all statistical benefits and accepts that further qualitative discussion will be necessarily to supplement the financially quantified benefits.

Privacy, Genealogy and Equalities Advisory Groups

Privacy

27. The privacy advisory group has members from high profile privacy lobby groups such as Big Brother Watch and Privacy International.
28. There is strong support from the privacy groups to a new system, as long as the required safeguards are in place. The group is encouraged by the safeguards developed to date, including new anonymisation methods, and is keen to continue to work with the programme to offer further advice.

Genealogy

29. The genealogical advisory group is organised in conjunction with The National Archives (TNA), and includes representatives drawn from the TNA's network. Discussions are at early stages, and there has been positive feedback about the potential opportunities from a new system (annual archives of individual data sources for example) but also concern about what might be lost. We are continuing discussions with TNA about the potential for a new a new historical data storage framework, to replace the 'spine' currently provided by census records.

Equalities

30. The membership of the equalities advisory group has been developed from the network established for the 2011 Census and includes membership from groups representing ethnicity, identity, language and religion interests, in addition to the Equalities Commission.
31. As with the Genealogical group, discussions are at an early stage, and there are mixed views about the relative merits of increased frequency versus more detailed statistical outputs.
32. We expect strong participation in the Autumn consultation from both the genealogical and diversity communities.

Annex B Potential opportunities and risks of a new system based on existing data and surveys

Opportunities	Potential actions
1. Can the more frequent statistics from the new system be used to improve other National Statistics?	Establish a systematic, prioritised review process across related National Statistics?
2. Can the proposed 4 per cent annual survey be integrated with other GSS surveys (both within and outside ONS) to increase the statistical power of other surveys and/or to reduce costs?	<p>Establish a systematic, prioritised review of major surveys?</p> <p>Such a review could take place before the programme makes its formal recommendation, so that any wider costs and benefits could be submitted as part of (or alongside) the Beyond 2011 business case. This would be challenging given the Beyond 2011 timetable, but tactically might be the right approach. A limited review of the potential implications for other surveys is already planned, but not sufficient to inform firm financial commitments.</p>
3. Can the systems (e.g. IT systems for online data collection or survey case management) developed by ONS to implement the new surveys be used for surveys either within or outside ONS?	It is intended that internal ONS reviews will be undertaken alongside the Beyond 2011 programme, and reviews of the potential use for census offices in the devolved administrations. No reviews for other government departments are currently planned.
4. Can the linked datasets created by ONS be used for wider statistical or research benefit, either by widening access to other users or by linking additional datasets?	<p>Consider the relationship to the planned Administrative Data Research Centres</p> <p>Discuss possibilities with the commercial sector for adding additional data sources</p>
5. Can we further extend the breadth of socio-demographic statistics by tapping into information on topics the census has not traditionally covered, but for which there has been user demand (e.g. income, sexual identity, household recycling behaviours ...)?	Conduct a systematic review of the potential opportunities across public and private sector datasets. A review of potential data sources is underway within the Beyond 2011 programme, but there might be benefit from reviews by other producers of statistics across government
6. Can the proposed new data sharing legislation be used to bring improvement elsewhere in the statistical system?.	Conduct a systematic, prioritised review of other GSS data collection activities to consider whether existing data could be used to either replace or enhance existing processes
7. Can the proposed new legislation to make surveys compulsory be used to improve response rates and reduce costs across the GSS?	<p>Conduct a review of other surveys</p> <p>Try to include wider survey requirements in the proposed Bill.</p>

Risks	Potential actions
<p>8. What if we recommend a move to a new system, but government does not pass new legislation to enable data sharing or to make surveys compulsory?</p>	<p>The recommendation of the programme team is that we should not make a firm decision to move to a new system until such legislation is in place. We would recommend undertaking a census if it were not in place in time, as the risks to the statistical system of proceeding without legislation would be too great otherwise. A final decision point is 2016 or 2017 (we are currently refining this date through detailed implementation planning)</p>
<p>9. What if new legislation is passed that repeals the 1920 Census Act and key powers are not retained?</p> <p>(In addition to enabling a mandatory census, the 1920 Census Act <u>requires</u> the Authority, in between censuses, to collect and publish any available statistical information from LAs or government departments on the number and condition of the population. Although the specific requirement is not defined, a 'custom and practice' interpretation is that this provides a legal requirement for production of annual population estimates for example.)</p>	<p>Preparations for data sharing legislation would need to explicitly consider the wider population statistics requirements, particularly if there were any suggestion of repealing the 1920 Census Act.</p>
<p>10. What if we move to a new system and find that it does not work?</p>	<p>This would be a significant problem, both for UK users of the data, and for ONS in meeting EU legislative requirements. The extensive assurance processes described above have been put in place to minimise the likelihood of making a recommendation that we cannot in fact implement.</p> <p>As contingency, we would need to revert to a (delayed) census, and would be likely to not meet the EU legal requirements in time. Even to have this option we would need to either retain the 1920 Census Act, or ensure that the new compulsory survey legislation is sufficiently broad to enable a compulsory census.</p>
<p>11. What if we move to a new system and find that we cannot achieve it in the required timescales?</p>	<p>Similar to the above. We could discuss with Eurostat how they would view such a situation, and whether they would be willing to support us if this situation were to arise (on the basis that we could provide the required data, but to a delayed timescale)</p>
<p>12. What if we move to a new system and there is a strong adverse public reaction to data sharing?</p>	<p>Our public acceptability testing and engagement with privacy groups suggests that this is not a showstopper at this point in time, but it would be a problem if public</p>

	attitudes were to change in future (for example due to other adverse events in the data sharing landscape outside our control). Having data sharing legislation in place would mitigate this risk to a degree, but as a last resort, we again may need to revert to a census at a later point.
13. What if we move to a new system and then find that key datasets cease to exist, or change to the extent that they are no longer sufficient for statistical purposes?	Other countries (e.g. the Netherlands) have legislation that gives the NSI a legal role in the governance of government data. We are seeking to include this in the proposed data sharing legislation. This mitigates the risk to a degree, but does not remove it. The key datasets on which we would rely are the NHS patient register and the DWP/HMRC customer information system. The likelihood of the disastrous change in the coverage of these datasets is considered to be low, but not impossible
14. What if we move to a new system and then find that we have failed to fully appreciate the benefits of the detailed information provided by a census (that had therefore been lost)?	The public consultation planned for this autumn will focus on identifying these benefits as fully as possible, to enable our recommendation to be based on the best possible information

SA(COS)(13)26 – GSS Data Strategy

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(13)26

GSS Data Strategy

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/national-statistician/government-statistical-service/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)27

Statistical work in HM Revenue and Customs

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) with a summary of statistical work in HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to note and discuss the contents of this paper.

