



Government
Statistical Service

NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S GUIDANCE:

Use of Administrative or Management Information

ISBN 978-1-85774-712-6

The National Statistician

The National Statistician is Head of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) – the community of all those involved in the production of official statistics in the UK, across government departments, agencies and the devolved administrations. The National Statistician is also the Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority and their principal advisor on:

- the quality of official statistics
- good practice in relation to official statistics
- the comprehensiveness of official statistics

Enquiries

For information about the content of this publication, please contact:

Tel: 01633 455528

Email: nsoffice.enquiries@statistics.gsi.gov.uk

Copyright and reproduction

© Crown copyright 2011

This material is subject to Crown Copyright protection.

For information on copyright and on reproducing or redistributing this material, see

www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/copyright/index.html

Last reviewed: February 2011

Contents

Introduction	4
Summary Guidance for all Staff	5
Good practice in the use of management information and related official statistics	5
Key message	5
Public use of management and similar information, and related official statistics	5
Access to management information covering similar ground to official statistics	7
Supporting transparency	7
National Statistician's Detailed Guidance	8
Treatment of administrative/management data used for statistical purposes	8
Introduction	8
Complementary guidance	9
Scope of guidance	10
Guiding principles	10
Good practice	11
Managing the publication and dissemination of management and similar information which generates official statistics	12
Managing access to administrative/management information prior to the publication of any derived official statistics	15
Managing access to derived official statistics not yet in their final form	17
Stewardship of administrative/management systems which also generate (or have the potential to generate) official statistics	18
Managing the quality of administrative/management sources which generate official statistics	20
Compiling a statement of administrative sources	23
Annex A Good Practice Template – Statement of Administrative Sources	25
Annex B Good Practice – Supporting Metadata	27

Introduction

Jil Matheson
National Statistician

Edition 1.0 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics was published in January 2009. It provides a benchmark of good practice for all bodies producing official statistics. Complying with the Code will help provide assurance that official statistics have been produced to high standards and that they serve the public good. It will also help raise trustworthiness and confidence in those statistics. This supplementary guidance to the Code is intended to help producers of statistics, other officials and ministers to interpret, understand and implement the Code. It should be viewed as supporting documentation and should not be regarded as prescriptive.

It is anticipated that the guidance will be reviewed and updated periodically, in response to experiences of using it as well as to reflect possible updates to the Code itself. This is the second edition of the guidance, comments about which would therefore be most welcome.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. N. Matheson". The letters are cursive and connected, with a prominent "J" and "M".

February 2011

Summary Guidance for all Staff

Good practice in the use of management information and related official statistics

1. This note applies to all public servants who deal with management and similar forms of information. This second edition has been issued by the National Statistician and builds on earlier guidance circulated by the Head of the Home Civil Service. It supplements the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and supports the delivery of trustworthy statistics that meet the needs of government and society.

Key Message

2. The Code of Practice encourages organisations to use quantitative information drawn from administrative systems for the management of government business, decision-making and the production of official statistics. This guidance sets out the practices that must be followed when this information is put into the public domain.

Public use of management and similar information, and related official statistics

3. Summary of key practices – to be followed by everyone who uses such information:
 - Seek and follow the advice of the appropriate Head of Profession for Statistics (HoP) (or equivalent official) on the public presentation of such information
 - Use published official statistics, where available, in any form of public statement prepared for Ministers or officials

- If you need to issue public statements which use quantitative information that has not been published previously, then:
 - obtain advice from the HoP on how that information should be presented/released
 - if this information is intended to be released on a regular basis, determine on the advice of the HoP whether that information should become an official statistic so that it complies with the Code
- In normal circumstances, access to provisional versions of official statistics should only be given to those persons involved in their production, distribution and quality assurance. In exceptional circumstances, however, HoPs may grant access to others if they decide that this is in the public interest, including policy decisions. Such access will be made public. Access will not be granted for the purpose of presenting or defending official policies
- In exceptional circumstances the HoP may agree to the use in public statements of alternative information to official statistics, for example information from the same source prior to the release of the official statistic, or similar unpublished management or other quantitative information. The HoP will need to be satisfied that such use is justified and that a clear explanation will be given as to why the official statistics have not been used. The HoP must also be satisfied that any prior release of the source data will not undermine the planned official statistics release or broader public trust in official statistics (e.g. release of unreliable information or release that could be perceived as being at an opportune point and not in the public interest).

