

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

**Meeting of Friday 20 February 2009
Board Room, Statistics House, Newport**

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Michael Scholar (Chair)

Professor Sir Roger Jowell (Deputy Chair, Official Statistics)

Mr Richard Alldritt

Mr Partha Dasgupta

Ms Karen Dunnell (to item 10)

Ms Moira Gibb

Sir Alan Langlands

Mr Steve Newman

Professor Steve Nickell

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead

Mr Mervyn Stevens

Other Attendees

Mr Richard Laux (Monitoring and Assessment, UK Statistics Authority) (items 7 to 9)

Mr Guy Goodwin (item 13) and Mr Glen Watson (ONS) for (items 11 to 13)

Apologies

Lord Rowe-Beddoe (Deputy Chair, ONS)

Professor David Rhind

Minutes of the UK Statistics Authority Meeting - 20 February 2009

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Lord Rowe-Beddoe and Professor Rhind.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting on 16 January 2009 were accepted as a true and fair account of that meeting.
- 3.2 Ms Dunnell reported on her decision to release the statistics on migrant workers early and at the same time as the unemployment figures. This had been in order to prevent the possible misuse of the raw data released with the unemployment figures. The meeting noted that this matter would be the subject of a Note by the Monitoring and Assessment Team of the Authority.

4. Reports from Committee Chairs ONS Board

- 4.1 The meeting received a briefing from Lord Rowe-Beddoe on the meeting of the ONS Board held on Friday 13 March. The ONS Board had recommended that the ONS Business Plan and Budget for 2009-10 be approved by the Board of the Authority. The meeting endorsed the ONS Business Plan and Budget for 2009-10, noting the small budget for contingencies.

5. National Accounts Modernisation [SA(09)12]

- 5.1 Noting that the plans in this paper had been endorsed by the ONS Board at their meeting on Friday 13 March the Chair described representations which had been made to him since then by the Trades Unions. The meeting considered the strategy set out in the paper, together with representations made by the Trades Unions and agreed that the plan set out in the paper should be implemented, modified as necessary to take account of any changes required in order to meet the concerns expressed by the Trades Unions about data quality.

6. Management Information and Policy Documents [SA(09)08]

- 6.1 Mr Alldritt presented a paper which included a draft statement on what the Authority would regard as Official Statistics when released as part of management information or policy documents and which would therefore be subject to assessment against the Code of Practice. The meeting noted the contents of a recent letter from the Cabinet Secretary to the Public Administration Select Committee on this issue and that a Government Statistical Service (GSS) working group would be making recommendations shortly. The meeting endorsed the approach in this draft statement but agreed that it should not be finalised until the GSS working group had reported.

7. Monitoring Report 6 *Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics* - Specification [SA(09)09]

- 7.1 Mr Laux presented a paper which set out the specification and management plans for the delivery of Monitoring Report 6 *Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics*. This Monitoring Report would build on the work of previous reports issued by other bodies and would evaluate what progress had been made and would include its own recommendations for future improvements. The final report would be published in September 2009. The Authority endorsed these plans.

8. Monitoring Report 4 *Improving Migration Statistics* - Interim Report [SA(09)10]

- 8.1 Mr Laux reported that a draft interim report would be considered shortly by the relevant Project Board and by the Committee for Official Statistics at their meeting on 10 March. The draft would then be considered by the Board of the Authority on 20 March and the interim report published at the end of March. The meeting agreed these plans.

9. Management of Assessments [SA(09)11]

- 9.1 Mr Laux reported that some initial assessment had started and he presented a paper with proposals on how the assessment process would be managed. The meeting noted that efforts had been made to minimise the burden on producers of statistics and that the process would be reviewed in the light of experience. The meeting approved the plans as set out in the paper.

10. Authority Business Plan 2009-10 [SA(09)13]

- 10.1 Mr Bumpstead presented a draft Business Plan 2009-10 for the Central Office of the Authority. The meeting noted the agreed budget of £5 million for 2009-10 and asked that the Business Plan should include indicative budget figures for the years 2010 - 2012. The meeting agreed that a further draft should be presented to the Authority Board.

11. Census Update

- 11.1 Mr Watson gave an oral report on the progress of the Census 2011. Plans were on course and within budget. Good progress had been made on letting further contracts and the most recent Office of Government Commerce review had reported favourably. Engagement with stakeholders was on-going.

12. 2011 Census Data Security Approach [SA(09)06]

- 12.1 Mr Watson introduced a paper which reported on the key data security features for the Census 2011. ONS would commission an independent security review of the arrangements and would publish the outcome of that review. The meeting noted the arrangements and agreed to consider how best to be engaged in the scoping and identification of a potential leader for the security review.

13. Beyond the 2011 Census [SA(09)07]

- 13.1 Mr Goodwin reported that work had begun on looking at what might be required to provide demographic statistics beyond the Census 2011. After a wide-ranging discussion the meeting agreed to return to these issues soon.

14. Any other business

- 14.1 There was no other business.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

Friday, 20 February, 2009

Board Room, Statistics House, Newport, 11:15 - 15:00

Chair: Sir Michael Scholar

Apologies: Professor David Rhind, Lord Rowe-Beddoe

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting Declarations of interest	Meeting of 160109
2	Reports from Committees	Oral Report Chair
3	National Accounts Modernisation	SA(09)12 Karen Dunnell
4	Management Information and Policy Documents	SA(09)08 Richard Alldritt
5	Monitoring Report 6 <i>Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics</i> - Specification	SA(09)09 Richard Laux
6	Monitoring Report 4 <i>Improving Migration Statistics</i> - Interim Report	SA(09)10 Richard Laux
7	Management of Assessments	SA(09)11 Richard Alldritt Richard Laux
8	Authority Business Plan 2009-10	SA(09)13 Rob Bumpstead
9	Census Update	Oral Report Karen Dunnell Glen Watson
10	2011 Census Data Security Approach	SA(09)06 Glen Watson
11	Beyond the 2011 Census	SA(09)07 Guy Goodwin
12	Any other business	

Next Meeting: Friday, 20 March, 2009

Statistics House, Newport, 10.00 - 11:00

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)12

National Accounts Modernisation

Purpose

1. This note covers a paper which provides an overview of the new National Accounts Modernisation Programme, its scope and deliverables in supporting future National Accounts production and publication.

Recommendations

2. The paper is due to be considered by the ONS Board at its meeting on 13 February. The Board's recommendations will be circulated in advance of this meeting.

Secretariat, February 2009

List of Annexes

Annex A National Accounts Modernisation Programme

Annex A National Accounts Modernisation Programme

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

ONS BOARD

SA(ONS)(09)04

National Accounts Modernisation Programme

Purpose

1. This paper provides an overview of the new National Accounts Modernisation Programme, its scope and deliverables in supporting future National Accounts production and publication.