Discussion

3. As a department, HMRC has a very strong evidence-base which is mainly based on taxpayer information. This evidence base is fundamental to policy and operational decision making across the department and within HM Treasury (HMT). For example our tax gap annual publication helps us understand how the tax system is working and where we could do even better.
4. HMRC (including the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) – an HMRC executive agency) has around 160 professional statistical staff who are members of the Government Statistical Service (GSS), of which around 120 are within the central analytical directorate - Knowledge Analysis & Intelligence (KAI) which contains around 320 staff from the four analytical professions (Statistics, Economics, Operational and Social Research). They are based in London, Southend and Manchester and work in inter-disciplinary teams.
5. Our work falls into four main areas: collecting data which is the main evidence base for analysis; undertaking analysis in support of HMRC/HMT policy development; undertaking operational analysis such as risk modelling; and producing statistics, responses to Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) and Parliamentary Question (PQ) responses.
6. Our statistics releases (around 100 per year) cover each tax which we administer, representing total tax revenues of £474 billion during 2011-12 and more than £42 billion we paid out in Personal Tax Credits and Child Benefit. We consider the resource needed to produce official statistics and National Statistics as the marginal cost of producing them; as the main purpose of the data are for HMRC operational and policy purposes. On this basis KAI and VOA only spend some five full-time equivalents of staff input on the marginal activity of producing these statistics.
7. In addition, HMRC produces Trade Statistics to EU legal requirements which are a key component of the ONS Balance of Payments and National Accounts statistics. One of our teams outside of KAI is responsible for this – they run the ‘Intrastat’ survey to collect intra-EU trade data and use Customs data to compile the Trade Statistics. The Intrastat survey is one of the largest government business statistics surveys. Due to the size and the complexity of the data set, we run the ‘uktradeinfo’¹ website to disseminate the trade statistics. Here, the entire team’s resources are focussed on producing official statistics and National Statistics – this amounts to approximately 104 of which 14 are professional statisticians.

¹ www.uktradeinfo.com

8. All of the statistics we publish as official statistics or National Statistics are produced in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. All our National Statistics have been assessed and certified by the UK Statistics Authority.
9. There are three different ways in which this programme takes into account external feedback:
 - i. first, there is a contact for each statistical product who maintains a log of questions and suggestions which we review regularly to improve these outputs;
 - ii. second, there is a continuous customer engagement survey running on the statistics website; and
 - iii. third, over the last year nearly all statistics producers ran ad hoc customer surveys targeted at likely customers (and those who had contacted us in the past).
10. The number and scope of our statistical outputs has broadly remained the same over the last few years and is expected to stay the same. The reason for this is that our operational and policy development activities require an evidence-base, but as mentioned previously the marginal costs of publication are relatively low.

Main issues

11. As with all departments we are facing a financial squeeze, however our turnover is relatively high and we therefore still have to recruit in significant numbers. We have slight concerns about the quality of statisticians coming from universities.
12. As a department we are constrained by legislation – the Customs and Revenue Act (CRCA). This legislation makes it illegal for us to release disclosive information (both personal and business). Some departments can access this information with consent from our HMT Minister and with primary legislation, but unfortunately people think we are being difficult, whereas we are simply trying to act within the law.
13. On a final positive note on data sharing, we have fairly recently (May 2011) launched the HMRC Datalab² as a new Research Data Centre (RDC). The Datalab consists of a secure environment where researchers can access, free of charge, suitably anonymised records derived from confidential taxpayer and customs data. The research needs to benefit HMRC and we have put in place a governance structure and disclosure control to ensure that taxpayers' information is protected.
14. The aim of this initiative is to produce high quality research that benefits both the department and the wider academic community, in the form of a wider evidence base to support knowledge sharing and policy making. To date we have approved 18 research proposals to undertake research on various topics, including Corporation Tax, personal income and earnings, VAT, imports and exports and Stamp Duty Land Taxes.
15. Wider than this, in terms of promoting admin data, we have a team working on transparency and a senior civil servant leading on the HMRC input into the Admin Data Taskforce and its Technical Group and the recommendations across Government coming from that. We also make the Survey of Personal Incomes available through a Public Use Tape from UK Data Service (formerly known as the SDS).

Sean Whellams, Chief Statistician, HMRC

5 July 2013

² <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/datalab/data.htm>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)28

Providing Comparable Statistics across the UK

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the ONS proposals to produce a compendium of comparable statistics across the UK.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) are invited to note and comment on the work proposed.

Discussion

3. Paper [SA(COS)(13)04] (provided to the January meeting of COS and included at **Annex A** to this paper) outlined the several strands of work that are being undertaken across government to inform decisions on the upcoming Scottish Referendum. The paper noted that ONS was considering whether it had a role in this work. This paper describes the role ONS will be taking.
4. ONS plans to produce a compendium of statistics for the constituent countries of the UK, for those statistics where comparable data exist or can be easily derived. This will be published on the ONS website for users wanting an independent and impartial digest of the main statistics.
5. The project team taking this forward are currently considering the scope of the work, the type of publication (whether to publish all at once or individually by theme) and the timetable.
6. Discussions are underway with representatives from the constituent countries of the UK and an advisory group is being formed from those representatives, and representatives from the major data-producing departments. This group will meet for the first time in September to comment on the work plan currently being produced by ONS.
7. It is acknowledged that this work stream will need to make links with some of the other work across government, in particular, the work on comparability sponsored by the Government Statistical Service Inter-Administrative Committee, as well as with the theme groups across government.
8. The current intention is to have all information published by the end of March 2014.