Access to management information that covers similar ground to official statistics

4. Summary of key practices – to be followed by everyone who uses such information:
 - Access to management and similar data is available when it is needed to support the day-to-day management/ operation of the organisation or decision making
 - If you do have access to such information before any related official statistics are published, you must not issue public statements based on that information, except in the circumstances described above
 - Your organisation has a list of administrative sources that are, or can be, used to produce official statistics. It should make public, on request, details of any information from those sources given to Ministers, chief executives and senior officials before the publication of related official statistics.

Supporting Transparency

5. Increasingly Departments are making their own internal data publicly available for re-use. Statisticians can help if you are doing this. You should:
 - Consult the HoP about whether to treat as official statistics. If so, they will advise on how to do this
 - Use the skills of professional statisticians to improve the use and presentation of the information derived from management and administrative systems
 - Remember to follow your organisation's processes for protecting information for example relating to the Data Protection Act consulting the relevant Information Asset Owner if necessary
 - Where information on data.gov.uk is used as the basis for public statements, the guidance in paragraph 3 should be followed.

National Statistician's Detailed Guidance

Please note that references to the 'Head of Profession for Statistics' are also intended to refer to the equivalent lead official in each organisation.

Treatment of administrative/management data used for statistical purposes

Principle 7, Practice 7: Where administrative sources are used for statistical purposes, follow the practices set out in Protocol 3.

Protocol 3: Administrative sources should be fully exploited for statistical purposes, subject to adherence to appropriate safeguards.

Introduction

6. This section provides guidance and advice on how the 'Principles' and 'Practices' set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics should be applied in the following circumstances, where:
 - quantitative information derived from administrative, operational, managerial, financial, scientific, and research sources are used to serve the day-to-day business of government and are, or should be, published with or without the designation 'official statistics'
 - data that are collected for the sole purpose of supporting government business demonstrate the potential to generate 'official statistics' as a by-product, or where it is in the public interest that they should do so

- provisional data from purely statistical surveys are made available for administrative, managerial, operational and related purposes on an exceptional and case-by-case basis
7. For all practical purposes, all of the circumstances described above mean that a wide range of people, both within and outside government, many of who may not be acquainted with the concept of a statistical Code of Practice, will be in a position where they can use and disseminate the data from those sources before those data are converted into official statistics, and often before any derived official statistics are published and made available to all. In other words they will have early access to official statistics which are **not yet in their final form**.
 8. The early availability of such data before their conversion into official statistics (albeit with good justification) can lead to their uncontrolled or ad hoc use, and to the risk of their public disclosure or dissemination. Such early release may, in turn, pre-empt or undermine the eventual and more formal release of official statistics based on those data. The selective use of favourable information of this type can also undermine public trust in official statistics.
 9. The risks outlined above mean that the arrangements for handling such access must be managed in a way that ensures organisations fulfil their duty to comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Complementary guidance

10. A different, but complementary, set of principles and rules apply in those circumstances where government ministers, chief executives and their close officials are given pre-release access to official statistics which **are in their final form** prior to publication. The arrangements governing this particular type of early access are set out in a series of legislative Orders laid by the UK Government and the three devolved administrations (DAs) and are explained more fully in separate guidance issued by each¹.