Timing

2. Routine.

Recommendations

3. The ONS Board are invited to:
 - i. note the closure of the existing Programme at the end of 2008, in accordance with the Authority's 'drawing a line in the sand' strategy;
 - ii. endorse the establishment of a refocused Programme with scope as set out below, to be delivered over the next two years from within available funding, and;
 - iii. note the establishment of a new stakeholder board, with external members including the Bank of England (BoE) and HM Treasury (HMT).

Discussion

4. The scope, priorities, plans and governance of the National Accounts Modernisation Programme were reviewed between November 2008 and January 2009. During this period, discussions were held with BoE, HMT and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) to establish and confirm their needs and priorities. As a result, the Programme to end 2008 has been closed, in accordance with the Authority's strategy of 'drawing a line in the sand'. The succeeding Programme has been substantially refocused.

5 Key points about scope

- 5.1 The previous programme has delivered a Centralised ONS Repository of Data (CORD) system, which was used in National Accounts production for the first time in preparation for Blue Book September 2008. This is now a workable platform to which other systems can be added. Compared with the previous system, it has more resilience and better flexibility to support future methods changes.
- 5.2 Work has proceeded using this platform to ensure that Blue Book 2009 can be produced according to the specification previously agreed with the key stakeholders.
- 5.3 Both BoE and HMT were very clear that their primary requirement was to have high quality National Accounts, as judged by factors such as timeliness, lack of unnecessary revisions, coherence, lack of persistent bias, etc. They also wanted the National Accounts to be produced by methods and procedures which were transparent, so as to aid interpretation of what the Accounts were showing, and they viewed this as a dimension of quality. They felt the purpose of the new programme from February 2009 should be to achieve these aims. They were not concerned, and

saw it as ONS's business, as to how this goal was achieved.

5.4 One key work strand therefore is:

- i. **the construction of a set of quality indicators**, developing existing internal work. These would be for discussion and agreement with the key stakeholders, and the aim is to complete this and publish the indicators at the time of Blue Book 2009, and report on them regularly thereafter. They would be a key measure by which ONS would judge itself and expect to be judged. **Quality indicators to be published from July 2009.**

5.5 This same objective of improved quality, as specified above, would also be the touchstone for including and prioritising other work streams within the programme, along with the objectives of strengthening resilience, flexibility to make necessary changes, and efficiency, by faster processing. On this basis, a clear priority is:

- ii. **to move the 18 'local systems' into the integrated central system.** These are the separate systems which have evolved piecemeal over time in different areas of the national accounting business, and which currently articulate poorly. This will improve efficiency, reduce scope for mistakes and free up time for intelligent consideration of National Accounts issues, currently dissipated in overcoming the problems to which separate systems give rise. It will also give greater flexibility to support needed methods changes. In particular, it will also render practicable a Eurostat mandated change to update the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). **Local systems to be within the integrated system by December 2010.**

5.6 Other work streams which clearly pass the test of leading to improved National Accounts quality include:

- iii. **incorporation of the updated SIC 2007 into the National Accounts by December 2010 for use in Blue Book 2011.**
- iv. **determination of the sensible size of the industry and product matrix underpinning the National Accounts, having regard to effectiveness and practicability. Complete by January 2010 for use in Blue Book 2010.**
- v. **restoration of an annual review of methods used in the last Blue Book and the problems encountered to underpin improvement in the next one, from 2009 onwards.**

5.7 Some other work streams which had been planned, in the Programme now closed, are supported by less evidence on whether they would have appreciable impact on overall quality. Discussions with external stakeholders raised queries on their relative importance. Their inclusion in the new Programme will therefore be dependent upon work to review their likely effect on quality. These reviews will be completed by mid-March 2009. If and only if these reviews support inclusion, provisional completion dates for these work streams would be:

- vi. **production of substantially expanded Input-output tables to be completed by November 2010 for use in Blue Book 2011.**
- vii. **quarterly balancing to be completed by November 2010 for use in Blue Book 2011**
- viii. **constant price balancing to be complete by February 2010 for use in Blue Book 2011.**

6 More General Considerations

- 6.1 It is intended that the refocused Programme will be driven forward within the context and framework shown below.
- 6.2 All substantive work will be completed by March 2011. This brings forward the previously scheduled timetable by more than two years. This will be achieved by the sharper focus now incorporated, with work taken forward only where it has clear user benefits.
- 6.3 Programme costs will be contained within allocated funds. Time boxing techniques will be used to prevent gold plating and other perverse incentives to prolong work.
- 6.4 An explicit deliverable of the programme will be provision of capability for other areas of ONS to exploit CORD, following agreed ways of working.
- 6.5 Relocation of National Accounts posts to Newport will continue, though formally will not be managed as part of the programme. Relocation will be largely complete by summer 2010 and clear plans have been formulated to achieve this. There are already as many staff in the macro-economic and national accounts area in Newport as in London (discounting those staff leaving by 31 March 2009).
- 6.6 Streamlined governance will ensure development work for the Programme remains focused on the user objectives as specified above, and that timely strategic decisions will be made and enforced as necessary. A new small Programme Board has been formed to govern the strategic direction of the work.
- 6.7 A new Stakeholder Board, with members from HMT, BoE, BERR, as well as Sources and Methodology directorates within ONS, will meet for the first time in late February or early March 2009. It will be informed of the full plans and milestones and will receive regular progress updates, including reports on benefits realisation and risk management. Feedback from the Stakeholder Board will be invaluable but it will not have a decision-making role or right of veto.

Joe Grice, Chief Economist & Director, Economic, Labour Market and Social Analysis
Aileen Simkins, Director of Operations, Economic, Labour Market and Social Analysis
February 2009

SA(09)08 – Management Information and Policy Documents

This document will be published on the Authority's website in due course.

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)09

***Monitoring Report 6:
Barriers to Trust in Relation to Crime Statistics – Outline Specification***

Purpose

1. The Annex attached to this paper presents an outline specification for Monitoring Review 6 *Barriers to Trust in Relation to Crime Statistics*.

Timing

2. It is planned to submit an interim report in July and a final report in September. The Authority is asked to agree an outline specification now so that a project board can be set up. A more developed specification will be discussed at the first meeting of the project board and submitted to the Committee for Official Statistics meeting in May.

Recommendation

3. Authority members are invited to agree the outline specification as a basis for setting up the project board.

Discussion

4. The Authority agreed some initial priorities for monitoring reports in June 2008 and again in January 2009 (SA(08)23 and SA(09)01). *Barriers to Trust in Relation to Crime Statistics* was identified on both occasions. Against a background of continuing criticism and confusion in the media and the Authority's own concerns about the release of knife crime statistics in December 2008, the review will focus on the extent to which recommendations from previous reviews of crime statistics have been implemented and whether further steps are now needed.
5. Partha Dasgupta has agreed to chair the project board.