Tricia Dodd, ONS Analysis and Dissemination Directorate, July 2013

List of Annexes

Annex A COS paper SA(COS)(13)04 - Statistics for the Scottish Referendum

SA(ONS)(13)28 – ONS work to provide comparable statistics across the UK

Annex A COS paper SA(COS)(13)04 - Statistics for the Scottish Referendum

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

To see the document go to the Papers from the Committee for Official Statistics meeting on 24 January 2013 at :

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/board-and-committees-documentation/minutes-and-papers/papers-from-the-committee-for-official-statistics-meeting-on-24-january-2013.pdf>

SA(COS)(13)29 – Emerging Findings from Monitoring Review

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(13)29

***Emerging Findings from Monitoring Review:
Official Statistics in the Context of the Referendum on Scottish
Independence in 2014***

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

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reports/monitoring-report-6-2013---official-statistics-in-the-context-of-the-referendum-on-scottish-independence.pdf>

SA(COS)(13)30 – Draft Monitoring Review: School-level examination results

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(13)30

Draft Monitoring Review: School-level examination results

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

To view the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-sir-andrew-dilnot-to-rt-hon--david-laws-mp.pdf>

SA(COS)(13)31 – Issues raised with Authority

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(13)31

Issues raised with Authority

Issues raised with the Authority are published on the UK Statistics Authority website at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/issues-log/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)32

Review of Arrangements for Engaging with Arm's Length Bodies

Purpose

1. This paper sets out the rationale for the recently completed Review of Arrangements for Engaging with Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) and the outcomes of that review.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to consider the outcomes of the review.

Discussion

3. In 2010, following the expansion of the UK's statistical system to include ALBs, a task force was commissioned by the National Statistician to develop a framework for engagement. The final report from the task force was approved by the Statistical Heads of Profession Group (HoPs) in August 2010. The report set out a suggested approach for engagement between departments and their ALBs. It was also agreed that a review of the arrangements put in place in August 2010 would be carried out after two years.
4. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) was commissioned in 2012 to carry out a light touch review of the arrangements under which HoPs have been engaging with their ALBs. The aims of the review were to:
 - i. establish the effectiveness of current arrangements;
 - ii. identify any good practices that could be shared; and
 - iii. highlight any areas for improvement.
5. The review was conducted in two separate phases using the same methodology. Phase 1 involved those departments which currently acted as sponsor for their ALBs and Phase 2 involved the ALBs themselves. Information on the effectiveness of the current arrangements was gathered through the use of a questionnaire designed using the suggested approaches for engagement agreed by HoPs in August 2010.
6. Responses were received from 14 departments and 29 ALBs. Analysis of the responses suggests that the extent of engagement between departments and ALBs varies and appears to be based on risk rather than a proactive and supportive approach. It is noted that the risk based approach seems to be working but more support and guidance would benefit the majority of ALBs. It is also noted that five ALBs are not in favour of forging too close a relationship with their sponsor department.
7. There are areas of good practice in the methods and procedures used by departments including providing support for new or changed statistical products, training opportunities and secondments. A copy of the review's report is at **Annex A**.
8. Evidence from the 2012/13 Annual Assurance Reports (AARs) about the management of relationships with ALBs has been taken into account in framing the Review's recommendations.
9. The review recommends that:

- i. a statement of good practice setting out a minimum standard for contact and support be created and shared across the GSS;
- ii. NSO ensures that information about good practice and other support is available via the GSS intranet (StatNet) and other mechanisms; and
- iii. AARs will continue to be used to evaluate whether the current arrangements for engagement are working;

10. HoPs agreed at their meeting in June to endorse the recommendations and welcomed the NSO's commitment to their implementation.

Kieron Mahony, National Statistician's Office, 8 July 2013

List of Annexes

Annex 1 Report on the Review of Arrangements for Engaging with Arm's Length Bodies

Annex 1

Report on the Review of Arrangements for Engaging with Arm's Length Bodies

Introduction

1. In 2010, following the expansion of the UK's statistical system to include 'Arm's Length Bodies' (ALBs), a taskforce was commissioned by the National Statistician to develop a framework for engagement with those bodies sponsored by UK Government departments. It was agreed that a review of the arrangements put in place in August 2010 would be carried out after a two year period.
2. The review of the arrangements for engaging with ALBs was commissioned by the National Statistician following a meeting the Heads of Profession Steering Group (HPSG) in May 2012. The views of the parent departments were presented to HPSG and in the Heads of Professions (HoPs) meeting in October 2012. It was agreed that a further exercise was needed to gain a full picture of the levels of engagement and a second phase was commissioned which focused on the views of the ALBs. The views of the ALBs were presented to HPSG in June 2013. This report includes the background for the review and the findings and recommendations from both phases of the review.

Background

3. At the HPSG meeting on 8 May 2012 there was agreement, supported by the National Statistician, that the arrangements currently being used by departments/administrations to engage with their ALBs should be reviewed for :
 - their current effectiveness;
 - to establish any good practices that could be shared and;
 - to highlight any areas for improvement.

Questionnaire and methods of engagement

4. The information on the effectiveness of the current arrangements of engagement with ALBs was gathered through the use of a questionnaire which was despatched via e-mail to 15 Sponsor Departments and 37 ALBs. The aim of the questionnaires was to gain their views of the current arrangements.
5. The questionnaires were designed using the suggested approaches for engagement that were agreed by HoPs in August 2010. The questionnaires contained six questions along with a section for additional comments. The outline of the questionnaires is set out in Annex A.

Summary

6. Responses were received from 14 Sponsor Departments and 29 ALBs. A summary of the findings is shown below, with a more detailed analysis of the responses in Annexes B and C.
7. Overall the evidence indicates that the current arrangements that were suggested in the Arm's Length Bodies Taskforce Report in August 2010 are working effectively and evidence from the review suggests that there is no need for any substantive change.