1 The UK Government's Official Statistics Order 2010 and any equivalent Orders in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Scope of guidance

11. The principles and rules set out in this guidance apply to:
 - all Crown bodies and those non-Crown bodies identified in any Official Statistics Order²
 - officials in any of the above bodies (whether or not statisticians) who either:
 - a) own, control, manage or use any administrative, management, monitoring or research systems or processes which either generate, or have the potential to generate, either 'official statistics', or Code compliant 'National Statistics'
 - b) use the data obtained from such processes or systems to: meet managerial, policy or operational requirements; answer Parliamentary Questions; reply to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act; or produce official statistics.
12. This guidance does not apply to staff in local bodies with respect to the provision of their own data (even when those data feed into central government systems) but it does apply when they are given access to national information, or information about other local bodies, that eventually feeds into official statistics.

Guiding principles

13. The guiding principles set out below will help to ensure that everyone who uses official statistics or other forms of similar, numerical information is clear about how they have been compiled. This will help to promote trust and transparency:
 - it is entirely legitimate for organisations to make full and effective use of quantitative information obtained from their administrative systems for operational and managerial purposes and to encourage re-use by others
 - where operational, managerial or policy decisions are informed by quantitative evidence, this process should be based on the best information available

² The UK Government's Official Statistics Order 2010 and any equivalent Orders in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

- organisations should employ the skills of professional statisticians to improve the information derived from administrative systems and should also encourage them to exploit such information for statistical purposes in order to achieve value-for-money and reduce the potential burden on data suppliers
- neither the Code nor the statutory rules relating to pre-release access can apply in their entirety to such information. Instead, specific and appropriate arrangements for the application of the Code must be developed in each case
- the regular or recurring use of administrative/ management information in public statements or releases places an obligation on organisations to either publish such information as official statistics, and in a way which conforms to the Code of Practice, or publish a public explanation for the continuance of such practice
- whatever arrangements are in place, openness and transparency are key to maintaining and enhancing public trust in government use of quantitative information, and to safeguarding the integrity of any resulting official statistics
- the overriding imperative must be to serve the public good.

Good practice

14. The complexity of all the different arrangements in place across government makes it difficult to lay down a simple set of rules that will govern all the circumstances that can apply. Owners, producers and users must often make on-the-spot judgements about propriety and the correct course of action.

Those judgements, however, must be based on a set of sound ground-rules which are transparent to both practitioners and the wider community. The good practices outlined below reflect and expand on those set out in the Code of Practice – particularly those in Protocol 3. They focus on five key areas of management:

- Publication and dissemination
- Access
- Stewardship and development of administrative/management systems
- Assessment and maintenance of quality
- Public accountability and transparency.

Managing the publication and dissemination of management and similar information which generates official statistics

Protocol 3, Practice 4: Ensure that no action is taken within the producer body, or public statement made, that might undermine confidence in the independence of the statistics when released.

Proactive release

15. Many organisations use administrative, management and other forms of quantitative information in various forms of public releases including, for example, ministerial press releases, fact sheets, departmental reports, and chief executive press releases. The numbers given in these releases should be based on published official statistics whenever they are available. If there is a need to use unpublished management or other forms of quantitative information then it is the duty of the responsible officials to:
 - a) consult the appropriate Head of Profession for Statistics (HoP) (or equivalent lead official) on the options for meeting such requests

- b) take any advice offered by the HoP on the quality of administrative/management data and on its proper application and usage, and include that advice in any ministerial submission which covers that data
 - c) take any advice offered by the HoP on how the information should be put into the public domain (that is, whether it should be regarded immediately as official statistics and released in line with the Code of Practice). The HoP will consult with the National Statistician when necessary
 - d) where information is **not** released as official statistics, clearly label any alternative dataset as lying outside this domain; draw attention to its source and status; explain the relationship between that dataset and any equivalent official statistics and highlight any shortcomings compared with any related statistics
 - e) avoid any statement which might pre-empt or compromise the later release of official statistics
 - f) avoid selective or biased reporting that might undermine public trust in the statistics
 - g) if the need for such an action becomes a regular requirement, consult the HoP with a view to converting that information into official statistics
 - h) avoid the proactive publication of selective favourable data, or any action that might encourage such a perception.
16. In turn, and in order to mitigate the need to use administrative/management data in the interim, and as an alternative, producers of official statistics should endeavour to publish derived statistics in accordance with a timetable which strikes an appropriate balance between timeliness of release, users' needs, resource availability, and fitness-for-purpose.