Jill Barelli

**Monitoring and Assessment Team, UK Statistics Authority
February 2009**

List of Annexes

Annex A Outline Specification for Monitoring Report 6 on Barriers to Trust in Relation to Crime Statistics

Annex A Outline Specification for Monitoring Report on Barriers to Trust in Relation to Crime Statistics

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This review will assist the Authority in fulfilling its obligations under section 8 of the Statistics and Registration Service Act (2007). The Act states that:

'The Board [Authority] is to monitor the production and publication of official statistics.

The Board may report any concerns it has about:

- a. the quality of any official statistics,*
 - b. good practice in relation to any official statistics, or*
 - c. the comprehensiveness of any official statistics,*
- to the person responsible for those statistics.*

The Board may publish its findings or any report under this section.'

- 1.2 The aim will be to identify the barriers to trust in crime statistics, to review the steps already taken to overcome these barriers and to make recommendations as appropriate.

2 Background

- 2.1 There have been a number of previous reviews of crime statistics, most recently by the Statistics Commission in September 2006 and in November of that year by a review group that was commissioned by the Home Office and led by Professor Adrian Smith. Crime statistics also featured in the recent review 'Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime' undertaken by Louise Casey at the request of the Prime Minister. The present review will not seek to replicate this previous work. It will look at the issues relating to trust that were identified in the earlier reviews and at what has happened since, identifying steps that have been taken to implement the recommendations and at what may remain to be done.

- 2.2 Barriers to trust in statistics may arise from the way data are collected and handled, or from the presentation or reception of the published statistics. Issues that have arisen in the media and elsewhere in relation to crime statistics include:

- the existence of two major sources of crime data (the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime) each with different strengths and weaknesses and which sometimes seem to show contradictory trends;
- changes and clarifications in recording standards, counting rules and classifications (these have improved the quality and consistency of data, but the resulting discontinuities have sometimes attracted adverse comment);
- publication and dissemination arrangements (e.g. knife crime);
- the release of data via Freedom of Information requests;
- selective or partial use of data by a range of commentators;
- the usefulness of 'total crime' as a measure, and;
- whether the production and dissemination of the statistics is sufficiently independent of those whose performance may be measured by those statistics.

- 2.3 In carrying out the review, the Monitoring and Assessment Team will look closely (as the previous reviews have done) at the range of users and the precise uses to which crime statistics are put.

3 Remit

- 3.1 The review will focus primarily on the British Crime Survey and on police recorded

crime in England and Wales. However, some issues may arise (e.g. in relation to the orderly publication and dissemination of statistics, the use of data to measure performance, and the coherence of data throughout the criminal justice system or across the UK) that could involve statistics produced by the Ministry of Justice and the devolved administrations.

- 3.2 The review will also aim (through discussion with relevant experts and examination of websites) to demonstrate how the quality and presentation of crime statistics in England and Wales compare with elsewhere, and with international standards.

4 Conduct of the review

- 4.1 The review will be undertaken by the Monitoring and Assessment Team, working under the auspices of a project board. This will initially comprise:

- a non-executive member of the Authority as Chair (Partha Dasgupta);
- the statistical heads of profession from the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, or their nominees;
- the National Statistician or her representative;
- a representative from a local crime and disorder reduction partnership (probably a local authority);
- a representative of the Welsh Assembly Government (statistical head of profession or nominee¹);
- three or four independent experts²;
- from the Authority's monitoring and assessment team, Richard Alldritt, Richard Laux, and Jill Barelli (project manager).

- 4.2 The board will be expanded as necessary if new issues emerge. It will meet on at least three occasions: to initiate the programme of work; to consider an interim report and to consider a draft of the final report. It may also conduct some of its business by e-mail.

- 4.3 A draft of the report will also be circulated within the Authority, to the Home Office and to any other government department or devolved administration affected by the recommendations. Any substantive comments received in response to the draft report will be either acted on or reproduced in the final report.

5 Methods and approach

- 5.1 The review will not involve original research as this would replicate what has already been done. Instead, the Monitoring and Assessment Team will:

- a. review previous reports and statements, follow up actions, media coverage and articles;
- b. arrange meetings or interviews with producers of crime statistics at the Home Office; policy customers; representatives of the police; other government departments and devolved administrations as appropriate;
- c. summarise previous research findings on trust in statistics in general and crime statistics in particular (this may include contact with the researchers or further analysis of the data);
- d. discuss the substantive issues with relevant experts and users inside and outside of government, and;
- e. contact statisticians in Scotland and Northern Ireland about their experiences in publishing crime statistics and the scope for increasing public trust. We may also contact selected national statistical institutes elsewhere.

6 Timetable

- 6.1 It is envisaged that the project board will meet for first time towards the end of March in

order to discuss and develop a more detailed specification. It will then consider an interim report in June and a draft of the final report in late August or early September. If these deadlines are met, the Committee for Official Statistics will receive the developed specification in May, the interim report in July and the final report in September.

Footnotes

1. Welsh crime statistics are not devolved and it is therefore important that the Assembly Government is offered an opportunity to air any views or concerns it may have.
2. The independent experts have not been approached at the time of writing, but it is anticipated that two or three criminologists who are extremely knowledgeable about the data sources and who could represent the views of expert users may be engaged. It is also proposed to invite an expert on performance monitoring, as this is an important aspect of the way the data are used.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)10

***Monitoring Report 4:
Migration Statistics – Interim Report***

Purpose

1. The Monitoring and Assessment Team is seeking agreement that the Authority publish an interim report on the Authority's website, at the end of March, summarising the evidence about progress to improve migration statistics, together with initial recommendations.

Timing

2. The draft interim report will be discussed by the Project Board on 2 March, and submitted to the Committee for Official Statistics for consideration at its meeting on 10 March. A revised draft will then be circulated to the Authority Board ahead of the 20 March meeting with a view to a final decision on whether to proceed being taken, although without further substantive discussion in view of the nature of the 20 March meeting.

