

Press Release

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Tuesday, 6th May 2008**

UK Statistics Authority Welcomes the Re-Appointment of National Statistician

The UK Statistics Authority has today welcomed the re-appointment of the National Statistician Karen Dunnell for a further year. As a Crown appointment, the re-appointment was made by Her Majesty the Queen following consultation with Cabinet Secretary Sir Gus O'Donnell.

This National Statisticians' role will be to continue to be Chief Advisor to the UK Statistics Authority and to the Government on statistical matters. She will also be the UK Statistics Authority's Chief Executive with responsibility for the Office for National Statistics.

Speaking today Sir Michael Scholar, the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority said:

"The UK Statistics Authority very much welcome the re-appointment of Karen Dunnell for another year, as the UK Statistics Authority starts its work to rebuild public trust in Government statistics."

Notes to Editors

1. The Statistics and Registration Service Act gained Royal Assent in 2007 out of which the UK Statistics Authority came into existence on 1 April 2008. Since its official launch the UK Statistics Authority, and not Government Ministers, are in charge of the nation's main economic and social statistics produced by ONS. The Authority is fully independent and reports directly to Parliament, not through Government Ministers or departments so as to be sure that these figures are not subject to political interference or manipulation. In addition, the Authority have oversight of all UK official statistics, with statutory powers and the obligation to promote, improve and safeguard official statistics across the UK. http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070018_en_1
2. Karen Dunnell began her career as a researcher, and subsequently a lecturer, in medical and social studies. She joined the Civil Service and the Office for Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) in 1974. Prior to being appointed as the National Statistician in 2005, Karen was the Executive Director with responsibility for Surveys and Administrative Sources, including the Statistical Modernisation Programme.

Besides her work at ONS, Karen has published widely on statistical topics, including three books on health and demographics. She is active in professional as well as

academic life. She is a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society and has been chair of the Society for Social Medicine, visiting Professor at the London School of Hygiene and Research Associate at the London School of Economics.

3. The level of trust in official statistics is currently very low in Britain, recognised by Government through the introduction of the legislation, with all-party support in both Houses of Parliament, and support from the devolved Administrations, to establish the new Authority. A recent survey released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 17 March 2008 found that only one in five people think figures are compiled without political interference. The UK came 27th out of 27 in a recent survey within European countries of trust in their Governments' statistics.
4. Sir Michael Scholar KCB was appointed Chair of the new Authority in September 2007 in open competition, and with Parliamentary approval under the new procedure. He is President of St John's College, Oxford. He has been a governor of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research since 2001. Previously he was Permanent Secretary to the Department of Trade and Industry (1996 to 2001), Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Office (1993 to 1996) and Private Secretary to the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1981 to 1983).
5. The non-executive members of the authority were appointed in open competition and are:

Lord Rowe-Beddoe of Kilgetty (David Rowe-Beddoe), who will occupy the Deputy Chair post with responsibility for the governance of the Office for National Statistics.

Professor Adrian Smith FRS, who will occupy the Deputy Chair post with responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of all official statistics across the UK.

Professor David Rhind CBE, FRS, FBA who was Chairman of the Statistics Commission and was Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the City University in London until July 2007.

He is a non-executive director of the Bank of England's Court of Directors, and until 1998 was Director-General of the Ordnance Survey.

Partha Dasgupta who is currently Chief Executive of the Pension Protection Fund and a former Managing Director at Barclays Global Investors.

Sir Alan Langlands FRSE who is Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dundee. He was Chief Executive of the National Health Service in England 1994-2000.

Moira Gibb CBE who is Chief Executive Officer of Camden Borough Council.

Professor Steve Nickell CBE, FBA who is Warden of Nuffield College, Oxford. He was a member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee from June 2000 to May 2006.
6. The Authority also includes three executive members. These are: the National Statistician, Karen Dunnell; the Head of Assessment, Richard Alldritt; and the ONS Finance Director, Steve Newman.
7. The postal address for the UK Statistics Authority is, Statistics House, Tredegar Park, Newport, NP10 8XG.

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