Ad hoc or reactive release

17. In the normal course of business, organisations will receive regular requests for quantitative information – perhaps in the form of Parliamentary Questions or in the context of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) – which can only be met by reference to data sourced from their administrative/management systems. When officials respond to such requests they should, where practicable, use the official statistics derived from those systems in preference to any intermediary or alternative version of the information. In so doing, officials should:
 - provide, or at least point to, the latest available official statistics which are relevant to the enquiry rather than provide any intermediary, provisional or alternative versions of the data
 - invoke the appropriate section of the appropriate FOIA which protects from disclosure official statistics that are due to be published later.
18. Clearly the more that an organisation is able to publish data from its administrative/management sources in the form of official statistics, the less likely it is that the organisation will be forced to make an unplanned release of internal administrative/management information. Quantitative information obtained directly from these systems should only be used to meet FOI and other requests if there is no statistical alternative.
19. If there is an overriding case for publishing quantitative information from such systems in advance of the release of any official statistics derived from them, then officials should consult the HoP and follow points a) to h) above. In such circumstances, HoPs should consider bringing forward publication of any planned official statistics in an ordered and transparent way in order to ensure equality of access.

20. However, it should be noted that **if there was no intention to release any relevant management information as official statistics at the time that a FOI request is received, then the management information has to be provided under FOI rules.** Once the official statistics have been published they can be used to answer any subsequent FOI requests using the latest published set.
21. Some organisations produce official statistics from administrative sources that are updated on a frequent basis. This means that there will normally be management and other forms of information that is more up to date than the official statistics. Organisations should continue to use the latest published official statistics in these circumstances. However, they should consider whether changes should be made to the frequency of the published official statistics if there is a significant need for more timely data. They could also consider producing provisional versions of the official statistics.

Managing access to administrative/management information prior to the publication of any derived official statistics

22. Organisations that are covered by the Code are encouraged to make full and appropriate use of management and similar forms of quantitative information for the day-to-day running of their business. However, care must be taken when this information covers similar ground to any official statistics that are due to be published subsequently.
23. The controllers of such systems must:
 - a) where possible, limit additional access to management and similar data (whether in electronic or hardcopy form) on a need-to-know basis. That is, to those persons required to peer review the data and to persons within the originating or owner organisation who have a legitimate need to use the data for managerial, operational or other appropriate decision-making purposes in advance of their publication as statistics

- b) where people have access, ensure that they understand their responsibilities under the Code and give a clear undertaking not to place such data in the public domain
- c) ensure that any web-based access to such data is appropriately protected
- d) keep records of which sets of information are provided to ministers and senior officials and other post-holders who are granted access for the purposes described in (a) above, and make this record publicly available on request
- e) where access is restricted but subsequently granted to additional parties, for example for exceptional reasons, refer any such instance to the statistical HoP
- f) formulate and apply clear 'conditions of use' on such access – modelled on this guidance.

24. In such circumstances, users must:

- a) abide by the 'conditions of use' attached to administrative/management data by the HoP. This also applies to any people outside the owner organisation who are granted access for specific purposes (for example staff in other organisations who may be collaborating on an initiative that spans several organisations)
- b) avoid ad hoc or selective comments on, or reporting of, administrative/management data which might undermine trust in any derived statistics
- c) avoid making any public statement that prejudices or pre-empts the contents of any subsequent statistical release
- d) comply with the rules set out in the relevant Pre-release Access to Statistics Order in the period immediately before publication of any derived official statistics, for example by not making any comment, or issuing any statement that might compromise the integrity of those statistics.

