
Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir Michael Scholar KCB

Anthony Smith
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8 July 2009

Dear Mr. Smith

INCLUSION OF PASSENGER FOCUS IN THE *OFFICIAL STATISTICS ORDER 2009*

Thank you for your letter dated 17 June in which you set out your views in respect of Passenger Focus's inclusion in the *Official Statistics Order 2009*.

The Statistics Authority's remit is set out in the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*. Our primary role is to promote and safeguard official statistics for the public good. Organisations that produce official statistics are defined in the Act either as Crown bodies or as certain other bodies included in 'Official Statistics Orders'. Responsibility for Official Statistics Orders rests with the Cabinet Office, which usually consults both the Authority and the relevant government departments where a non-departmental body such as Passenger Focus is being considered for inclusion.

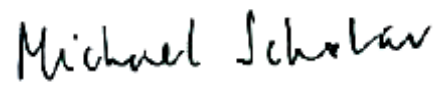
I am advised that the Department for Transport (DfT) put forward to the Cabinet Office the inclusion of Passenger Focus in the 2009 Order. I understand that officials from the Office for National Statistics met your staff recently to discuss the implications of inclusion in the new statutory arrangements, and I hope this meeting was useful.

Thank you for providing us with information on Passenger Focus's objectives. I note that you see the statistics that you produce as primarily attitudinal in nature. However, this is not of itself a reason to exclude them from the scope of official statistics. A range of official statistics are produced from attitudinal surveys in other organisations. For example, the Office for National Statistics *Omnibus Survey*, the Home Office *British Crime Survey*, and DfT's own *National Travel Survey*.

Formally, Passenger Focus has been a producer of official statistics since the 2009 Order came into effect on 1 April 2009, and the Authority will therefore continue to recognise your statistics as 'official'. Passenger Focus is not however currently a producer of National Statistics, as defined in the Act, and therefore adherence to the principles and practices of the Code of Practice is not a statutory requirement on you. The Code should nonetheless be seen as a statement of good practice in relation to all official statistics.

I am copying this and related correspondence to David Deaton in the Cabinet Office and to Antonia Roberts, Head of Profession for Statistics at DfT.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Scholar". The handwriting is cursive and fluid.

Sir Michael Scholar KCB