Recommendations

3. The Authority is invited to agree the plan to publish an interim report.

Discussion

4. The draft interim report draws on evidence gathered from:
 - a review of published documents on work to improve migration statistics through the Office for National Statistics (ONS) programme, Improving Migration and Populations Statistics;
 - interviews with 14 users from a variety of backgrounds: local, regional, international, private sector, and academic experts, and;
 - a review of unpublished papers of the current cross-government Migration Statistics Improvement Programme.
5. The report examines the nature of progress made in improving migration statistics and whether the right areas are being investigated, according to the views of the users. It also looks at how effective the programme management has been; how involved are the cross-government partners in the programme; whether there is sufficient resource to complete the work required; and the effectiveness of user consultation.
6. Releasing the interim report on-line will facilitate discussion of the conclusions with user communities and producers of migration statistics. It is proposed to hold an open meeting in late April. The comments will then inform the final report.
7. Further evidence to inform the final report will be drawn from an academic literature review of published material on the extent to which the producers of migration statistics are utilising the latest methodological advances, together with a formal Assessment report on the compliance of ONS migration statistics against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Penny Babb, Monitoring and Assessment Team, February 2009

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)11

Management of Assessments

Purpose

1. This paper proposes a number of detailed aspects of the process of conducting assessments - from collecting evidence, to the Authority's consideration of recommendations about designation - and updates Authority members on progress with the planning of the initial assessments.

Timing

2. Consideration at the this meeting of the Authority's Board will enable the Monitoring and Assessment Team to press ahead with the initial programme of assessments scheduled for the first half of 2009.

Recommendations

3. Committee members are invited to:
 - i. endorse the draft web statement "Evidence for Assessment" (Annex 1);
 - ii. consider the Written Evidence for Assessment (WEfA) template by which we propose to collect information from producers (Annex 2);
 - iii. consider the Statistics Users Questionnaire, by which we propose to collect information from users (Annex 3);
 - iv. note the proposed structure of Assessment Reports (Annex 4);
 - v. consider how the Authority should review Assessment Reports in the context of the overall sequence of assessment activity (Annex 5);
 - vi. endorse the draft web statement *The Schedule of Assessments, February - June 2009* (Annex 6);
 - vii. note the Monitoring and Assessment Team's plans for a formal 'pause and review' exercise in the light of the initial assessments (Annex 7), and;
 - viii. note the latest position on responses to the Authority's section 16 notices (Annex 8).

Discussion

Draft web statement

4. The Monitoring and Assessment Team recognises the degree of interest in Assessment from producers, users and other commentators and is keen to maintain a flow of information as our thinking about Assessment develops. Once we have some experience of conducting Assessments we will review the push/pull balance of our communication.

Written Evidence for Assessment

5. At the Committee for Official Statistics meeting in January 2009 an initial proposal for a questionnaire to collect information from producers was discussed. The Committee suggested that the burden on producers be reviewed. The Monitoring and Assessment Team agrees that this issue of burden is most important, not least because the provision of information is a statutory responsibility on producers:

"The person responsible for any official statistics in relation to which an assessment is being made ... must provide the Board with such information about the statistics as it may reasonably require" [Statistics Act section12(4)]

6. The revised draft WEfA document (Annex 2) requests links to, or copies of, material to support the Monitoring and Assessment Team's considerations. It complements this by explicitly enabling producers to highlight other relevant issues about compliance, and it

invites the producer to indicate that they consider the set of statistics to be compliant with the Code of Practice.

7. The Monitoring and Assessment Team has reviewed the WEfA from their own experiences as producers, and informally with colleagues elsewhere, for reassurance about the practicability and reasonableness of the requirement. The Team are satisfied on both counts - in particular we consider that we will have enough information to undertake an assessment, and do not think that the burden of responding to the WEfA document should be substantial. This is of course a separate issue from the burden of actually being or becoming compliant with the Code. Producers have been asked to provide an estimate of the amount of time taken to respond to the WEfA so that we can improve our understanding of burdens.

Statistics Users Questionnaire

8. This questionnaire is based on a version used successfully in two pilot assessments conducted by Office for National Statistics in 2007.

Structure of Assessment Reports

9. The Monitoring and Assessment Team plan to produce concise, accessible, and evidential Assessment Reports, which provide the reader with: an objective and authoritative statement of the strengths and limitations of the set of statistics in terms of compliance with the Code; any good practice identified, and; a recommendation about the designation of the statistics. We do not anticipate necessarily commenting on compliance with each practice in the Code, although inevitably we will do so where we identify limitations.

The Authority's review of Assessment Reports

10. The Statistics Act establishes some aspects of an overall framework, as follows:

- *"The National Statistician may not exercise the functions of ... determining ... whether any official statistics comply with the Code" (section 31(3));*
- *"The National Statistician may not take part in any assessment or determination of the Board [about assessment and re-assessment] in relation to statistics produced by the Board" (section 34(1));*
- *"The Head of Assessment is to be the Board's principal adviser on the exercise of its [assessment and re-assessment] functions" (section 33(1));*
- *"The Board [Authority] must have regard to the advice of the Head of Assessment in the exercise of those functions" (section 36(2)), and;*
- *"The Board [Authority] may not ... delegate the function of ... determining ... whether any official statistics comply with the Code" (section 36(2)).*

11. The sections relating to the role of the National Statistician are ambiguous. The Explanatory Notes say, in relation to section 34(1), that the sub-section:

"prohibits the National Statistician from taking part in deliberations or decisions about the assessment or reassessment of statistics that the Board itself has produced. That does not prevent the National Statistician from making representations to the Board about those statistics but, as with other statistical producers, he may not take part in decisions by the Board, or their representatives, on the assessment or reassessment of those statistics."

12. The sequence proposed at Annex 5 is consistent with this overall framework, and has additionally been developed with an eye to:

- the likely volume of work for the Authority once a steady stream of Assessment

- Reports are being produced;
- the need to ensure that the factual basis of Assessment Reports is unquestionable, and;
- a desire to avoid surprises.

13. Step 15 of the proposed sequence suggests that non-executive members of the Committee for Official Statistics will hold special meetings in alternate months to discuss ongoing assessments.

Schedule of Assessments

14. The Authority published an Initial Programme of Assessments in November 2008. The Monitoring and Assessment Team has contacted all relevant producer bodies to identify suitable windows in which to conduct the assessments, and have combined this with the availability of Team members to produce a schedule. It is proposed to publish this on the website.

Pause and Review

15. Paragraph 13 of the preamble to the Written Evidence for Assessment document mentions that the Monitoring and Assessment Team will undertake a review of the effectiveness of the whole range of evidence gathering, after we have completed the initial tranche of assessments. We propose that this review will look at a number of other aspects of Assessment too, as set out in Annex 7.

Section 16 Notices

16. The Authority has notified Ministers about 11 sets of official statistics that we think should be assessed against the Code of Practice. The first response has now been received and more are expected between now and July (Annex 8). Where the response is positive, the relevant assessment will be scheduled into the next work programme.