25. Producers of official statistics must:
 - a) provide advice on integrity and propriety to colleagues who use administrative/management data before they are converted into statistics
 - b) grant pre-release access to the official statistics in accordance with the principles and rules set out in the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Order
 - c) escalate to the HoP or National Statistician any concerns about the improper use of administrative/management data.

Managing access to derived official statistics not yet in their final form

26. Controllers must not grant early access to derived official statistics for policy or briefing purposes, other than for the purposes, and under the conditions, set out in the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Order. This is because such access would breach the fundamental principle of 'equality of access', and might raise suspicions that such access was being used to circumvent the rules which govern pre-release access to statistics in their final form.
27. This rule can only be waived in exceptional circumstances where, in the opinion of the HoP, acting in consultation with policy colleagues, the public benefit likely to result from such access significantly outweighs the detriment to public trust in official statistics which is likely to result from such access. In making such a decision the HoP will judge whether the latest available quantitative information provides sufficient cause for a policy decision or intervention to be taken before the figures are placed in the public domain, seeking advice from the National Statistician as appropriate.
28. In the case of UK government organisations, such exceptional access must be publicly documented at the time of publication.

Stewardship of administrative/management systems which also generate (or have the potential to generate) official statistics

Principle 6, Practice 3: Promote statistical purposes actively in the design of administrative systems in order to enhance the statistical potential of administrative records.

Principle 6, Practice 5: Evaluate existing data sources and estimation techniques before undertaking new surveys.

Protocol 3, Practice 3: Maximise opportunities for the use of administrative data, cross-analysis of sources and for the exchange and re-use of data, to avoid duplicating requests for information. Where possible, use common information technology and information management systems that facilitate the flow of information between producers of statistics.

29. As the Code of Practice for Official Statistics recognises, the statistical advantages of administrative/management systems (relating, for example, to their timeliness and breadth of coverage) can only be fully realised if statistical purposes are actively promoted in the design, development, maintenance, and adaptation of such systems. Close collaboration between the controllers of systems and their statistical colleagues can also generate complementary improvements to the systems themselves, and to their capacity to deliver robust and useful management information. Benefits can also accrue to the wider community if collaboration leads to the elimination of

expensive data collection systems, a reduction in the form-filling burden placed on data providers, and improvements in the quality of management information. Senior managers should ensure, therefore, that close links are established and maintained between the controllers of administrative/management systems and the producers of any derived official statistics; that system managers and IT staff involve their statistical colleagues in the stewardship of such systems; and that statisticians are given the opportunity to influence their thinking. More particularly the controllers of such systems must:

- a) recognise that the experience and expertise of professional statisticians and other professional analysts in government can make a valuable contribution to the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative/management systems and their application to policy or operational purposes
- b) establish governance arrangements that give government statisticians and other professional analysts' appropriate access to administrative/management systems, and the opportunity to influence their design and further development in ways which increase the potential of those systems to provide official statistics which remain consistent over time
- c) consult statisticians and other professional analysts in government before considering, or making, any changes to administrative/management systems or any related performance targets which might damage the viability, integrity or continuity of any derived statistics.

30. Those responsible for producing official statistics must, in turn:
- a) recognise that early access to administrative, management and related data for the purposes for which those data were originally collected does not constitute inappropriate access
 - b) avoid imposing over-zealous statistical standards on such data, or obstructing the legitimate use or the exceptional publication of such data before their conversion into official statistics
 - c) consider the alternative option of exploiting existing administrative/management systems before launching new statistical surveys in order to avoid the possibility of imposing duplicative and burdensome obligations on data providers
 - d) collaborate with the owners/administrators of such systems to ensure that the definitions and concepts used for administrative/management purposes are as close as possible to those required for statistical purposes
 - e) work in partnership with the owners/managers/controllers of administrative/management systems to help enhance the potential for those systems to generate official statistics.