8. Analysis of the responses suggests that the engagement between the Sponsor Departments and the ALBs varies and appears to be a more risk based rather than a proactive and supportive approach. It is noted that the risk based approach is working in some areas but more support and guidance would benefit the majority of ALBs. It is also noted that five of the ALBs wish to stay at “arms length” from their Sponsor Department which would suggest any guidelines, support and advice should come from a neutral party within the GSS.
9. There are some areas of good practice in the methods adopted by Sponsor Departments; providing support for new or changes to the statistical products, training opportunities and secondments between the Sponsor Department and ALBs.

Recommendations

10. The recommendations reflect the evidence collated from the two phases of the review into the arrangements of engagement between the sponsor Departments and their ALBs. Additional evidence from question six on the Annual Assurance Reports (AARs) which asked “how you have managed relationships with ALBs in 2012/13” has also been considered.
11. Evidence gathered suggests that in order to enhance the current mechanisms it is recommended that:
 - A statement of current good practice detailing a minimum standard for contact and support to be created and shared across the GSS.
 - NSO to ensure that the good practice information and support is available to ALBs via Statnet and other mechanisms.
 - Information and examples of how departments / administrations engage with their ALBs to continue to be part of the AARs.

**National Statisticians Office
June 2013**

Annex A**Review of the Arm's Length Bodies - Questionnaires**

Question to Sponsor Departments	Questions to ALBs
Do you have a written agreement in place between your Department and any ALBs?	Do you have a written agreement in place with your sponsor Department?
Do you have regular contact with the Lead Official of the ALBs that your Department sponsors?	Do you have regular contact with the Head of Profession in your sponsor Department?
How does your department work with its ALBs e.g. on joint statistical releases?	Do you work directly with your sponsor Department on specific work projects e.g. on joint statistical releases?
Are ALBs sponsored by your department aware of key documents such as the Code of Practice, of the need to put in place appropriate pre-release access arrangements and of the advantages of using the Publication Hub?	Has the HoP in your sponsor Department made you aware of key documents such as the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, of the need to put in place appropriate pre-release access arrangements and of the advantages of using the Publication Hub?
Do your discussions with ALBs include future planning of statistical products, any Code of Practice issues and developments in relation to official statistics?	Do any discussions with the HoP include future planning of statistical products, any Code of Practice issues and developments in relation to official statistics?
Are you involved in the management and development of statisticians within the ALBs e.g. through training events, joint working?	Does the HoP in your sponsor Department become involved in the management and development of statisticians within your organisation e.g. through training events, joint working?

Annex B

Review of Arm's Length Bodies - Analysis of the completed Phase 1 questionnaires

Question	Analysis of Responses	Additional Comments/Examples
Do you have a written agreement in place between your Department and any ALBs?	5 of the 14 respondents have written agreements in place with their ALBs	<p>The types of written agreements in place vary from published management agreements, containing compliance statements to less formal agreements.</p> <p>The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has published management agreements with all their ALBs,</p> <p>The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) wrote to its ALBs Lead Officials and have had verbal agreements in place.</p>
Do you have regular contact with the Lead Official of the ALBs that your Department sponsors?	13 of the 14 respondents have had contact with their ALBs in the last twelve months. Of those 13, 3 have had contact at least monthly, 4 have had contact more frequently than twice a year and 3 have contact every six months. 3 respondents have varying levels of contact depending on issues, joint working etc. Only 1 respondent has had no contact with their ALBs over the past twelve months due to a restructuring exercise which meant that it had no ALBs working on official statistics.	Defra have set up a Lead Statisticians' Group whose membership comprises of Lead Statisticians from Defra and its ALBs. The group first met on 13 July 2012 and will be meeting quarterly
How does your department work with its ALBs e.g. on joint statistical releases?	4 of the 14 respondents do not have any form of joint working arrangements with their ALBs, although 2 of those 4 indicated that they liaise with their ALBs on topic specific issues as required. The other 10 respondents have indicated that they have close working relationships through joint statistical releases and other statistical issues.	<p>Defra work closely with Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Natural England and the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Welsh Government with Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Student Loan Company (SLC).</p> <p>BIS with HESA, SLC and FSE.</p>
Are ALBs sponsored by your department aware of key documents such as the Code of Practice, of	All 14 respondents have indicated that their ALBs are aware of key documents and practices such as the Official Statistics Code of Practice,	ALBs linked to the Department of Health (DH), Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), are pre

<p>the need to put in place appropriate pre-release access arrangements and of the advantages of using the Publication Hub?</p>	<p>Pre-release access arrangements and the Publication Hub.</p>	<p>announcing statistical releases on the Publication Hub and follow pre-release access rules.</p> <p>Several respondents have given presentations and organised training events for their ALBs on the Code, PRA and the Hub (Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), Scottish Government)</p> <p>DCMS have met with all their ALBs and have developed a checklist of guidance and responsibilities.</p> <p>Two of Defra's ALBs have also developed their own guidance with support from the HoP.</p> <p>Welsh Government has had a visiting programme for its ALBs at a senior level.</p>
<p>Do your discussions with ALBs include future planning of statistical products, any Code of Practice issues and developments in relation to official statistics?</p>	<p>12 respondents have had discussions with their ALBs over future statistical planning, code issues and other developments relating to official statistics. All respondents have indicated that they provide advice on the Code to their ALBs although the level and frequency of how advice is provided varies. Over the past year 3 respondents have actively involved their ALBs in their annual statistical work planning.</p>	<p>Defra provide advice to Natural England on obtaining National Statistics status.</p> <p>Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) hold seminars centrally for its ALBs to discuss official statistics developments.</p> <p>SG has allocated a dedicated contact to all its ALBs for Code issues and other official statistics queries.</p> <p>DCMS have been involved in a joint public consultation with Sport England over the merging of the Taking Part and Active People surveys.</p>
<p>Are you involved in the management and development of statisticians within the ALBs e.g. through training events, joint working?</p>	<p>8 of the 14 respondents have indicated that they involved in the management and development of statisticians with their ALBs. Levels of engagement range from providing educational seminars, inviting statisticians to relevant GSG events, involving ALB colleagues in joint working groups, embedding</p>	<p>Several respondents have extended invitations to their ALBs to the statistical commentary workshops (Defra, DH).</p> <p>Welsh Government invite their ALBs statistical staff to its quarterly statistical forum.</p>