Monitoring & Assessment Team, February 2009

List of annexes

Annex 1	Statement 'Evidence for Assessment'
Annex 2	Written Evidence for Assessment
Annex 3	Statistics Users Questionnaire
Annex 4	Proposed structure of Assessment Reports
Annex 5	Proposed sequence of the production and approval of Assessment Reports
Annex 6	Draft web statement 'Schedule of Assessments February to June 2009'
Annex 7	Terms of Reference for a Pause and Review exercise
Annex 8	Responses to Section 16 Notices

Annex 1 Evidence for Assessment

This document is published on the Authority's website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/principles---procedures/evidence-for-assessments.pdf>

Annex 2 Written Evidence for Assessment

This document is published on the Authority's website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/principles---procedures/written-evidence-for-assessments.doc>

Annex 3 Statistics Users Questionnaire

This document is published on the Authority's website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/principles---procedures/user-questionnaire.doc>

Annex 4 Proposed Structure of Assessment Reports

This document is published on the Authority's website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/principles---procedures/proposed-structure-of-assessment-reports.pdf>

Annex 5 Proposed sequence of the production and approval of Assessment Reports

This document is published on the Authority's website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/principles---procedures/sequence-of-the-production-and-approval-of-assessment-reports.pdf>

Annex 6 Draft web statement 'Schedule for Assessments, February – June 2009'

This document will be published on the Authority's website in due course.

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

Annex 7 Terms of Reference for a Pause and Review Exercise

This document is published on the Authority's website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/principles---procedures/pause-and-review-exercise.pdf>

Annex 8 Responses to Section 16 Notices

Following the publication of Monitoring Report 3: 'Priorities for Designation as National Statistics', Ministers were formally notified about 11 sets of official statistics that the Authority considers should be assessed against the Code of Practice with a view to designation as National Statistics. These notifications were laid before Parliament in accordance with section 16 of the *Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007*.

The current position is as follows:

Ministry of Justice

- Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System
- Judicial and Court Statistics
- Statistics on the Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in Central Government

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice has written to concur with the Authority's view and to make a formal request that these statistics be assessed.

NHS Information Centre

- Statistics from the National Child Measurement Programme
- Statistics on Obesity, Physical Activity and Diet

We understand that a submission will be going to Ministers in the Department for Health later this month.

Communities and Local Government

- Gross Affordable Housing Supply
- Council Housing Sales
- Collection Rates for Council Tax
- Housing Stock
- Council Tax Levels Set by Local Authorities

The Authority's Monitoring and Assessment Team met officials from the department in January and a formal response is expected in July.

Department for Overseas Development

- Official Development Assistance as a proportion of National Income

The Secretary of State for International Development has formally requested that this statistic be assessed.

Monitoring and Assessment Team, February 2009

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)13

***Business Plan 2009/10
Central Office of the UK Statistics Authority***

Purpose

1. This paper presents a draft business plan for the work of the UK Statistics Authority's Monitoring and Assessment and Secretariat teams, collectively referred to as the Central Office of the UK Statistics Authority.

Timing

2. If Authority members endorse these proposals they will be adopted as a programme of action for 2009/10 and as a basis on which to evaluate performance.
3. The business plan can be further developed in light of the Authority's discussion on strategy due to be held in March. The intention would then be to make the business plan publicly available on the Authority's web-site.

Recommendations

4. Members of the Authority are invited to:
 - i. comment on the draft business plan (Annex A), and;
 - ii. consider the suggestion that the business plan nests within a high-level strategic framework for the Authority.

Discussion

5. The business plan seeks to publicly demonstrate how the Central Office will support the Authority's objectives, how it will use its allocated resources and what it expects to deliver in the coming financial year, 2009-10.
6. The plan groups together three broad areas of activity: scrutiny; governance and administration, and; communication and engagement. The plan will be used to link 'downwards' to team plans and individual staff members' annual performance agreement and appraisals.
7. It also suggested that the plan align 'upwards' to a high-level Authority strategic framework. Whereas the business plan is annual the framework document, or corporate plan, might cover a longer period, perhaps to 2011-12. The corporate plan could for example include a mission statement, legislative context, values, high level objectives, some broad actions to achieve these objectives, along with a set of performance indicators.
8. The annual business plan at Annex A makes some assumptions about the Authority's strategic objectives, based on previous discussions during 2008. Nothing contained in it is intended to circumvent discussion of these issues at the March Authority meeting. Rather, these sections are intended to provide an illustration of how the corporate and business plans might link together.

Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, January 2009

List of Annexes

Annex A Central Office of the UK Statistics Authority Draft Business Plan

Annex A Central Office of the UK Statistics Authority Draft Business Plan

This document will be published on the Authority's website in due course.

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)06

2011 Census Information Security Approach

Purpose

1. To provide information on the security approach being adopted for the 2011 England and Wales Census.

Timing

2. This paper responds to a request from the December 2008 UK Statistics Authority meeting for further information on 2011 Census Information Security.

Recommendations

3. The Authority is invited to:
 - a) note the approach being undertaken to deliver information security across the 2011 Census programme, and;
 - b) consider how to progress the appointment of a credible public figure to lead an independent review of security.

Discussion

Scope of Issues

4. Information Security is a fundamental component of the 2011 Census. ONS has a well-established reputation of maintaining census confidentiality which it intends to uphold with the 2011 Census. Commitments have already been made on information security including commitments to Cabinet Office, public commitments detailed in the 2011 Census White Paper and commitments detailed on the Census website.
5. Security issues relating to the 2011 Census include use of the internet to complete Census questionnaires, the deployment of a large field force to support completion of the Census and the electronic/physical security of the sites and systems used to process the Census data.

Scope of Security

6. The scope of security for the Census incorporates the following areas:
 - a) physical security of census assets and physical transportation;
 - b) security requirements, architecture and design;
 - c) application and infrastructure security including application coding and configuration;
 - d) physical and logical Information Technology (IT) access and authorisation;
 - e) logging, monitoring and auditing of privileged user actions;
 - f) continuity of service;
 - g) testing of security including vulnerability identification and penetration testing;
 - h) security documentation;
 - i) people security aspects - ONS and contractor staff, their security clearances, training, and awareness, and;
 - j) decommissioning of the Census system, destruction of questionnaires and archiving of data.

7. Security of these areas are considered across the following functions/systems including the Internet application, Data Capture Centre, Secure Data Centre(s), UK 2011 Census Wide Area Network, Web help facility, Contact Centre etc.