Managing the quality of administrative/management sources which generate official statistics

Protocol 3, Practice 2: Only base statistics on administrative data where the definitions and concepts are good approximations to those appropriate for statistical purposes.

31. The controllers of administrative/management systems, as well as their policy, operational and statistical customers, all have an interest in maintaining the quality of the information they extract from those systems. For statisticians, however, there are several overriding issues:
- Whether they have sufficient understanding about the basis of an administrative/management system to be able to judge whether or not that system is capable of delivering robust official statistics
 - Their ability to link to other statistical sources at the design stage of new or redeveloped systems and the opportunities that exist for shared IT systems
 - The extent to which changes to the underlying systems – whether generated by policy shifts, or changes in IT systems or business processes – have the potential to damage the quality of the official statistics derived from those data and in particular their relevance, coherence, comparability and consistency over time. (The degree to which such changes pose a problem for statisticians depends to a large extent on their understanding of, and influence over, the source data; and their ability to mitigate such changes.)
32. Senior managers should ensure, therefore, that controllers and statisticians co-operate in the task of assessing and documenting such systems in a manner that will serve the following purposes.
33. Organisations must:
- a) compile a 'Statement of Administrative Sources' (SAS) – in accordance with Protocol 3 attached to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics – which describes how administrative, management or similar information is used within organisations, and the extent to which that information is released prior to its eventual publication as official statistics. A recommended template for a 'Statement of Administrative Sources' is shown in Annex A

- b) apply appropriate quality assurance procedures to administrative/management systems – thereby informing, supplementing and reinforcing the UK Statistics Authority’s statutory accreditation ‘assessments’ of any derived statistics
- c) create and maintain a high-level ‘process map’ for each system which provides a clear description of the process which leads to the production of the original administrative/management data, and the relationship between that data and any resultant statistics
- d) ensure, where practicable and where there is no risk of adverse consequences, that administrative/management systems use definitions and classifications which match, or map to, those used for statistical surveys
- e) compile appropriate documentation (as shown in Annex B) in order to:
 - inform judgements about the potential for such systems to generate official statistics
 - explain any system changes which have had an impact on the continuity of any derived statistics
 - inform decisions about the most appropriate way to handle discontinuities or issue revisions
 - foster greater public understanding of how the underlying administrative/management data are collected, processed, used, and released and how they relate to any resultant statistics
- f) accompany any publication of administrative/management data with balanced commentary and supporting metadata which describes the nature and quality of the data used, and their fitness for purpose
- g) otherwise make transparency a key component of good practice.

Compiling a statement of administrative sources

Protocol 3, Practice 5: Prepare, in consultation with the National Statistician, a Statement of Administrative Sources which identifies the following –

- a. The administrative systems currently used in the production of official statistics
- b. Procedures to be followed within the organisation to ensure that full account is taken of the implications for official statistics when changes to administrative systems are contemplated
- c. Information on other administrative sources that are not currently used in the production of official statistics but have potential to be so used
- d. Arrangements for providing statistical staff, whether inside the producer body or elsewhere, with access to administrative data for statistical purposes
- e. Arrangements for auditing the quality of administrative data used for statistical purposes
- f. Arrangements for ensuring the security of statistical processes that draw on administrative data.

34. One of the most effective ways of preserving public trust in official statistics is to be totally transparent about their origin, and about the processes and procedures which lead to their compilation and publication. At the simplest level this requires officials to make publicly available a list of the 'names' or 'titles' of all the quantitative systems and sources within organisations which can be drawn upon for administrative, management, or operational purposes as well as for statistical purposes, and to which the principles and rules in this guidance apply.
35. The UK Statistics Authority, however, expects government officials to go several steps further. Protocol 3 attached to its Code of Practice requires officials to publish a 'Statement of Administrative Sources' which identifies not only those administrative/management systems which are already used in the production of official statistics, but also those systems which have the potential to be so used.
36. In addition, and for each system used to produce official statistics, the Authority expects officials to describe the arrangements made to:
 - take account of the effect of administrative changes on the resultant statistics
 - provide statistical staff with access to the data for statistical purposes
 - audit the quality of the source data
 - ensure the security of the statistical processes that draw on such systems.