	<p>statisticians from the parent department in ALBs, and discussing and monitoring CPD logs.</p>	<p>Ministry of Justice (MoJ) bed out statistical staff on secondment to its ALBs, currently there are 5 in National Offender Management Service (NOMS), 2 in sentencing council, 1 in Youth Justice Board (YJB), 1 in Legal Service Commission (LSC) and 0.4 in Judicial Appointments Committee (JAC).</p> <p>Home Office (HO) holds regular meetings with GSG staff in ALBs to discuss CPD logs etc.</p> <p>Scottish Government has organised educational seminars for ALB staff, regularly invites ALB GSG staff to SG statistician group events and invites ALB staff onto joint working groups tackling statistical issues.</p>
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Annex C

Review of the Arm's Length Bodies – Analysis of the completed Phase 2 questionnaire

Question	Analysis of Responses	Additional Comments/Examples
Do you have a written agreement in place with your sponsor Department?	9 out of 29 have a formal agreement in place.	<p>The written agreements vary from formal agreements to minutes of meetings.</p> <p>DCLG/HCA and HO/NPIA do not have a formal agreement but have close liaison with their sponsor Department.</p> <p>NI/PSNI and WG/ESTYN manage the relationships and needs through secondments of statisticians between the ALBs and sponsor Department.</p> <p>WG/PHW is in the process of creating an agreement as part of the process of becoming producers of official statistics.</p>
Do you have regular contact with the Head of Profession in your sponsor Department?	<p>Only 7 out of 29 have no contact with their sponsor department with 2 of these 7 having an exceptions policy for contact.</p> <p>The frequency of contact for the 22 ALBs range from monthly to biannual meetings with the facility to request an emergency meeting if an issue arises that requires Departmental input.</p>	BIS/HESA would like more contact with their HoP.
Do you work directly with your sponsor Department on specific work projects e.g. on joint statistical releases?	13 out of 29 ALBs work directly with their sponsor departments on specific work projects.	<p>A number of the ALBs reported that they did not work directly with their sponsor Departments but they did closely when it came to advice and support. For example; DWP/PPF work closely with the sponsor Department who provides quality assurance on statistical releases and HO/NPIA worked collaboratively in managing responses to statistical PQs and management information.</p> <p>.</p>
Has the HoP in your sponsor Department made you aware of key documents such as the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, of the need to put in place appropriate pre-release access	Only 5 ALBs stated they had not been made aware of key documents, PRA and Pub Hub.	<p>The HO HoP has completed presentations to the ALBs on the Code of Practice.</p> <p>Of the 5 ALBs who stated that their sponsor had not made them aware of the key documents BIS/HESA are aware of this information via UKSA assessment and DCLG/PINS report that resources has</p>

arrangements and of the advantages of using the Publication Hub?		restricted this interaction.
Do any discussions with the HoP include future planning of statistical products, any Code of Practice issues and developments in relation to official statistics?	16 out of 29 ALBs discussions with HoPs include future planning and development of statistics and CoP issues.	<p>DGLG holds regular review meetings with their ALBs to inform and improve future statistical releases.</p> <p>The DfE/SaTA is a new agency and the HoP has been instrumental in increasing the awareness of the CoP.</p> <p>SG/Sustrain work together to improve the statistics and the skill levels of staff through training opportunities and workshops.</p>
Does the HoP in your sponsor Department become involved in the management and development of statisticians within your organisation e.g. through training events, joint working?	Only 6 HoPs in sponsor departments are involved in the management and development of statisticians'.	<p>A number of the ALBs state they have no statisticians or that they have data analysts and industry experts. To address this DCMS/OFCOM have internal professional development training.</p> <p>DGLG and SG have encouraged their ALBs to attend GSS endorsed workshops and other training events.</p> <p>BIS/HESA is interested in exploring the option for statistical training now that they are aware of it.</p>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)33

Activities of the Government Statistical Service – May 2013 to June 2013

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Committee for Official Statistics with an update of Government Statistical Service (GSS) activities for May and June 2013.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note the summary of GSS activities for this period.

Discussion

Capability

Raising Professional Standards

3. The GSS People Committee has established a short-term project under a small Task and Finish Group to formulate a Capability Work Plan for this year. Work includes looking at talent management, career management, improving networking, strategic direction and development opportunities. Initial plans will be presented to the People Committee on 24 July. The People Strategy will also be updated in line with the GSS Strategy and the Civil Service Capabilities Plan.

GSG Fast Stream Recruitment

4. Statistical Assessment Centres for Round 2 have been completed and there is an unusually high number (for Round 2) of candidates to go forward to the Fast Stream Assessment Centre in July. Successful candidates will be placed shortly thereafter to meet bids from Heads of Profession (HoPs) for Assistant Statisticians.

Statistical Officer Recruitment

5. Latest returns from HoPs indicate a healthy demand for continuing Statistical Officer graduate recruitment. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) is considering how best to meet the most urgent requirements.

Badging

6. The recent exercise to badge experienced GSS staff into the Government Statisticians Group (GSG) achieved eleven successful passes, and these will remain within their own organisations.

International

Reform of the European Statistical Law - EU Regulation 223

7. Negotiations between the European Commission, Member States (MS) and UK Parliament are at a delicate stage. The main point of difficulty remains 'Commitment on Confidence' and the status of the Code of Practice. The Commission must now decide whether to allow co-decision to go ahead or to withdraw their proposal all together; the latter would be a highly unusual move.

Evaluation of the GSSIC Work Programme

8. An evaluation of the GSS International Committee (GSSIC) performance against its 2012/13 Work Programme and a paper considering recent changes in the strategic international environment was discussed at the GSSIC meeting on 4 July 2013. A key

focus will surround how the GSSIC can support the GSS Strategy and international users of GSS Statistics. These papers were reviewed by members and will inform the development of the Committee's 2013/14 Work Programme.