High level approach to Security

8. The 2011 Census programme has a clear view on how information security will be delivered. This includes clear understanding of security needs and commitments, formally defined security requirements, implementation of formal security management procedures compliant with internationally recognised standards, formal accreditation of IT systems and clear continuity arrangements. These activities are supported by a set of independent assurance reviews of the security features designed, delivered and operated as part of the Census system.
9. The delivery of the 2011 Census is supported by a major contract with Lockheed Martin UK (LM UK) for the delivery of printing, paper scanning and capture, Internet, network connectivity, call centre functionality and resources, and specific applications e.g. Questionnaire Tracking. ONS has fully and publicly addressed concerns about the security and confidentiality of Census data arising from the involvement of LM UK. This was addressed in statements released in August 2008, at the time of the contract award, with limited public response. More details on the joint approach used for ensuring an appropriate approach to information security with LM UK is included in **Annex A**.
10. The Census programme is following Government wide information risk management and data security standards. The 2011 Census data has been evaluated and classified as having a protective marking of RESTRICTED according to UK Government security requirements. Security processes applicable to a RESTRICTED rated project/system are being adhered to, to ensure the overall security of 2011 Census systems and associated processes and procedures.
11. In meeting the requirements for handling Census data, technical and procedural safeguards will be implemented to prevent the use of 'data/memory sticks' on infrastructure supporting Census and external people with access to large amounts of Census data will be vetted to the "Security Cleared" level, allowing custody of information classified up to SECRET.
12. Internal ONS systems handling census data will be accredited, as mandated by the Government Security Policy Framework. A Risk Management and Accreditation Documentation Set (RMADS) for ONS systems will be produced. This documentation set is used to provide the ONS Accreditor with evidence that the solution provided counters security threats to an appropriate level, and meets all HMG baseline security controls. The ONS Accreditor can then make recommendations to the ONS Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) on whether internal systems should be formally accredited and any residual risks which need to be considered.
13. Census division, within ONS is implementing information security management procedures compliant with BS7799/ISO27001, and BS25999, internationally recognised standards for the management of information security and Business Continuity Planning (BCP) respectively.
14. All persons working on the Census including permanent ONS employees, the field force or contractors will be required to sign undertakings to ensure that they are aware of their confidentiality obligations and liability under the terms of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

15. The recruitment process for all Census field force staff engaged on the Census programme includes personal screening e.g. taking up references, telephone interview, and criminal records checks as required by HMG policy.
16. A programme wide information security assurance plan is being produced, which highlights key aspects of the Census system over which additional security assurance is required. Assurance will be delivered by undertaking formal reviews. Reviews may range from self assessments, assessments by the Census Security team or assessments by an external independent organisation. The higher levels of assurance provided by independent external review will be applied to those areas of greatest risk e.g. the infrastructure and applications used to collect response information over the Internet.
17. The physical security of personal Census information held in Census Offices, by field staff or by authorised agents is strictly enforced. All sites processing Census data will have in place access control, CCTV, security guards, intruder alarms etc. ONS staff will confirm provision of these facilities with suppliers and independent physical security checks will also be undertaken.
18. In addition to the above activities, ONS propose to commission an independent review of security, with a wide remit, and a commitment to publish the final outcome of the review. It is envisaged that this public review would be in phases, starting before the 2009 Rehearsal and concluding in early 2011. It is proposed that the mandate for the review will be along the lines: "Can the public trust that the information they provide during the 2011 Census will be secure and remain confidential, particularly given that contractors and contractor developed systems will be used to support the running of the Census".
19. It is believed that such a review will need to be led by someone with security/confidentiality experience; a public profile and credibility with the public and politicians. During April/May 2009, ONS intends to seek the views of the National Statistician; Chair of the UK Statistics Authority; and the Information Commissioner, amongst others, on suitable candidates and on this proposed approach. Any nominations/suggestions from UK Statistic Authority members on potential review leaders or the scope of this review would be welcomed.

Risks

20. Information Security is identified as a component in two of the top five risks identified by the Census Programme.
 - a) Public confidence in data security – need to maintain high levels of confidence in census processes. Concerns about US Patriot Act and loss of data in transmission, for example are potentially damaging
 - b) Operational risk (postal strike, foot & mouth, flooding, internet system breach, lost data scandal at the wrong time etc.)

UK Statistics Authority engagement on Public Census Security Review

21. The UK Statistics Authority will wish to consider how best to be engaged in the scoping and identification of a potential leader for the proposed Public security review.

Glen Watson
ONS Census Director
February 2009

List of Annexes

Annex A - Working with the LM UK consortia to delivery Information Security

Annex A - Working with the LM UK consortia to delivery Information Security

Working closely with the LM UK consortia ONS have undertaken the following actions to ensure that information security is appropriately dealt with across all aspects of the services provided by LM UK

1. Formal information security requirements have been included in Schedule 2.5 of the LM UK contract, supported by a more detailed Security Aspects Letter (SAL).
2. LM UK has retained Logica plc. to act as their security adviser for the 2011 Census programme.
3. ONS requires LM UK consortia partners to become compliant with BS7799/ISO27001, and BS25999, internationally recognised standards for the management of information security and Business Continuity Planning (BCP) respectively.
4. ONS has agreed a security policy with LM UK for the 2011 Census service. The objective of the policy is to ensure that Census data is protected and maintained, that information is held in a confidential manner, the integrity of the information is maintained and information is available when required.
5. The information security mechanisms delivered by LM UK for the Census Service are subject to formal government accreditation, the same as ONS internal systems. A Risk Management and Accreditation Documentation Set (RMADS) is being produced by the LM UK consortia for the Census Service. This documentation will be reviewed by the ONS Accreditor, similar to process undertaken for internal ONS systems.
6. A Security Integrated Programme Team (IPT), using people from Census Division and LH UK consortia has been created to coordinate and manage delivery of accreditation, BCP and achievement of compliance with ISO 27001 across the LM consortia.
7. Bulk transfer of information between LM and Census will be encrypted and meet government information security standards for the protection of personal data.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)07

Beyond 2011: Planning the future for socio-demographic statistics

Purpose

1. The National Statistician and Registrars General have recently initiated 'Beyond 2011', a UK-wide programme of work designed to look at the requirements of users beyond the 2011 Census and how they might be best met. The programme will consider a wide range of population statistics including population counts, household structures and person characteristics.
2. This paper sets out the rationale for Beyond 2011 and seeks members' guidance on the approach being taken to this forward-looking and complex programme of work, engagement with users and key challenges.

Timing

3. Routine. The paper is primarily for information while providing members with the opportunity to express views at an early stage.

Recommendations

4. Members of the UK Statistics Authority are invited to:
 - i. note the rationale for Beyond 2011 and endorse the priority given to this work;
 - ii. endorse the need for early and extensive user consultation and engagement;
 - iii. note some of the current barriers to the development of an integrated system of population statistics sources, in particular the absence of an address register and a population register, and;
 - iv. note the need for strong cross-governmental and parliamentary support, including the need for a UK-wide approach in agreement with devolved administrations.