Annex A

Good Practice Template – Statement of Administrative Sources

This annex provides guidance on the recommended format, structure, and content of each organisation’s ‘Statement on Administrative Sources’

To comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics (and more particularly Protocol 3 of that Code) every organisation that produces official statistics must publish a ‘Statement of Administrative Sources’. This statement must include a list of the ‘names’ or ‘titles’ of all the quantitative information systems which are in operational use throughout the organisation, distinguishing between:

- those which are already used for both internal and external administrative/management purposes as well as for statistical purposes
- those which, currently, are used only for administrative/management purposes but which have the potential to be used, additionally, for statistical purposes.

In the interests of making their arrangements as transparent as possible, government organisations are urged to publish Statements which are as comprehensive and detailed as resources will allow. For each of the **first** type of system described above, the Statement should also include the following details:

Collection – a short outline of the process through which the system’s underlying ‘raw data’ are captured.

Application – a description of each of the main applications/uses to which the administrative/management data are put before they are transformed into official statistics (for example, operational monitoring, resource allocation, or performance measurement).

Access and dissemination – a summary of the arrangements put in place for sharing and disseminating the administrative/management data, either inside or outside the organisation, during the period before they are converted into official statistics – whether via a hardcopy, an intranet, access to a database, or whatever. The details provided should cover the range, nature and timing of such access.

Non-statistical publication – a summary of any exceptional arrangements made for placing the administrative/management data in the public domain during the period before they are converted into official statistics. This should cover the reason for such publication and the nature and timing of it.

Statistical publication – a listing of each of the ‘official statistics’ or ‘National Statistics’ series derived from each system.

Synergies – a mapping which explains the relationship between any public manifestations of the administrative/management data, and any subsequent statistical releases or publications.

Security/data protection arrangements – organisations are also encouraged to link their Statements to the more detailed metadata documentation described in Annex B. The extent to which this metadata can be compiled will give a good indication as to whether sound judgements can be made on the suitability of such systems to provide relevant statistics that are fit for purpose.

Annex B

Good Practice – Supporting Metadata

This annex lists the metadata fields that should underpin the description of each information system listed in each organisation’s ‘Statement of Administrative Sources’

The quality of official statistics derived from administrative/management systems depends to a large extent on having a clear description, and thus understanding, of the processes through which both the original data are collected, and the resultant statistics are produced. The essential requirement is to provide a detailed and easily accessible ‘process map’ which describes the complete chain of production – starting with the original collection process and ending with the delivery of the final statistical product – through provision of the following metadata.

Recommended metadata fields:

Statistical end-product

- Title of the statistical product derived from an administrative/management source
- Name of the organisation responsible for this statistical end-product
- Name/email address of contact point for this product

Administrative/management source or system

- Name/title of the original administrative/management data source
- Name of the organisation responsible for the original data source
- The purpose of the administrative/management system/source

- Unit of inquiry (for example, claimants, taxpayers, households, accidents)
- Intended coverage of administrative/management system/ source
- Completeness that is actual coverage (for example, take-up rate)
- Geographical coverage of the statistical product
- Lowest level of geographical coverage
- Extent to which statistical end-producers can influence the system
- Data definitions used
- Classification systems used
- The data collection process
 - periodicity/timing
 - validation procedures
- Access arrangements for policy/operational/etc purposes
- Dissemination procedures (and publication procedures where appropriate)
- Timing/periodicity of public release (if any)
- Nature of changes to the system/source (or other 'noise') which can impact on the statistics

Change process

- Procedures for changing definitions, scope, etc

The subsequent statistical production process

- Validation procedures
- Quality assessment
- Periodicity of release
- Potential impact of changes to the administrative/ management system on the statistics
- Procedures for mitigating such discontinuities.