OECD Committee on Statistics (CSTAT) and UN Conference of European Statistics (CES) Plenary Sessions

9. The annual CES and CSTAT Plenary Sessions took place between 10 to 13 June 2013. Key discussions of UK interest focused on the following.
 - i. The challenge of providing access to microdata for research purposes, in particular whether current legislation is adequate and administrative burdens can be managed.
 - ii. Indicators of productivity and competitiveness, focusing on improving coherence and applying micro-data sources.
 - iii. The measurement of social capital, focusing on the overview of concepts, methods and future work.
 - iv. Statistical work on household economic resources.
 - v. Green Growth and the OECD Implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA).
 - vi. Open, Accessible and Free Data, particularly on the new OECD policy.
 - vii. An update on the outcome of the work of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) Friends of the Chair on Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which will be considered by ECOSOC during their substantive session between 1 to 26 July 2013.
 - viii. It should also be noted that the UK agreed to lead a CES seminar in 2014 on "What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate this value?" The topic is currently being consulted on by the CES Secretariat and UK business areas have been made aware.

GSS website

10. The NSO is modernising the GSS intranet site (StatNet) which is one of the primary ways of communicating with GSS members across government. The site is set to become a public website, where as previously it was only accessible to GSS members. The new website will provide an essential tool for collaboration across the GSS, which is a key part of the GSS strategy. It will also help to improve the public face of the GSS. There will be clear links to the websites of the UK Statistics Authority and UK statistical producers. The new website will be launched in early September.

Statistical Advice and Support

GSS Methodological Support Task and Finish Group

11. The group, formed in April, has started documenting centres of expertise/support available across the GSS and relevant contacts for each. This task will continue over the coming months and be widely publicised on StatNet. It will form the basis of a GSS methodological support network with ONS providing coordination for development work.
12. Members of the task and finish group have also started implementing risk assessment processes within their departments. The Statistical Advice and Support team, informed by information from the Annual Assurance Reports (AARs), will invite other selected departments to work with the Good Practice Team in July to instigate full SPSC expectations in relation to GSS risk assessment and quality assurance initiatives. The aim will be to produce a 'top-tips' document for wider dissemination across the GSS.

Workshops

13. NSO delivered two presentations (commentary and user engagement) at the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Eastern Seminar in June and has responded to specific requests from MOD and Ofsted to provide targeted help with commentary for particular releases. NSO has also refined user engagement and commentary presentations for the GSS Statistical Foundation Course and these were first delivered to participants in late June.

Annual Assurance Reports - update

14. A high level summary report of AARs, highlighting matters of common concern across the GSS and areas of good practice/expertise, was presented to HoPs on 20 June. This thematic summary honours the National Statistician's commitment of confidentiality and is provided in **Annex A**. HoPs welcomed the summary information and agreed the priorities in relation to quality assurance and data linking/sharing initiatives. HoPs also supported the proposal to establish peer groups as fora to discuss and help resolve common issues such as disclosure control and the publication of management information. NSO will, using the information from the AARs, put departments facing common concerns in touch with each other, facilitate the establishment of peer groups and encourage wider discussion and sharing of good practice.
15. NSO has started to make contact with departments who requested specific assistance in relation to quality reviews, statistical planning and the management of relationships with ALBs, and will seek clarity in relation to a range of other statistical activity, including statistical planning processes and the scrutiny of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) log books. NSO will use this information to better understand and improve current practices across the GSS.
16. In due course, NSO will reflect on the content, comprehensiveness and timing of the current AAR template and if necessary review the Statement of a HoP's Role and Responsibilities on which the template is based. AAR alignment with the GSS Annual Report and the template for the Written Evidence for Assessment (WEFA) will also be reviewed.

Statistical Policy and Governance

Comparability Task and Finish Group Update

17. The final report of the Comparability Task and Finish Group (considered at the May meeting of COS, SA(COS)(13)18) was presented to HoPs at their June meeting and well received. Next steps will be taken forward by GSS Themes. The National Statistician wrote to Theme Leaders on 27 June requesting that they identify headline statistics, assign comparability markings, and prepare comparability statements by mid-October 2013.

Pre-release access

18. The National Statistician wrote to HoPs on 26 June about ONS's plans to minimise pre-release access to its statistical releases. HoPs were advised that the next step would be a review of each existing list of persons granted pre-release access following which the National Statistician will write again to departments with outcomes. The letter also encouraged HoPs to make progress on the minimisation of pre-release access for all departmental releases.

Pam Davies, National Statistician's Office, 8 July 2013

List of Annexes

Annex A Thematic summary of 2012/13 Annual Assurance Reports

Annex A Thematic summary of 2012/13 Annual Assurance Reports

- 1. Code compliance** - Reports generally show active involvement by HoPs in promoting Code compliance and controlling pre release access. Mechanisms for embedding good practice and safeguarding professional independence are also evident.
- 2. Quality** - The Authority's formal assessment programme is considered the primary quality assurance tool of recent years. A few departments have implemented their own proactive approach to quality review and assurance, and are utilising a range of established processes. Almost a third of departments report no formal quality review processes and other resources available on StatNet, including the Quality, Methods and Harmonisation Tool (QMHT), do not appear to be widely utilised. Support sought from the Methodology Advisory Service (MAS) and the Quality Improvement Fund (QIF) is also limited.
- 3. Planning and coordination** - Wide ranging user engagement activity, generally focussed on 'professional' users, is evident across departments, with a number exploiting the use of Twitter and StatsUserNet and others acknowledging the challenges of obtaining feedback. There are a number of examples of new, innovative uses of administrative data to either replace other data sources or for use in quality assurance processes. Around a third of departments do not have a statistical work plan. Only a few departments report having taken serious steps to address the issue of UK comparability.
- 4. Statistical policy** - Just over half of departments detailed active involvement with the formulation of statistical policy through the GSS Committee framework, with some good examples of implementing changes to policy. Departments reported investing time and resource into disseminating GSS activity to their teams and there has been frustration with the lack of appetite within some Themes to dedicate sufficient resources to implement change.
- 5. Data sharing** – There generally appears to be a very disconnected ad hoc approach in relation to data sharing across the GSS, although two departments in particular are leading the way implementing data sharing initiatives. Data sharing is evident for both statistical and policy purposes and these initiatives would benefit from clarification and further exploitation. There is a wealth of different platforms used for data sharing which need to be better understood.
- 6. Capability** - Almost all departments appear fully compliant with GSS recruitment procedures whilst only a handful confirm active scrutiny of CPD log books. There is a lack of clear training plans in operation to increase 'List A skills'. There is also some evidence of skill loss as staff move posts/departments and this has been exacerbated with the recent recruitment restrictions. Some particular concerns were raised in relation to dwindling resources and the impact on conference attendance and maintaining the quality of fast stream GSG posts.
- 7. ALBs** - The majority of departments are investing time and resource into building effective working relationships with their ALBs although some mention the challenges and implications of Official Statistics Orders in bringing additional organisations into scope for the production of official statistics. A few departments reported having limited and inconsistent interaction with their ALBs although all intend to focus on this relationship building in 2013/14.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)34