Discussion

5. Following the last Census, and more recently with the relatively high levels of immigration and emigration to and from the UK, there has been an increased focus on the adequacy of our population statistics. A major inter-departmental programme of work is in place to improve migration statistics in the short term and significant efforts are being made to ensure the 2011 Census is the best possible.
6. Looking to the longer term, key stakeholders have raised the issue of whether the 2011 Census should be the last in its current form - the argument being that the traditional census is giving lower quality results over time, especially at the local level, primarily because of increased non-response while there are now larger, more comprehensive and higher quality administrative sources than there were a decade ago. The Treasury Select Committee (TSC) report 'Counting the Population' [see **Annex B**] proposed that the Authority sets strategic objectives with a view to the 2011 Census being the last in its current form (recommendation 12).

7. ONS, with the devolved administrations, has started scoping a programme of work, 'Beyond 2011', to develop proposals for an integrated system to improve population and other socio-demographic statistics following the 2011 Census. The programme will assess the feasibility of integrating a number of data sources (administrative data and registers, household survey data and a full or modified Census design). A note on the programme, work streams and timetable is provided at **Annex A**. Proposals are to be set out in an initial Strategic Outline Business Case by end March 2009. The business case will describe five work strands which will need to be taken forward over the next four years and which will produce the evidence needed to allow decisions to be made about alternative or complementary approaches to a traditional Census.
8. Over the last few decades, some countries (e.g. Belgium, Austria) have carried out substantial work on the development of robust statistical systems to underpin their population statistics, often based on registers and administrative systems. The Beyond 2011 Programme will consider this work and its application in a UK context.
9. One of the work strands will set out a user engagement and consultation strategy. Work on this user strategy has already started and an initial meeting of the Statistics Users Forum (SUF) is being planned for late-April or May at the Royal Statistical Society. This session will concentrate on likely user needs (e.g. the evolving needs of local government, the required scope and frequency of statistics etc), rather than the means of the delivery, and these will feed into the assessment of possible options. This is only the beginning of a process which we are expecting to include a formal user consultation and to make use of a wide range of experts as proposals are being formulated and tested.
10. The Beyond 2011 Programme will be complex, spanning a long period of time, and with substantial investment needs. In particular, members will want to note that:
 - there is no UK population or single address register, updated on an on-going basis (a comprehensive address list is being developed for the 2011 Census), while the public's appetite for large, linked databases may be low;
 - the successful development of an integrated system of data sources will be dependent on intensive and sustained cross-government/country efforts in data sharing, Ministerial and Parliamentary support and substantial levels of investment;
 - the statistical outputs from a new integrated system will have different quality profiles. It is likely some outputs will be available more frequently but at different levels of accuracy at various levels of geography. User consultation will be key to determine which properties are more important for which outputs but it is inevitable conflicts between different requirements will remain. This will need careful consultation and sustained engagement with users;
 - the delivery of the work programme and the implementation of any new system will be complex in both statistical and operational aspects. Complex technical issues will need to be addressed - for example, in information management systems development and data security.

11. While the work on potential alternative approaches is going on, we will in parallel be preparing the case for a traditional Census in 2021 (or possibly 2016) because of the lead time in planning a Census. We will need to have completed some of the early work for the next Census (including making the case for early years funding) before it is clear whether an alternative approach is desirable and viable.

Roeland Beerten, Administrative Sources and Data Integration Division, ONS
February 2009

List of Annexes

- Annex A** Beyond 2011 Work programme - the five work streams and timing of key events
- Annex B** Recommendations from the Treasury Select Committee enquiry *Counting the Population* and response from the Authority

Annex A Beyond 2011 Work programme - the five work streams and timing of key events

1. A Beyond 2011 working group has been set up and has met twice since September 2008. Membership is drawn from across the Government Statistical Service (GSS), including the Devolved Administrations. An initial draft of the strategic outline business case was presented to the Working Group at its November meeting. At present, the Working Group reports to the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme Board, chaired by the National Statistician, although it is anticipated that it will eventually become a programme in its own right, subject to funding.
2. The high-level proposal plans to take forward the work in five work streams.

Workstream 1 will set out a user engagement and consultation strategy and will engage with users of population and wider socio-demographic statistics in order to establish their current and likely future requirements. This will cover not just which statistics are required, but also the quality and timeliness with which they are required, taking into account available resources.

Workstream 2 will identify the existing administrative data sources ONS will need access to in order to carry out a linkage exercise. This is in order to deliver a feasibility assessment for creating a population database for the UK. It will set out a detailed work plan for linkage of a limited number of data sources around the time of the 2011 Census, and include a preliminary benchmarking exercise with the 2011 Census results.

Workstream 3 will investigate other approaches, over and above the administrative data linkage exercise, that may also be needed. These are:

- o A more extensive household survey strategy;
- o Alternative Census designs (including looking at approaches used by other countries), and;
- o Synthetic estimation - using a combination of a population spine with other information as the basis for Census type outputs.

Workstream 4 will address a number of issues that may act as enablers or barriers to the three previous workstreams. These are as follows:

- o IM capacity;
- o Data security;
- o Legal aspects of bringing together various types of data sources;
- o Public acceptability of data linking within government, and;
- o Harmonisation and comparability across sources.

Workstream 5 will bring together the findings from the other workstreams to deliver a detailed scoping study on an integrated system of statistical sources to produce better population and other socio-demographic statistics.

3. Within current resources it is not possible to take forward the work in all five work streams at an early stage. For the period of the current ONS CSR settlement, work streams one and two will take priority in the programme timetable, together with some work on aspects of work stream four. Work streams three and five will be taken forward later in the programme timetable. The following key milestones have been identified:
 - o April 2009 - produce a Strategic Outline Business Case and high-level work plan;
 - o Autumn 2009 - produce Full Business Case to inform Comprehensive Spending Review bids in other departments and the devolved administrations;

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- o Spring 2010 - formal User Consultation on initial proposals;
- o Spring 2011 - Census 2011 and extraction of relevant administrative datasets;
- o 2011 – 2012 - Comparison of Census data and administrative sources, and;
- o 2013+ - Decisions on future of Census (e.g. 2016, 2021) and use of administrative data sources.

**Annex B Recommendations from the Treasury Select Committee enquiry
Counting the Population and response from the Authority**

The Treasury Sub-Committee's report 'Counting the Population' was published on 23 May 2008. The full report and its recommendations can be found at:

<http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmtreasy/183/183.pdf>

The Authority set out its response to the recommendations from the TSC report on 25 July 2008. The following recommendations specifically referred to (aspects) of the Beyond 2011 work. The full response can be found at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/response-to-tsc-report-on-counting-the-population.pdf>

1. We require the Statistics Authority in response to this Report to set out the steps it will take to utilise and better link data held by the Government and by local government in order to provide a more accurate picture of the population within this country. (Paragraph 4 of the Conclusions and Recommendations, Paragraph 62 of the main text).