***Update on the impact of cuts on statistical inputs and outputs, and
monitoring statistical capability***

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on plans by producers of official statistics for ceasing the production of statistics, and on public consultations relating to those statistics. The paper also includes the up-to-date number for staffing statistics in the Government Statistician Group (GSG) against which reports are being benchmarked.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to note:
 - the latest position on reported cuts to official statistics and further potential cuts subject to public consultation and other official statistics issues being consulted upon; and
 - the current staffing numbers for the GSG.

Discussion

3. Since the last report to the Committee on 16 May 2013, there have been no notifications of cessations to the National Statistician.
4. Historical information about cessations by department up to June 2013 can be found at **Annex A**.
5. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) has identified three new statistical consultations since the last update to the Committee.
 - i. The Hospital Information Branch (HIB), within the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), Northern Ireland, is consulting on changes to the source and published content of data relating to the availability and use of operating theatres in Northern Ireland. The data are currently National Statistics. The proposal is that the source of data used to collect and compile official information should change and the content of information published should no longer include information on theatre sessions, while information on cases operated on should be more detailed. The consultation document highlights the strength and weaknesses of the existing and the proposed new methodology.
 - ii. ONS has launched a consultation on a five year work plan for National Accounts and other outputs that have a close relationship has been developed by ONS. Over that period the National Accounts and other relevant outputs are legally required to be compiled using revised frameworks and guidelines beginning in September 2014. Introducing these new frameworks form the basis of a large development programme that ONS is undertaking and will be the driver for many of the improvements. Given the increase in user interest, particularly GDP, Public Sector Debt and Deficit and, as a result of the financial crisis, the Financial Account, it is particularly important that users have the opportunity to influence future plans.
 - iii. ONS has launched a consultation to gather and assess user opinions on the changes proposed on compiling workplace-based and residence-based estimates of regional Gross Value Added (GVA) in the Regional Accounts. This follows on from a methodology review in 2012. It is proposed to introduce independent measures of

workplace- and residence-based Compensation of Employees (CoE) at the NUTS1 level of regional geography (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) and to apportion corporate profits to regions using total Gross Operating Surplus/Mixed Income (GOS/MI).

6. Further details about these three live consultations are at **Annex B**.

Monitoring Statistical Capacity

7. The National Statistician's Office has now updated its database of professional government statisticians so the numbers shown in **Annex C and D** reflect the latest returns from UK Government departments and agencies and the devolved administrations.
8. The new format shows the Full-Time Equivalent numbers of staff by the major grade groups at a moment in time, and these will be updated on a quarterly basis to provide a new time series. More staff will be joining throughout the year as those successful in recent recruitment campaigns are able to take up posts offered. In addition, a snapshot will be provided of the major departments' numbers, split as before between SCS and non-SCS posts.

Pam Davies, National Statistician's Office, 1 July 2013

List of Annexes

Annex A	Cuts previously reported to COS
Annex B	New consultations
Annex C	Government Statistician Group staffing levels by department
Annex D	Government Statistician Group by grade

Annex A Cuts previously reported to COS

Department	Statistics	Date of cessation
Office for National Statistics	Thirteen statistical series previously contained in the Financial Statistics compendium publication	April 2013
Department for Communities and Local Government	The Place Survey	July 2010
	Local Government Key Facts Card: England	November 2010
	Citizenship Survey	March 2011
	Official Statistics on Supporting People	May 2011
	Changes to DCLG Statistics – Regional Outputs	October 2012 for outputs without PRA. Outputs with PRA – throughout 2013.
Department of Culture Media and Sport	Target Group Index statistics on arts attendance	31 October 2011
Department for Education	Schools Providing Access to Extended Services Statistics	October 2010
	Parental experiences of services provided to disabled children Statistics	November 2010
	Diploma Learning England	November 2011
	School Destinations of Secondary School Pupils Resident in London Boroughs	September 2011
	Behaviour in schools	1 April 2012
Department for Health	Health Profile of England	Last publication March 2010
	Mortality Monitoring: Life Expectancy and all-age-all-cause mortality, and mortality from selected causes - overall and inequalities	Last publication October 2011
	Mortality Monitoring: Infant Mortality and inequalities	Last publication December 2011

Home Office	Statistics on post-decision reviews on asylum applications, applications for asylum support, and asylum appeals.	25 th August 2011
	Basic Command Unit level recorded crime and detection statistics	April 2012
HM Revenue and Customs	Business Payment Support Service	Last publication July 2011
Ministry of Defence	RAF Pocket Brief	April 2012
	Civilian Staffing by agency, trading fund and location	February 2012
NHS Information Centre	Prescription Cost Analysis statistics	July 2012
	NHS Nursing and Midwifery Bank Staff return	September 2011
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	Northern Ireland Abstract of Statistics Online	16 June 2012
	Participation in full-time education and vocational training by 16 and 17 year olds in Northern Ireland	December 2012
Welsh Government	1. Health Visitors, District Nurses and Other Community Nurses 2. NHS Day Care 3. Community Psychiatric Nurses and Community Learning Disability Nurses	October 2010
	New Deal Statistics	November 2010
	Welsh Short Term Output Indices	Within weeks if that decision is made by Ministers
	Local Authority Education Expenditure	Suspended for 2010/11 year.
	Affordable housing provision – collection of information from registered social landlords	2012/13
	NHS staff vacancies	1 March 2012
Scottish Government	1. Children Educated outwith Schools	November 2010

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Placing Requests 3. Teacher and Educational Psychologists Vacancies 4. Pre-Appeal SQA Examination Results 5. Expenditure on Schools 6. Budgeted School Running Costs 7. The Independent School Census 	
	Various changes to Scottish Government Surveys	2012 onwards
Department for Work and Pensions	New Deals and the Flexible New Deal programme statistics	March 2011
	Tax Benefit Model	8 June 2011
	National Insurance Number Allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals entering the UK	August 2012
	Vacancies handled by Jobcentre Plus	Autumn 2012
Office for National Statistics	Quarterly dividends inquiry	5 March 2012

Annex B New consultations about cuts and changes to statistics

This table summarises the consultations that have been notified to the National Statistician in the period 6 May to 1 July 2013 or have been discovered by the National Statistician's Office undertaking periodic trawls of departmental websites.

The list demonstrates that GSS statisticians are actively reviewing the need for continued statistics with users in order to improve efficiency, as well as responding to reductions in resources in the current public sector financial climate.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION	DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTATION
Consultations identified prior to 1 July 2013 and reported to COS in July 2013	
<p>Consultation on Workplace and Residence Estimates of Regional Gross Value Added</p> <p>Department: Office for National Statistics (ONS)</p> <p>Open: 7 June 2013 Close: 30 August 2013</p>	<p>The purpose of this consultation is to gather and assess user opinions on the changes proposed following a review of the methodology used to compile workplace-based and residence-based estimates of regional Gross Value Added (GVA) in the Regional Accounts.</p> <p>We would appreciate feedback on the following proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal to introduce independent measures of workplace and residence-based Compensation of Employees (CoE) at the NUTS1 level of regional geography (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) • The proposal to apportion corporate profits to regions using total Gross Operating Surplus/Mixed Income (GOS/MI) instead of using workplace CoE at all levels of regional geography <p>More details of the proposed changes and the results of an impact analysis can be found in the article and reference tables published with this consultation. The consultation period begins with the publication of this document and will close on Friday 30 August 2013. Please ensure that your response reaches us by then.</p>

<p>National Accounts and Related Statistics Work Plan: 2013/14 to 2017/18</p> <p>Department: Office for National Statistics</p> <p>Open: 31 May 2013</p> <p>Close: 31 July 2013</p>	<p>On 31 May 2013, ONS launched a public consultation on a five year work plan for National Accounts and Other outputs that have a close relationship and is seeking comments from users on it.</p> <p>The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has developed a five year work plan for National Accounts and other outputs that have a close relationship and is seeking comments from users on it. The next five years will be an extensive period of change for users of National Accounts statistics. Over that period the National Accounts and other relevant outputs are legally required to be compiled using revised frameworks and guidelines beginning in September 2014. Introducing these new frameworks (European System of Accounts 2010, Balance of Payments Manual version 6) form the basis of a large development programme that ONS is undertaking and will be the driver for many of the improvements that ONS will introduce in the next five years. However, this period of extensive change coincides with a significant increase in user interest in the numbers that are produced, particularly Gross Domestic Product, Public Sector Debt and Deficit and, as a result of the financial crisis, the Financial Account. Given this interest and the fact that a large part of the development resource available for this work is committed to the legally required changes, it is particularly important that users have the opportunity to influence future plans.</p>
<p>Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Content and Source used to compile Official Hospital Theatres Activity Information.</p> <p>Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety</p> <p>Start: 20 May 2013</p> <p>Close: 15 July 2013</p>	<p>Hospital Information Branch (HIB), a Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) branch within the DHSSPS, is responsible for the compilation and annual publication of data relating to the availability and use of operating theatres in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Availability and use of operating theatres data are currently National Statistics and are governed by the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007 and the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.</p> <p>The proposal suggests that (i) the source of data used to collect and compile official information on availability and use of operating theatres in Northern Ireland should change from the Korner Hospital KH08 aggregate return to a patient-level dataset taken from the Regional Theatre Management System and available to the Department via the Data Warehouse and (ii) the content of information published should no longer include information on theatre sessions, while information on cases operated on should be more detailed.</p>

Annex C Government Statistician Group staffing levels by department

Department	March 2013		May 2013		July 2013	
	SCS (FTE)	Non -SCS (FTE)	SCS (FTE)	Non-SCS (FTE)	SCS (FTE)	Non-SCS (FTE)
BIS	3	58	3	55	3	56
DCLG	2	52	2	50	2	53
DECC	1	25	1	28	1	28
DEFRA	2	28	2	27	2	28
DfE	2	94	2	126	2	126
DfID	1	39	1	39	1	39
DfT	2	46	2	45	2	45
DH	1	50	1	51	2	54
NHSIC	1	85	1	91	1	92
DWP	3	169	3	171	3	176
HMRC	3	112	3	139	3	141
HO	2	25	2	25	2	25
MoD	1	64	1	65	1	68
MoJ	1	66	1	77	1	77
UKSA/ONS	20	128	19	132	20	138
SG	1	150	1	191	1	159
OTHERS	2	197	3	175	2	206
Sub-totals	48	1388	48	1484	49	1511
Totals	1436		1532		1560	

Note: All data reported are rounded, full time equivalent figures. Data exclude staff currently occupying non-analytical posts.

Annex D Government Statistician Group by grade

	March 2013	May 2013	July 2013
Statistical Officer Grades	742	828	848
Fast Stream	133	134	136
Grade 6 & 7	513	522	527
SCS1 (Deputy Directors)	40	40	41
Directors and above	8	8	8
Total	1436	1532	1560

Values are rounded to nearest whole number