Progress has been made towards sharing administrative data, in the context of the ONS-led cross-departmental Improving Migration and Population Statistics work programme. The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (SRSA), which came into force on 1st April 2008, allows Ministers to make regulations to enable data sharing between the Statistics Authority and other public authorities, including government departments and agencies. While its provisions make data sharing easier they cannot be used to compel departments to share their data. In each case the explicit approval of the Secretary of State responsible for the department involved is required for the proposed sharing of data.

The Ministerial Group supporting the Programme has endorsed the use of datasharing to improve population statistics. Discussions are taking place with relevant Government Departments to identify data sources that are suitable for linkage and would provide a more accurate picture of the population. Priority requirements have been identified as follows:

- The Schools Census, held by Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), This will improve statistics by allowing ONS to track patterns of internal and international migration in the school-aged population as well as supplying indicators of the impact of migration (e.g. pupil's first language);
- The Migrant Worker Scan, which is an extract of the National Insurance Recording System held by DWP, containing information on all overseas nationals allocated a National Insurance number in order to work or claim benefits, and;
- The Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS), which links benefit and programme information held by DWP on its customers with employment records from Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC). The necessary draft regulations are being prepared in discussion with the departments concerned.

The use of data held by local government is discussed in the response given in Paragraph 6.

9. The Statistics Authority to set out the action that the Authority will take under the powers of the SRSA to develop the Government's administrative databases to provide a more accurate and cost effective method of monitoring the population. (Paragraph 13 of the Conclusions and Recommendations, Paragraph 139 of the main text).

See responses given in Paragraphs 1 and 10.

10. We recommend that the Statistics Authority establish a pilot project enabling a population register to be operated alongside the 2011 Census in order to compare the effectiveness of such a system with that of the Census. (Paragraph 14 of the Conclusions and Recommendations, Paragraph 140 of the main text).

There is currently no single population register in the UK or a linked system of administrative sources that allows precise measurement of where people are in the country between censuses. Unlike some countries the UK does not have a comprehensive system of recording migrants, particularly those leaving the country, nor any legal requirement to notify change of address. In those countries that have population registers, with mandatory notification of change of address, the registers are run primarily for administrative purposes by agencies other than the statistical offices. In those countries, for example in Scandinavia, where they are used for the production of population statistics, the register information is made available to the statistics office.

As indicated in the introductory remarks, ONS have initiated a study into developing a more integrated system to improve population statistics in England and Wales following the 2011 Census. ONS is not planning to pilot the operation of a population register alongside the 2011 Census, but will be comparing figures from the Census to a wide range of administrative sources and surveys collected or collated in 2011. This would include linking administrative data at the individual level, where possible. The uses that could be made from such an exercise for the ongoing production of population statistics will be examined. It will include a cost/benefit analysis of the likely benefits to users (including Local Authorities), and will consider legal aspects of data sharing, ethical issues and public acceptance of the statistical uses of such data.

It will be essential to have good address information, both to conduct the Census and undertake successful linkage of records. ONS is on course to develop a national single address register for one-off use in the 2011 Census. ONS plans to use address sources from Ordnance Survey, Royal Mail and the National Land and Property Gazetteer to produce a single coherent address list. To enhance further the quality of the Census single address register, ONS plans to engage address product suppliers and Local Authorities to resolve address mismatches, including conducting an on-the ground address checking exercise across significant parts of England and Wales before Census day.

Several administrative registers provide a partial index of the population. These include the NHS central register, the new NHS Personal Demographics Service (PDS) and the National Insurance Recording System (NIRS) which includes a complete register of National Insurance Numbers (NINOs). Specific issues currently limiting the use of these sources are quality of linkage of records over time, gaps and duplication of individual information on the system, timeliness and accuracy of address information and completeness and accuracy of emigration recording.

The Citizen Information Project (CIP), completed in 2005 by a team based within ONS, reported on the value to both citizens and the public sector in greater sharing of contact details (name, address, date of birth, reference numbers) in a secure way across the public sector, including the benefits for the production of statistics.

<http://www.gro.gov.uk/cip/Definition/FinalReportAnnexes/Index.asp>

12. The Statistics Authority set strategic objectives to ensure that the data gathered throughout the UK can be used to produce annual population statistics that are of a quality that will enable the 2011 Census to be the last census in the UK where the population is counted through the collection of census forms. (Paragraph 16 of the Conclusions and recommendations, Paragraph 149 of the main text).

ONS have initiated a study into the best way of developing a more integrated system to improve population statistics in England and Wales following the 2011 Census (see response given in Paragraph 10). It is for the Scottish and Northern Ireland authorities to decide the future of Censuses in their countries.

Demand for Census information is higher than ever, both to count population and provide detailed socio-economic information for small subgroups of the population and local neighbourhoods. For the 2011 Census the review of the need for this type of information collected by the Census was initiated and carried out by ONS in 2002. A review will similarly be carried out to determine the best way to meet that need in 2021, taking account of the study into a more integrated system of population statistics and related developments. Given the higher political focus on population and migration, it may be that the review should be a cross-government review.

ONS believe that it is too early to make a firm commitment on whether or not the 2011 Census will be the last. The information traditionally provided by a Census is likely still to be needed in 2021. A traditional Census remains the norm in the majority of developed countries. In terms of timing, the Scandinavian countries took up to 30 years to move from traditional censuses to a register based census because of the need to validate the registers - themselves established in a different legislative and politico / social climate - against the definitive census estimates. Even then, these register-based Censuses do not provide all the socio-economic data on population subgroups at small area level that is available from a traditional census.

As indicated in response given in Paragraph 10, ONS will be vigorously taking forward feasibility work on the statistical benefits from linkage of individual level administrative data. The outcomes of this work will provide a steer on whether these data are fit for purpose to replace a traditional Census, and if not what steps would need to be undertaken by government departments to enhance the existing administrative data they hold.

Specific issues currently limiting the use of existing administrative sources and registers are the quality of linkage of records over time, gaps and duplication of individual information on the system, timeliness and accuracy of address information and completeness and accuracy of emigration recording. ONS will be active in making sure the statistical uses of such new sources are taken into account in their development. In particular, ONS is investigating the statistical use that could be made of proposed government initiatives such as e-Borders and the foreign nationals register / ID card scheme.

Were a 2021 Census to be held, it might be very different from a traditional Census. There are several options, For example, to focus the Census on the headcount and demographic questions only, whilst boosting the Integrated Household Survey, to provide smaller area information on the characteristics of people. This is the approach being taken by the US Bureau of the Census, the culmination of development work spanning more than a decade. All this needs to be considered carefully before any decisions or recommendations are reached.